

DACOWITS

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



1951-2015: 64 Years of DACOWITS

2015
REPORT



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Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



Executive Summary

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) (hereafter referred to as the Committee or DACOWITS) was established in 1951 with a mandate to provide the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) with independent advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to servicewomen in the Armed Forces of the United States. Individual members of the Committee are appointed by the SECDEF and serve in a voluntary capacity for one- to four-year terms.

It has been the Committee's approach since 2010 to divide its work into two areas of focus: Assignments and Wellness. The Committee selected topics for study under each area of focus, and gathered both primary and secondary sources of information: briefings and written responses from DoD, Service-level military representatives, and subject matter experts (SMEs); data collected from focus groups and interactions with Service members during installation visits; and literature reviews. These sources of information, along with information DACOWITS gained through studying some of these topics in previous years, formed the basis—or reasoning—for the Committee's recommendations.

The Committee voted on recommendations during its September 2015 business meeting and approved this annual report at its December 2015 business meeting.

Assignments Recommendations

The Committee studied two Assignments topics in 2015: the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units, and female accessions. The Committee also continued to monitor the Services' responses to its 2012, 2013, and 2014 recommendations that the Services work collaboratively to provide women with properly designed and fitted combat equipment as soon as possible.

Effective and Full Integration of Women Into Closed Positions and Units

In 2015, DACOWITS continued to monitor DoD's and the Services' ongoing implementation of their respective plans to open closed positions and units to women no later than January 1, 2016. The Committee's study of the integration of women into ground combat units is built on five years of research as well as the Committee's recommendations, first made in 2010, to eliminate the policy implemented in 1994 excluding women from ground combat and to open all military positions and units to women. On January 24, 2013, then-SECDEF Leon Panetta and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) General Martin Dempsey issued a memorandum rescinding the ground combat exclusion policy and directed the Services to comply with a three-year plan to open closed positions and units to women no later than January 1, 2016. The plan was consistent with certain guiding principles set forth by Chairman Dempsey in a memorandum issued

January 9, 2013. The Services' plans were to include "... the development and implementation of validated, gender-neutral occupational standards and the required notifications to Congress," an approach that was consistent with the Committee's 2011 and 2012 recommendations that any physical standards be validated to accurately predict performance of actual, regular, and recurring duties of a military job and applied equitably to measure individual capabilities.

DACOWITS made the following recommendations to address the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary of Defense should open all closed units, occupational specialties, positions, and training to Service members who meet the requisite qualifications, regardless of gender. No exceptions should be granted that would continue any restrictions on the service of women.

Reasoning

Since 2010, DACOWITS has recommended that the SECDEF eliminate the discriminatory exclusion of women solely based on gender from any and all positions and occupational specialties, including those in direct combat. The Committee has studied the issue of disparate opportunities afforded to women in the Services under the ground combat exclusion rule and the rule's deleterious impact on women's accessions and career advancement. Employment discrimination against civilian women based solely on gender has been outlawed for decades in all other positions in government and the private sector, including law enforcement, firefighting, and other nontraditional career fields. Cases of gender discrimination are examined under the "intermediate scrutiny" standard. To be constitutional, a discriminatory law must further an important governmental interest or objective, and the means of discrimination must be substantially related to that government interest. Because gender-neutral standards are being implemented, any gender-based exclusion of women from combat positions and occupational specialties is likely to fail this legal test.

DoD contracted with the RAND Corporation (RAND) to conduct a study to describe best-practice methodologies for establishing gender-neutral standards for physically demanding jobs tailored to address the needs of the military. In September 2013, RAND issued a draft report that was provided to the Services. RAND's report identified a six-step process for establishing requirements for physically demanding occupations:

1. Identify physical demands.
2. Identify potential screening tests.
3. Validate and select tests
4. Establish minimum scores.
5. Implement screening.
6. Confirm tests are working as intended.

The Services appear to have taken various approaches toward conducting studies regarding establishing gender-neutral standards and opening positions to women. The Marine Corps

has given great weight to its study comparing the average performance results of men and women. The Army, in contrast, appears to have focused its analysis on individual performance and the individual's contribution as a member of a team. It is DACOWITS' belief that the Army's focus on individual performance standards is the best approach for determining the eligibility to serve in all positions and career fields. This approach strengthens the overall readiness and combat effectiveness of the Armed Forces.

Studies comparing the relative strength of the average woman to that of the average man are irrelevant. They are not responsive to the guidance issued by the SECDEF and the CJCS to develop and implement occupational standards to measure whether an individual is qualified to perform a certain position. These studies provide no rational basis for barring qualified women from a previously closed position. Indeed, these conclusions instead demonstrate a gender bias against all qualified women (even higher scoring women) in favor of any qualified man. To have the strongest fighting force, less qualified males should not be favored over equally or more qualified women.

DACOWITS' position on opening all closed units, positions, and training to Service members who meet the requisite qualifications is predicated upon the following considerations.

Opening all positions to women will make our military stronger.

Opening all positions to women ensures our military forces can attain the highest readiness levels possible. The Committee believes that U.S. military readiness is the foremost consideration for all legislative and policy initiatives concerning women in combat. To attain maximum military readiness, the military must ensure that all Americans who are qualified and interested in serving their country in uniform have the opportunity to do so. With an all-volunteer force, it is even more essential to ensure that the most qualified and capable Service members are available to meet national security objectives.

To deliberately exclude more than 50 percent of the American population, especially from front-line combat positions and occupational specialties, defies long-established and fundamental principles of successful organizations. In view of the declining proportion of youth qualified to serve in the military, the military must be positioned to enlist or commission the best young men and women.

The Committee believes the ongoing development and implementation of gender-neutral standards will provide lasting readiness benefits as our military forces adapt to future combat environments, missions, technology, and equipment. These standards should be based on a scientifically rigorous process; validated as job related (based on the actual, regular, and recurring duties to be performed using current technology and combat equipment); and determined to accurately measure individual, not average, performance.

Given such rigorous standards, there is no reason to exclude any Service member who can meet those standards. Only those individuals who can meet the standards should be recruited, retained, and promoted; anything less will undermine military readiness. Gender is not relevant to this determination any more than race, religion, or sexual orientation. Performance is the only relevant criteria.

When the Committee has broached the topic of standards at its business meetings and in DACOWITS focus groups at military bases, and when individual Committee members have addressed the issue on their own or others' behalf during their military careers, the response from female Service members is very clear: they do not appreciate or desire different standards, nor do they benefit from them. To the contrary, lower standards affect readiness, are restrictive and counterproductive, and create perceptions that are completely opposite from those to which these professionals aspire.

Opening all positions to women establishes the Military Services as a true meritocracy. The “DoD Human Goals Charter”—signed April 28, 2014, by senior DoD leadership (the SECDEF, the CJCS, Service Secretaries, and Service Chiefs)—states that it is DoD’s goal to “make military service in the Department of Defense a model of equal opportunity for all regardless of race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin” and “provide opportunity for everyone, military and civilian, to rise to as high a level of responsibility as possible, dependent only on individual talent and diligence.” Unless every member of the Military Services, male or female, is allowed to hold any position for which he or she is qualified, DoD simply cannot achieve this goal. By opening all positions and military occupational specialties to women, DoD will become a true meritocracy where every individual can live up to his or her full potential.

Opening all positions to women encourages the military culture to be more inclusive and accepting of diversity. The “DoD Human Goals Charter” states, “The defense of the Nation requires a well-trained volunteer total force comprised of active and reserve military members and civilian personnel. We gain a strategic advantage through the diversity of our total force and create a culture of inclusion where individuals are drawn to serve, are valued, and actively contribute to overall mission success.” This change in policy is consistent with the American values of fairness and diversity, which the military is charged to defend. Indeed, history is instructive on this point. When DoD eliminated other discriminatory policies, such as racial segregation of Service members or the prohibition on service by gay and lesbian individuals, it only strengthened the Armed Forces.

Arguments against opening all positions to women are specious.

The Committee’s studies of women’s assignment restrictions, including years of extensive interviews and focus groups with both male and female Service members of all ranks and in all Services, show that none of the proffered reasons for discrimination against gender hold up as a matter of either policy or law—any more than they did when they were used to justify discrimination based on race or sexual orientation.

Opening all positions to women is not likely to impact unit cohesion or morale. Since 1948, women have been a permanent and integral part of the Armed Forces without impacting unit cohesion or morale in combat situations. During Operation Desert Shield/Operation Desert Storm, out of necessity, more than 40,000 women served in the war zone in support units, missile crews, and aboard Navy ships, constituting 7 percent of the combat force. During that conflict, 13 women were killed and two taken prisoner. More recently, during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, nearly 300,000 women have served in the war zone, directly in harm’s way, and engaged the enemy in close combat. More than 9,000 women have received the combat action badge. More

than 1,000 women have been wounded in action, and more than 150 have made the ultimate sacrifice. Two women were awarded the Silver Star for their gallantry in action.

The Committee has never received nor reviewed a scientifically validated study that proves gender integration of military units negatively affects unit cohesion or morale. To the contrary, the general consensus from the focus groups that the Committee has conducted across the country for years suggests the opposite—women bring fresh perspectives, unique leadership skills, and a relentless commitment to completing the mission.

Combat is high-risk to health, regardless of gender. As long as women can meet the gender-neutral occupational standards for a job, they should be evaluated as individuals and not on a physiological average. Physical fitness standards are not occupational standards. Physical fitness standards are normed for both age and gender and are intended to provide a general measurement of an individual's health and fitness for duty. Occupational standards are developed to ensure that an individual is capable of performing the functions of a position. Occupational standards for each position must be the same for men and women. Protective equipment and gear must be suitable for Service members of all sizes and shapes, regardless of gender—these modifications are necessary to ensure all those who serve are properly equipped, trained, and prepared for their mission.

Opening all positions to women would not require unreasonable modifications to facilities to accommodate women. Although some of the Services expressed concern over the need to modify physical spaces for women, the Committee believes facility modifications are not required. Men and women already serve in close quarters with minimal to no privacy while training and on deployment.

Opening all positions to women will pose no reasonable obstacle to integrating women into a multinational force. DoD should not permit other countries or cultures to dictate U.S. policies and regulations on gender integration, especially when such cultural mores directly impact U.S. military morale and unit cohesion and undermine readiness by eliminating many potentially qualified Service members strictly based on gender. Moreover, many of our allies already have women serving in combat positions, including the Republic of Korea, Canada, Australia, Sweden, and Israel.

Women have demonstrated a desire and ability to serve in combat positions. This past year, scores of women have volunteered to participate in combat training programs and experiments to further gender integration efforts. In some cases, these women have delayed or negatively affected their careers even without any guarantee of earning the occupational specialty upon successfully completing the training. Many of these women have volunteered because they passionately believe in the need to change DoD policy. On August 21, 2015, two women successfully completed the rigorous Army Ranger School combat training course.

A survey conducted by the Center for Naval Analysis for the Marine Corps in 2011 indicated that 31 percent of female respondents would be interested in a lateral move to a combat occupational specialty if given the opportunity; 43 percent of female respondents would have chosen a combat arms occupational specialty when they joined the Marine Corps had it

been an option; and 34 percent of female respondents would volunteer for a Ground Combat Element assignment if allowed. To date, more than 140 female Marines have successfully completed the enlisted School of Infantry combat training course.

Until women have the same opportunity as men to serve in all positions and occupational specialties, with their performance evaluated by the same standards and criteria, they will never compete fairly “head to head” in selection and screening boards. The Committee believes this affects women’s ability to attain the most senior levels of responsibility and authority. This discrepancy in standards also creates a ripple effect down the ranks, discouraging some junior women from continuing their military careers and civilian women from considering military service.

It is an unfortunate fact that some Services are having problems recruiting racial/ethnic minority officers into the infantry and other combat arms branches. It would be unthinkable to argue that minorities should be restricted from such positions due to a low propensity to serve, lack of critical mass, or an assumed inability to meet standards. These arguments are no less specious when applied to women.

Recommendation 2: The Secretary of Defense should monitor, validate, and verify the Services’ implementation of their integration efforts and progress in opening positions to women.

Reasoning

The policy change eliminating the ground combat exclusion rule was announced on January 24, 2013. According to a report issued in 2015 by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Services had opened only 91,600 positions and 22 occupational specialties as of the date of the report. Nearly 250,000 positions and 53 occupational specialties remain closed to women solely based on gender. Once decisions have been made to open positions and occupations to women, a lengthy implementation process will follow. DoD must ensure the growth and evolution of women in these newly opened positions and occupations throughout the lifecycle of leadership development and career progression. DACOWITS agrees with the GAO report findings: without an ongoing monitoring process, it will be difficult for DoD to maintain necessary visibility over the extent to which the Services and the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) are integrating.

Recommendation 3: The Secretary of Defense should recommend legislation that mandates women between the ages of 18 and 26 fulfill the same Selective Service registration requirements as men.

Reasoning

The present Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) says that men (to include undocumented immigrants; legal permanent residents; refugees; incarcerated men upon release; transgender women born as men; and U.S. citizens) have a civil obligation to serve the Nation, but specifically

excludes women from that same civil obligation. In the case of *Rostker v. Goldberg* (1981), the U.S. Supreme Court determined that there was not sufficient need for women to register because they were excluded from combat military occupational specialties and positions. This rationale no longer applies since the SECDEF and the CJCS rescinded the ground combat exclusion rule in 2013. More than 90,000 additional positions are now available to women in the Services, with 250,000 more remaining to be opened by January 2016. The ground combat exclusion rule was also cited as a reason not to change the MSSA. The Committee strongly believes that with equal opportunity comes equal responsibility; therefore, women must be required to register for the Selective Service as their male counterparts must do.

Female Accessions

The Committee's 2015 study of female accessions was prompted by the low percentage of women in the military and the Committee's continued concern that the Services have the strongest possible pool of highly qualified individuals to meet the need in the coming years. The Committee's 2015 study of this topic builds upon the Committee's 2013 examination of the accessions of women officers and its 2014 examination of the accession of enlisted women.

DACOWITS made the following recommendations to address female accessions.

Recommendation 1: All Services should set goals to systematically increase the representation of women in the officer and enlisted ranks. These goals should be benchmarked against the pool of eligible women recruits/candidates. Furthermore, these goals should not be constrained by past or current representation of women in the Military Services or estimates of the propensity of women to enter the Service.

Recommendation 2: All Services should systematically increase the accessions of women into the officer and enlisted ranks.

Recommendation 3: All Services should devote sufficient resources to target and increase the recruitment of women into the officer and enlisted ranks.

Reasoning

DACOWITS has historically examined representation of officer and enlisted women in the Military Services. DACOWITS remains concerned about (1) the methods used to establish accession goals or the lack of methods thereof, (2) increasing the number of accessions throughput, and (3) the resources devoted to increasing the recruitment of women, to include female recruiters.

The Committee applauds the Secretary of the Navy for publically stating on September 10, 2014, at the Rutgers Aerospace and Defense Summit, “We don’t have enough women in either the Navy or the Marine Corps.” In briefings presented to DACOWITS in 2014, both the Navy and Marine Corps stated that they had exceeded their female enlisted goals in the accession of recruits from 2004 to 2014 with few exceptions. The Navy’s female enlisted accession goal increased from 16 percent in 2004 to 23 percent in 2013. The Marine Corps’ female enlisted accession goal increased from 7 percent in 2004 to 9 percent in 2013. More recently, when asked how it was going to comply with the Secretary of the Navy’s desire to increase the number of women in military service, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command briefed the Committee that it has not been given a gender-specific requirement for Active Component accessions and that increasing accessions would be based on propensity, throughput, and operational requirements. The Navy also said that it had no formal female accession target; however, they were successfully increasing accessions. In addition, as outlined in a briefing presented to DACOWITS in 2014, CAPT Bouve reported that the Navy is taking steps to examine the issue.

According to a 2015 DoD report from the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), women comprised 15.4 percent of the DoD active duty force through July 2015, while men comprised 84.6 percent. Since 2000, the percentage of female active duty officers has increased 2.5 percent (from 14.4 percent in 2000 to 17.0 percent in July 2015), while the percentage of female active duty enlisted members has increased only 0.4 percent (from 14.7 percent in 2000 to 15.0 percent in July 2015). Although this data does reflect a small overall increase in the numbers of women across a 15-year span, the Committee considers an increase of slightly more than 2 percent for officers, and a less than .5 percent increase for enlisted, not acceptable.

In contrast, the Coast Guard established a goal of 20 percent female accessions in 2003. It did not reach that goal until 2009, but it has exceeded it every year since. Additionally, the Coast Guard devoted 39 percent of its marketing resources this past year specifically to attract women. Because the Services are now in the process of opening units and positions previously closed to women, there is much room for growth in the representation of women in both the officer and enlisted ranks. This growth could be accomplished through setting goals, increasing accessions, and targeting additional recruiting resources.

Systematically increasing the accessions of women will entail a compendium of changes in myriad military policy areas. DACOWITS believes policy changes addressed throughout its recommendations will increase the propensity of women to serve in an institution that supports gender neutrality. Strong command emphasis on prevention and zero tolerance of sexual harassment and sexual assault, reasonable and consistent postpartum policies, supportive dual military assignments, adapted performance evaluation standards, properly fitting combat equipment, social media sexual harassment policies, and other policies described within this annual report will assist the systematic increase in accessions of women in the officer and enlisted ranks.

Properly Fitting Combat Equipment

In 2015, DACOWITS continued to monitor the Services’ responses to its 2012, 2013, and 2014 recommendations that the Services work collaboratively to provide women with properly designed and fitted combat equipment as soon as possible.

DACOWITS identified the following continuing concern to address properly fitting combat equipment.

Continuing Concern: Properly Fitting Combat Equipment

This continuing concern is similar to ones expressed by DACOWITS in 2013 and 2014. Providing servicewomen with properly designed and fitted combat equipment is essential to their safety and well-being, unhindered performance of military duties, and overall military readiness. Therefore, continued collaboration between the Marine Corps and Army on product development, testing, and procurement of properly fitting combat equipment for servicewomen is crucial.

One provision of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2015 requires that combat equipment for women be properly designed and fitted and meet standards for wear and survivability. The Army's approach has been to procure and field combat gear sized for females: the Female Improved Outer Tactical Vest, Protective Insert Sizing Improvements, Family of Concealable Body Armor, and the Protective Under Garment. The Marine Corps, on the other hand, views the fit of combat gear as an issue of stature, not an issue of differences in male/female physiques. Over the past few years, the Marine Corps has recognized a need for combat equipment that is adjustable and fits smaller stature Marines, the majority of which are female. It has also identified the need to modify its inventory to better accommodate the female population. To that end, the previous combat gear inventory was designed to fit male Marines in the 5th to 95th body size percentile. The new inventory will be expanded to cover a wider range of body sizes, from the 5th percentile for women up to the 95th percentile for men.

Furthermore, in a brief to DACOWITS, the Marine Corps told the Committee it believes the current gender-integration effort could potentially lead to the development of new gender-specific equipment. With that in mind, the Committee remains concerned that without future communication and collaboration between the Marine Corps and the Army, there could be additional lost opportunities for economies of scale in procurement and delays in timely development and distribution of this equipment. DACOWITS believes that all Service members should have properly fitted individual combat equipment so that they are safe and can perform at the highest level.

Wellness Recommendations

The Committee examined six Wellness topics in 2015: military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault; strengthening the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program; the impact of social media on Service members; pregnancy and postpartum policies; improvements in the use of protected health information; and Marine Corps performance evaluation system (PES) improvements.

Military Culture and the Elimination of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

The Committee's focus in 2015 included military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault, following a long history of DACOWITS research on this topic. In 2011, the Committee hosted focus groups among active duty Service members to inquire about the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault, prevention programs, reporting procedures, and the impact of sexual harassment and sexual assault on mission readiness. During its 2013 focus groups, the Committee studied the increase in reports of sexual assaults at the Military Service Academies and examined the effectiveness of sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention programs. In 2014, the Committee focused on initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to sexual harassment and sexual assault throughout DoD and the Services. In 2015, the Committee's primary research was centered on gaining a better understanding of the facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault; much of this discussion focused on military culture.

DACOWITS made the following recommendations and identified the following continuing concern to address military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary of Defense, Service Secretaries, and Joint Chiefs of Staff should communicate a united, passionate, and powerful message to the Armed Forces that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not part of our military culture.

Recommendation 2: The Service Chiefs should send verbal and written communications to Service members emphasizing that sexual harassment and sexual assault are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The message should embrace aggressive accountability of sexual harassment and sexual assault offenders, and those who were knowledgeable of the attacks and did nothing.

Reasoning

The Committee believes that the first step toward changing this negative aspect of our culture requires overt actions from the top leaders of each Military Service, enforcing strict accountability as passionately and seriously as mission accomplishment itself.

Military culture emphasizes tenets such as discipline, professional ethos, cohesion, and hierarchy, prioritizing the group above the individual to achieve the highest level of mission readiness. Military culture prides itself on being a family as well as a workplace. Notwithstanding this strong culture, startling statistics on sexual harassment and sexual assault continue to provide evidence that there remain within the military offenders of sexual harassment and sexual assault; this tarnishes military culture and undermines mission readiness and the dignity and safety of all Service members.

DACOWITS has consistently reported the impact of sexual harassment and sexual assault issues on the recruitment and retention of women in the military. Over the years, we have learned that this is not only a women's issue. RAND's 2014 "RAND Military Workplace Study" revealed that more servicemen experienced sexual assaults than servicewomen, based on the number of assaults by gender and the higher proportion of men to women (a 6:1 ratio) serving in the military. Thousands of Service members have experienced sexual assault. Workplace violence has serious social, economic, and security consequences. Whether these attacks occur on or off duty, sexual assaults are criminal acts. The RAND research also identified that military culture tends to socially isolate those who report sexual assault. This retaliation undermines workplace safety and security and undermines cohesion and the goal of mission readiness. The RAND military workplace study report states that 62 percent of Active Component women who officially reported a sexual assault perceived experiencing professional or social retaliation. Reporting an offender needs to be viewed as strengthening unit cohesion. Only when the military environment and culture changes can sexual harassment and sexual assault be eliminated.

The Forbes Magazine article "The Key to Changing Organizational Culture," published in 2012, lists three key findings:

1. "Culture consists of group norms of behavior and the underlying shared values that help keep those norms in place."
2. "A powerful person at the top, or a large enough group from anywhere in the organization, decides the old ways are not working, figures out a change vision, starts acting differently, and enlists others to act differently. If the new actions produce better results, if the results are communicated and celebrated, and if they are not killed off by the old culture fighting its rear-guard action, new norms will form and new shared values will grow."
3. "Some group decides what the new culture should be. It turns a list of values over to the communications or Human Resource departments with the order that they tell people what the new culture is. They cascade the message down the hierarchy, and little to nothing changes."

It is important to know that this discussion is not just an issue of honor, dignity, and respect; it is an issue of leadership that directly affects mission accomplishment. If there is a failure of leadership in supporting the high moral standards of respect for one another, then unit cohesion suffers, and operational mission success is directly degraded.

Embracing the importance of completely eliminating this unacceptable behavior is most clearly exhibited in the now-famous speech given by the Chief of the Australian Army, Lieutenant General David Morrison. He very deliberately and forcefully spoke to the Australian Army about the scourge of sexual harassment and sexual assault. He told his Service members, "Those who think that it is OK to behave in a way that demeans or exploits their colleagues have no place in this Army." He added, "On all operations, female soldiers and officers have

proven themselves worthy of the best traditions of the Australian Army. They are vital to us maintaining our capability now and into the future. If that does not suit you, then get out.” He also stated—in the best example of a top-down effort toward accountability in his Service—“I will be ruthless in ridding the Army of people who cannot live up to its values and I need every one of you to support me in achieving this.”

In an effort to stop sexual assault within DoD, DoD’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) reported to DACOWITS in late 2014 that there are reforms being developed to reinforce a culture of honor, dignity, and respect in the military. The Military Services need to eliminate this unacceptable behavior by embracing an aggressive accountability of all offenders—both those who committed the crimes and those who did nothing to prevent and/or stop them. In DoD’s recent “Report to the President of the United States on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response,” surveys showed a decrease in the prevalence of sexual assault since the establishment of SAPRO. SAPRO’s prevention line of effort is centered on the climate assessment process, which is designed to cause organizational change. It uses Service member feedback to hold commanders accountable for encouraging and supporting a climate of dignity and respect. The DMDC “Survivor Experience Survey” and DMDC focus groups on sexual assault prevention and response showed improvements in DoD leadership’s support, treatment, and response toward sexual assault. These improvements are excellent and noteworthy; however, sexual assault and sexual harassment are still occurring in our Military Services.

U.S. military culture can be changed. The Committee believes that modeling behavior and communicating an overt, passionate, and powerful message from leaders at all levels (starting at the top) reinforces our military culture of professionalism, teamwork, and unit cohesion—to include all Service members, all the time. We believe this not only will reduce incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault but also will strengthen our Armed Forces and improve our mission readiness.

Continuing Concern: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Training and Retaliation

Retaliation. Since 2011, the Committee has been studying sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military and continues to believe that combating these problems requires sustained and concentrated action, particularly in the area of retaliation and prevention training. RAND’s 2014 study found that an estimated 20,300 of the approximately 1.3 million Active Component Service members were sexually assaulted in the past year. The risk of sexual assault varied substantially by branch of service. Men and women in the Air Force experienced substantially lower rates of sexual assault than those in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. The majority of sexual assaults for both Active Component and Reserve Component members were perpetrated by other military personnel and occurred in military settings. Many who reported sexual assault perceived some type of retaliation. The study found that 62 percent of Active Component servicewomen perceived that they experienced professional or social retaliation after reporting a sexual assault. Since DoD’s last administration of its “Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members” to gather information on sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military, conducted in 2012, there has been improvement in all areas except retaliation. The

SECDEF has requested the development of a strategy to prevent retaliation associated with reporting crimes and other misconduct. DACOWITS intends to follow this issue and DoD ongoing initiatives closely in the coming year.

Prevention Training. During the 2015 focus groups, Service members said that sexual harassment and sexual assault training had started to change military culture and attitudes. While the training was regarded as necessary and useful by most, participants criticized the content, delivery, and frequency of the training. Some of the participants perceived Microsoft PowerPoint lectures and computer-based training to be less effective than interactive skits and lectures in cultivating awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault. With that in mind, The Department of the Navy SAPRO retained the interACT performance troupe to engage sailors, Marines, and civilians in theatrical role-playing to break the cycle of sexual assault, eliminate stereotypes associated with sexual assault, and enforce the Navy's zero-tolerance policy toward sexual assault. Rather than be passive observers, to date, more than 50,000 audience members have been invited on stage to become active participants. Because training is so important in the prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment, DACOWITS would like to see the other Services adopt this interactive approach to training.

Strengthening the Effectiveness of the Sexual Harassment Program

The Committee's focus in 2015 included strengthening the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program following a long history of DACOWITS research on this topic. In 2015, the Committee's primary research centered on gaining a better understanding of the facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault; much of the focus of this research was on the sexual harassment program.

DACOWITS made the following recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program.

Recommendation 1: The Department of Defense should immediately complete the report required by Congress on the effectiveness of the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in addressing sexual harassment.

Recommendation 2: The Department of Defense should require that the Services provide at least the same attention to preventing and responding to sexual harassment as they do to preventing and responding to sexual assault.

Reasoning

The 2011 GAO report "Preventing Sexual Harassment: DoD Needs Greater Leadership Commitment and an Oversight Framework" pointed out that sexual harassment programs in DoD suffered from limited staff resources, lack of oversight, no plan to monitor incidents, no

way to measure progress, and no method to communicate results. GAO recommended improving leadership commitment to preventing and responding to sexual harassment, compliance, accountability, and oversight of the sexual harassment program. DoD concurred with GAO's recommendations and reported to DACOWITS in 2013 that it was in the process of implementing the recommendations and making changes to DoD Directive (DoDD) 1350.2 with respect to sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Although the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO) has implemented a few of the GAO recommendations, it remains severely underresourced, and sexual harassment cases continue to receive insufficient attention. In its 2013 report, DACOWITS recommended that DoD and the Services combine efforts to develop one program to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault. This has been successfully accomplished by some of the Services.

Following the 2013 DACOWITS annual report, NDAA 2014 required a review of ODMEO to be completed by January 2016. The purpose of this review was to determine whether sexual harassment cases should continue to be evaluated and addressed by ODMEO; evaluate the working relationship between ODMEO and SAPRO in addressing sexual harassment; identify and evaluate ODMEO resource and personnel gaps; and determine ODMEO's ability to track sexual harassment cases.

DoD reported to DACOWITS in June 2015 that it still had not completed its required congressional report nor revised DoDD 1350.2 with respect to sexual harassment, including social media harassment. Yet RAND's 2014 military workplace study found that sexual harassment remains a persistent and serious problem and that there is a close correlation between sexual harassment and sexual assault. The RAND study was based on a representative sample of 170,000 respondents; the data revealed an estimated 116,600 Service members were sexually harassed in the previous year, far more than were sexually assaulted. However, ODMEO received only 736 reported formal complaints and 686 informal complaints of sexual harassment in FY 2014. The variance between the number of incidents reported in the study and that reported by ODMEO is disturbing. RAND recommended that DoD expand sexual harassment and gender discrimination monitoring, prevention, and accountability practices and that it equip commanders with data and guidance to take effective actions. With the creation of SAPRO, DoD has in recent years significantly increased efforts by the Services to prevent and respond to sexual assault. It is well past time for DoD to ensure that the Services provide the same attention to preventing and responding to sexual harassment.

The Impact of Social Media on Service Members

In 2015, DACOWITS began a new line of study, the impact of social media on Service members. The study was prompted by the Committee's concern surrounding social media use and online bullying and harassment.

DACOWITS made the following recommendations to address the impact of social media on Service members.

Recommendation 1: The Department of Defense and the Services should revise their definition of sexual harassment and any regulations pertaining to the use of social media to clarify that conduct or speech that takes place wholly online can itself constitute sexual harassment.

Recommendation 2: The Services should revise and implement sexual harassment training that addresses online harassment, anonymity, and the consequences of online behavior both on- and off-duty.

Reasoning

Online harassment is a growing and pervasive part of our society, both inside and outside the workplace. The Pew Research Center's 2014 report on online harassment estimates 40 percent of all Internet users and 65 percent of young people ages 18–29 who use the Internet have been harassed online. As those statistics pertain to young women, 25 percent reported being sexually harassed, 23 percent being physically threatened, and 18 percent being harassed over a sustained period of time. While males of the same age group were more likely than women to experience online harassment, including threats of physical harm and sustained harassing, women were more likely to experience the more severe forms of harassment, including stalking, sexual harassment, and inferences of sexual assault. Additionally, 92 percent of Internet users agree that online environments allow people a level of anonymity that potentially could encourage sexual predators. With that in mind, the increased use of social media across all aspects of the military makes it necessary to directly address varying forms of online harassment, accountability, and consequences.

DoD's accepted definition of sexual harassment is "a form of sexual discrimination that involves unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. . . ." DACOWITS believes that this should be amended to include wording that clearly states that "verbal and physical conduct" includes online/Internet/social media contact as well. Sexual and gender harassment on the Internet can occur in a variety of ways and through a variety of mediums. Some of these media include chat rooms, Internet forums, message boards, social networking sites, instant messaging, and e-mail. The fluidity of online terms and technology requires that any wording added to the definition be all encompassing to include all future technological social media changes.

Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies

The Committee's interest in pregnancy and postpartum policies is based on its belief that these issues are critical to the wellness and readiness of military women and, therefore, the overall force. DACOWITS studied pregnancy and postpartum issues in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2013. The Committee's focus in 2015 was on pregnancy and postpartum policies, specifically operational deferment, breastfeeding, and postpartum physical fitness testing.

DACOWITS made the following recommendations and identified the following continuing concern to address pregnancy and postpartum policies.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary of Defense should require that the Services evaluate, at least every two years, their policies regarding operational deferment in the case of pregnancy.

Reasoning

DoD has established a floor of four months of operational deferment for servicewomen who have given birth to a child. The Services differ on how much time they have opted to grant for operational deferment. The Air Force and Navy have decided, in the current operational environment, that they can grant up to 12 months of deferment. On the other hand, the Army and Marine Corps have decided that operational needs require a shorter operational deferment period of six months. The Committee understands the need for flexibility in operational deferment policies and Service-specific policies, consistent with the floor set by DoD. However, the Committee also believes that to ensure these policies are informed by current actual operational needs, they should be reviewed on a regular basis, no less frequently than every two years. The same logic would apply to the operational deferments provided in the case of adoption.

Recommendation 2: Given the importance of breastfeeding to healthy children and mothers, the Department of Defense should require the Services to increase the number and quality of lactation rooms available throughout the Military Services.

Reasoning

There is a growing emphasis on breastfeeding nationwide. According to the “2014 Breastfeeding Report Card,” breastfeeding rates continue to rise in the United States. Currently, 27 States and the District of Columbia have laws protecting breastfeeding in the workplace. Data from the breastfeeding report card show that 79.2 percent of newborns have breastfed; 49.4 percent were breastfeeding at six months, decreasing to 26.7 percent breastfeeding by 12 months.

Breastfeeding offers proven health benefits for children and mothers. In her 2011 “Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding,” the Surgeon General called breastfeeding “One of the most highly effective preventative measures a mother can take to protect the health of her infant and herself.” In 2012, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) reaffirmed its breastfeeding guidelines. Breastfeeding provides the healthiest start for an infant and promotes a unique bond between mother and baby. AAP, the American College of Nurse-Midwives, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the World Health Organization, and the United Nations Children’s Fund all recommend exclusive breastfeeding for approximately the first six months of a child’s life, followed by breastfeeding and the introduction of complementary foods until at least 12 months of age, and continuation of breastfeeding for as long as mutually desired by mother and baby. This recommendation is supported by infant health outcomes; breastfeeding protects

against a number of infant health problems (e.g., respiratory illness, ear infections) and has even been shown to have a positive impact on adolescent and adult obesity. Choosing to breastfeed should be considered an investment in the short- and long-term health of the infant rather than a lifestyle choice.

The 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's Break Time for Nursing Mothers Provision requires employers to provide employees with the right to pump breast milk on the job. Employers must grant employees the following: reasonable break time to express milk for a nursing child for one year after the child's birth; and a place, other than the bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used to express breast milk. Additionally, the law also protects workers from retaliation (e.g., reassignment to a less desirable job, taking away job duties or benefits) for asserting their rights on the job or filing a complaint about these issues.

Challenges in the workplace include lack of break time and inadequate facilities for pumping and storing breast milk. The committee believes many of these workplace challenges can be reduced with a small investment of time and flexibility. Providing accommodations for breastfeeding can offer tremendous rewards for DoD in cost savings for health care, reduced absenteeism, improved morale, and Service member retention. This policy should parallel the other postpartum policies and be equitable across the Armed Forces.

Recommendation 3: The Department of Defense should require that all of the Services create a consolidated pregnancy and parenthood instruction.

Reasoning

Pregnancy and parenthood are natural events that occur in the lives of Service members and can be compatible with a successful military career. There are responsibilities that come with parenthood, and for those in uniform, these responsibilities require consideration and planning because of military commitments. Service members are expected to balance the demands of a military career with their family plans and responsibilities. To assist commanding officers, supervisory personnel, and Service members, the Navy and the Marine Corps each created a pregnancy and parenthood regulation, which consolidates and outlines all administrative regulations pertaining to expecting personnel. These policies address parenthood issues to include the adoption of children and single-parent Service members. Policies and procedures developed by the Navy and the Marine Corps provide administrative support and ensure the health and welfare of pregnant servicewomen while minimizing the impact pregnancy and parenthood have on mission readiness. The Navy and Marine Corps serve as examples for the other Services.

Continuing Concern: Postpartum Policies

The Committee is closely following changes to postpartum policies, including operational deferment, maternity leave, convalescent leave, and physical training assessment exemptions. These issues have been evolving significantly over the last year, driven by policy changes

in some of the Services. The Committee intends to continue to examine these issues closely in the coming year.

Improvements in the Use of Protected Health Information

While DACOWITS has been studying the health care needs of servicewomen for many years, in 2015, it began a new line of study, improvements in the use of protected health information. The study was prompted by the Committee's concern surrounding the documentation of pregnancy on medical records available to commanders.

DACOWITS made the following recommendation to improve the use of protected health information.

Recommendation: The Department of Defense should issue a policy regarding the proper use and distribution of the computer generated OB MultiID Discharge Summaries and make every effort to eliminate the release of this protected health information.

Reasoning

The Committee is concerned about the improper release and/or use of protected health information (PHI). When servicewomen go to a military obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN) for initial treatment, they are required to complete a form regarding their pregnancy history. The OB/GYN then enters this information into the DoD OB Multidisciplinary Intake form. After treatment and release from the hospital, this information is used to generate the OB MultiID Discharge Summary.

Currently, the appropriate use and distribution of the OB MultiID Discharge Summary is not governed by DoD policy. DACOWITS is aware of several cases in which active duty women were directed to take the discharge summary to their commanders to request convalescent leave. In other cases, they were told to attach the discharge summary to a separate internal hospital form and provide that to their commanders to receive convalescent leave.

Medical documents, such as the discharge summary, can be misinterpreted by nonmedical personnel when presented with technical medical terminologies such as pregnancy/gestational numbers and final outcomes of each pregnancy/gestation. This misinterpreted information can adversely affect a Service member's career because of the potential introduction of personal bias into the decision-making matrix of that Service member's chain of command. Service members' leadership need only know that the Service member is medically cleared to perform or restricted from performing required duties. It is not generally necessary for the chain of command to know specifically why that medical limitation is in place.

The discharge summary is designed to communicate to the patient the aftercare plan following discharge from a hospital setting. This summary belongs to the patient. A discharge summary should be treated as a personal medical record and protected as such and should never be used as a leave request for the commanding officer.

Marine Corps Performance Evaluation System Improvements

In 2015, DACOWITS adopted a new study topic, the Marine Corps' PES and its references to pregnancy and postpartum convalescent periods. The study was prompted by the Committee's concern surrounding the documentation of pregnancy in PES records.

DACOWITS made the following recommendation to address Marine Corps PES improvements.

Recommendation: The Marine Corps Performance Evaluation System should not differentiate between women's and men's temporary medical conditions and all references to pregnancy and postpartum convalescent periods should be removed from fitness reports to ensure fairness and the individual's medical privacy.

Reasoning

MCO 1610.7, Performance Evaluation System, issued February 13, 2015, states the completed fitness report is the most important information component in manpower management. It is the primary means of evaluating a Marine's performance (Sergeant through Major General) and is the Commandant's primary tool for the selection of personnel for promotion, augmentation, resident schooling, command, and duty assignments. Therefore, throughout one's career, fitness reports are routinely reviewed by a selection board made up of Marines in order to select individuals for augmentation, advancement, schooling, and command. A promotion/selection board is a nonmedically qualified group of experienced Marines whose sole focus is to evaluate a Marine's career performance for advancement in duty or pay grade.

The PES states that it is unacceptable to note if the Marine Reported On (MRO) is pregnant unless the note is related to adherence to weight standards or completing the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) or Combat Fitness Test (CFT). However, pregnancy is the only medical condition that is required to be divulged on a fitness report.

When a Marine is unable to take or pass the PFT or CFT, the code NMED (Not Medical Qualified) is entered in the fitness report. When NMED is used, the Reporting Senior must provide an amplifying comment in the narrative section of the fitness report. To ensure fairness to all Marines, a gender-neutral statement to address the NMED code should be directed. For example, "MRO was exempt taking the PFT/CFT due to a temporary medical condition."

When the MRO's weight exceeds the maximum allowable standard, the MRO's body fat percentage is recorded. However, if the Marine is pregnant, the instructions state that the weight should be omitted and the four-letter code "PREG" should be entered on the report.

MCO 1610.7 states that if the body fat percentage reported is greater than the maximum allowed for the MRO's age grouping, the report is considered adverse unless a statement is included that says (1) an appropriately credentialed health care provider diagnosed the individual's weight condition to be the result of an underlying cause or associated disease process, or (2) the Marine is within the 42-day postpartum convalescent period, or (3) the

Marine is within the six months following a medical officer declaring the Marine fit for full duty following child delivery. Since a pregnant woman's weight gain is the result of an underlying cause certified by an appropriately credentialed health provider, there is no reason or justification for documenting an authorized waiver differently for men and women. Any reference to the Marine's weight gain because of her postpartum status, child delivery, etc., is inappropriate and an improper release of PHI.

Marine Corps servicewomen should be provided the same medical confidentiality as their male counterparts on fitness reports regarding authorized waivers for the PFT, CFT, or not meeting the weight standards. It should be noted that none of the other Services include pregnancy-related comments on personnel evaluations.



Chapter 1

Introduction

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) (hereafter referred to as the Committee or DACOWITS) was established in 1951 with a mandate to provide the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) with independent advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to servicewomen in the Armed Forces of the United States. Individual members of the Committee are appointed by the SECDEF and serve in a voluntary capacity for one- to four-year terms. The 2015 Committee had 18 members, four of whom joined in March and three who left the Committee around the date DACOWITS held its March business meeting. (See Appendix B for 2015 DACOWITS member biographies.)

It has been the Committee's approach since 2010 to divide its work into two areas of focus: Assignments and Wellness. For Assignments, the Committee examined the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units, female accessions, and properly fitting combat equipment. For Wellness, the Committee examined military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault, how to strengthen the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program, the impact of social media on Service members, pregnancy and postpartum policies, improvements in the use of protected health information, and Marine Corps performance evaluation system (PES) improvements.

The Committee gathered both primary and secondary sources of information: briefings and written responses from DoD, Service-level military representatives, and subject matter experts (SMEs); data collected from focus groups and interactions with Service members during installation visits; and literature reviews. These sources of information, along with information DACOWITS gained through studying some of these topics in previous years, formed the basis—or reasoning—for the Committee's recommendations.

DACOWITS collected primary qualitative data during site visits to 11 military installations,¹ representing all four DoD Service branches and the Coast Guard, from April to May 2015. (See Appendix C for a listing of installations visited.) During the focus groups conducted at these sites, the Committee addressed two Assignments topics and two Wellness topics. Assignments topics were gender integration and career progression of servicewomen; Wellness topics were the impact of social media on Service members, and facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault.

¹The 11 sites visited were Naval Station (NAVSTA) San Diego, Fort Carson, Hurlburt Air Force Base (AFB), Eglin AFB, NAVSTA Mayport, Dover AFB, Communications Area Master Station Atlantic Chesapeake, Fort Campbell, Camp Lejeune, Camp Pendleton, and Training Center Yorktown. The Committee also visited Twentynine Palms but did not conduct focus groups there.

In partnership with researchers from Insight Policy Research (Insight) and ICF International (ICF), the Committee developed a series of focus group protocols; each protocol included one or two topic modules, and most focus groups addressed one Assignments topic and one Wellness topic. The purpose of the protocols was to ensure each study topic was addressed by each relevant Service, gender, and pay grade group.² Protocols with two topic modules were used for 90-minute focus groups; protocols with one topic module were used for 45-minute focus groups. Committee members facilitated the focus group discussions to elicit and assess the views, attitudes, and experiences of Service members on the study topics. The Committee also distributed mini-surveys to participants to document the demographic composition of the groups. All data collection instruments were approved by ICF's Institutional Review Board with concurrence from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness (OUSD(P&R)) to ensure the protection of human subjects.

DACOWITS conducted 67 focus groups in 2015. Overall, 25 focus groups addressed gender integration, 30 addressed career progression of servicewomen, 41 addressed facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault, and 30 addressed the impact of social media on Service members. A total of 713 Service members participated in these focus groups, with an average of 10 participants per session. Men and women were equally represented, with each comprising 50 percent of the participants. The Coast Guard (22 percent), Navy (22 percent), Army (21 percent) and Marine Corps (20 percent) were nearly equally represented, with fewer participants from the Air Force (14 percent). Regarding participation by pay grade, enlisted Service members represented slightly more than half of focus group participants (57 percent); E4–E6 Service members made up the largest portion of focus group participants (37 percent), followed by E7–E9 Service members (15 percent) and E1–E3 Service members (5 percent). Of the officers who participated, O1–O3 officers comprised the largest subset (24 percent), followed by O4–O6 officers (15 percent) and WO1–WO5 officers (4 percent).

Staff from Insight and ICF transcribed the focus group discussions and compiled and analyzed the resulting data in collaboration with the Committee. (See Appendix D for the focus group protocols, Appendix E for the mini-survey, and Appendices F and G for complete presentations of the mini-survey results and the focus group findings, respectively.) Unless otherwise specified, themes from the focus groups were common across pay grades, Military Services, and genders.

Chapter 2 describes the Committee's research and recommendations on the Assignments topics. Chapter 3 addresses the Committee's research and recommendations on the Wellness topics. These two chapters are organized by topic; for each topic, the Committee's recommendations and continuing concerns are presented followed by a summary of briefings, focus group results, and additional research and literature.

²Two exceptions to this approach were made: Focus groups did not cover the gender integration module with members of the Coast Guard (which has been gender integrated for a number of years), nor did focus groups cover the career progression module with junior enlisted Service members (members who are just beginning their military careers).

In addition to the information and materials provided in Appendices A–G (described above), Appendix H lists briefings presented to DACOWITS; Appendix I lists written requests for information submitted by the Committee; Appendix J lists congressional notifications of military intent to continue to expand the role of women in the military; Appendix K shows percentages of women in each Service over the past five years; and Appendix L lists abbreviations and acronyms used in the report and appendices.



Chapter 2

Assignments Research and Recommendations

The Committee studied two Assignments topics in 2015: the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units, and female accessions. The Committee also continued to monitor the Services' responses to its 2012, 2013, and 2014 recommendations that the Services work collaboratively to provide women with properly designed and fitted combat equipment as soon as possible. Section A of this chapter evaluates progress on the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units, Section B examines female accessions, and Section C discusses properly fitting combat equipment. The Committee's recommendations and continuing concerns are provided for each section.

Effective and Full Integration of Women Into Closed Positions and Units

In 2015, DACOWITS continued to monitor DoD's and the Services' ongoing implementation of their respective plans to open closed positions and units to women no later than January 1, 2016. The Committee's study of the integration of women into ground combat units is built on five years of research as well as the Committee's recommendations, first made in 2010, to eliminate the policy implemented in 1994 excluding women from ground combat¹ and to open all military positions and units to women. On January 24, 2013, then-SECDEF Leon Panetta and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) General Martin Dempsey issued a memorandum rescinding the ground combat exclusion policy² and directed the Services to comply with a three-year plan to open closed positions and units to women no later than January 1, 2016. The plan was consistent with certain guiding principles set forth by Chairman Dempsey in a memorandum issued January 9, 2013.³ The Services' plans were to include "... the development and implementation of validated, gender-neutral occupational standards and the required notifications to Congress,"⁴ an approach that was consistent with the Committee's 2011 and 2012 recommendations that any physical standards be validated to accurately predict performance of actual, regular, and recurring duties of a military job and applied equitably to measure individual capabilities.^{5,6}

This part of Chapter 2 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendations
- Summary of Briefings Presented to DACOWITS
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendations

This section provides DACOWITS' 2015 recommendations on the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units and summarizes the reasoning in support of these recommendations. The recommendations and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 2.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary of Defense should open all closed units, occupational specialties, positions, and training to Service members who meet the requisite qualifications, regardless of gender. No exceptions should be granted that would continue any restrictions on the service of women.

Reasoning

Since 2010, DACOWITS has recommended that the SECDEF eliminate the discriminatory exclusion of women solely based on gender from any and all positions and occupational specialties, including those in direct combat. The Committee has studied the issue of disparate opportunities afforded to women in the Services under the ground combat exclusion rule⁷ and the rule's deleterious impact on women's accessions and career advancement. Employment discrimination against civilian women based solely on gender has been outlawed for decades in all other positions in government and the private sector, including law enforcement, firefighting, and other nontraditional career fields. Cases of gender discrimination are examined under the "intermediate scrutiny" standard. To be constitutional, a discriminatory law must further an important governmental interest or objective, and the means of discrimination must be substantially related to that government interest. Because gender-neutral standards are being implemented, any gender-based exclusion of women from combat positions and occupational specialties is likely to fail this legal test.

DoD contracted with the RAND Corporation (RAND) to conduct a study to describe best-practice methodologies for establishing gender-neutral standards for physically demanding jobs tailored to address the needs of the military. In September 2013, RAND issued a draft report that was provided to the Services.⁸ RAND's report identified a six-step process for establishing requirements for physically demanding occupations:

1. Identify physical demands.
2. Identify potential screening tests.
3. Validate and select tests.
4. Establish minimum scores.
5. Implement screening.
6. Confirm tests are working as intended.

The Services appear to have taken various approaches toward conducting studies regarding establishing gender-neutral standards and opening positions to women. The Marine Corps has given great weight to its study comparing the average performance results of men and women. The Army, in contrast, appears to have focused its analysis on individual performance

and the individual's contribution as a member of a team. It is DACOWITS' belief that the Army's focus on individual performance standards is the best approach for determining the eligibility to serve in all positions and career fields. This approach strengthens the overall readiness and combat effectiveness of the Armed Forces.

Studies comparing the relative strength of the average woman to that of the average man are irrelevant. They are not responsive to the guidance issued by the SECDEF and the CJCS to develop and implement occupational standards to measure whether an individual is qualified to perform a certain position.⁹ These studies provide no rational basis for barring qualified women from a previously closed position. Indeed, these conclusions instead demonstrate a gender bias against all qualified women (even higher scoring women) in favor of any qualified man. To have the strongest fighting force, less qualified males should not be favored over equally or more qualified women.

DACOWITS' position on opening all closed units, positions, and training to Service members who meet the requisite qualifications is predicated upon the following considerations.

Opening all positions to women will make our military stronger.

Opening all positions to women ensures our military forces can attain the highest readiness levels possible. The Committee believes that U.S. military readiness is the foremost consideration for all legislative and policy initiatives concerning women in combat. To attain maximum military readiness, the military must ensure that all Americans who are qualified and interested in serving their country in uniform have the opportunity to do so. With an all-volunteer force, it is even more essential to ensure that the most qualified and capable Service members are available to meet national security objectives.

To deliberately exclude more than 50 percent of the American population, especially from front-line combat positions and occupational specialties, defies long-established and fundamental principles of successful organizations. In view of the declining proportion of youth qualified to serve in the military,¹⁰ the military must be positioned to enlist or commission the best young men and women.

The Committee believes the ongoing development and implementation of gender-neutral standards will provide lasting readiness benefits as our military forces adapt to future combat environments, missions, technology, and equipment. These standards should be based on a scientifically rigorous process; validated as job related (based on the actual, regular, and recurring duties to be performed using current technology and combat equipment); and determined to accurately measure individual, not average, performance.

Given such rigorous standards, there is no reason to exclude any Service member who can meet those standards. Only those individuals who can meet the standards should be recruited, retained, and promoted; anything less will undermine military readiness. Gender is not relevant to this determination any more than race, religion, or sexual orientation. Performance is the only relevant criteria.

When the Committee has broached the topic of standards at its business meetings and in DACOWITS focus groups at military bases, and when individual Committee members have

addressed the issue on their own or others' behalf during their military careers, the response from female Service members is very clear: they do not appreciate or desire different standards, nor do they benefit from them. To the contrary, lower standards affect readiness, are restrictive and counterproductive, and create perceptions that are completely opposite from those to which these professionals aspire.

Opening all positions to women establishes the Military Services as a true meritocracy. The “DoD Human Goals Charter”—signed April 28, 2014, by senior DoD leadership (the SECDEF, the CJCS, Service Secretaries, and Service Chiefs)—states that it is DoD’s goal to “make military service in the Department of Defense a model of equal opportunity for all regardless of race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin” and “provide opportunity for everyone, military and civilian, to rise to as high a level of responsibility as possible, dependent only on individual talent and diligence.”¹¹ Unless every member of the Military Services, male or female, is allowed to hold any position for which he or she is qualified, DoD simply cannot achieve this goal. By opening all positions and military occupational specialties to women, DoD will become a true meritocracy where every individual can live up to his or her full potential.

Opening all positions to women encourages the military culture to be more inclusive and accepting of diversity. The “DoD Human Goals Charter” states, “The defense of the Nation requires a well-trained volunteer total force comprised of active and reserve military members and civilian personnel. We gain a strategic advantage through the diversity of our total force and create a culture of inclusion where individuals are drawn to serve, are valued, and actively contribute to overall mission success.”¹² This change in policy is consistent with the American values of fairness and diversity, which the military is charged to defend. Indeed, history is instructive on this point. When DoD eliminated other discriminatory policies, such as racial segregation of Service members or the prohibition on service by gay and lesbian individuals, it only strengthened the Armed Forces.

Arguments against opening all positions to women are specious.

The Committee’s studies of women’s assignment restrictions, including years of extensive interviews and focus groups with both male and female Service members of all ranks and in all Services, show that none of the proffered reasons for discrimination against gender hold up as a matter of either policy or law—any more than they did when they were used to justify discrimination based on race or sexual orientation.

Opening all positions to women is not likely to impact unit cohesion or morale. Since 1948, women have been a permanent and integral part of the Armed Forces without impacting unit cohesion or morale in combat situations. During Operation Desert Shield/Operation Desert Storm, out of necessity, more than 40,000 women served in the war zone in support units, missile crews, and aboard Navy ships, constituting 7 percent of the combat force.¹³ During that conflict, 13 women were killed and two taken prisoner.¹⁴ More recently, during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, nearly 300,000 women have served in the war zone, directly in harm’s way, and engaged the enemy in close combat.¹⁵ More than 9,000 women have received the combat action badge.¹⁶ More than 1,000 women have been wounded in action, and more than 150 have made the ultimate sacrifice.¹⁷ Two women were awarded the Silver Star for their gallantry in action.¹⁸

The Committee has never received nor reviewed a scientifically validated study that proves gender integration of military units negatively affects unit cohesion or morale. To the contrary, the general consensus from the focus groups that the Committee has conducted across the country for years suggests the opposite—women bring fresh perspectives, unique leadership skills, and a relentless commitment to completing the mission.

Combat is high-risk to health, regardless of gender. As long as women can meet the gender-neutral occupational standards for a job, they should be evaluated as individuals and not on a physiological average. Physical fitness standards are not occupational standards. Physical fitness standards are normed for both age and gender and are intended to provide a general measurement of an individual's health and fitness for duty. Occupational standards are developed to ensure that an individual is capable of performing the functions of a position. Occupational standards for each position must be the same for men and women. Protective equipment and gear must be suitable for Service members of all sizes and shapes, regardless of gender—these modifications are necessary to ensure all those who serve are properly equipped, trained, and prepared for their mission.

Opening all positions to women would not require unreasonable modifications to facilities to accommodate women. Although some of the Services expressed concern over the need to modify physical spaces for women, the Committee believes facility modifications are not required. Men and women already serve in close quarters with minimal to no privacy while training and on deployment.¹⁹

Opening all positions to women will pose no reasonable obstacle to integrating women into a multinational force. DoD should not permit other countries or cultures to dictate U.S. policies and regulations on gender integration, especially when such cultural mores directly impact U.S. military morale and unit cohesion and undermine readiness by eliminating many potentially qualified Service members strictly based on gender. Moreover, many of our allies already have women serving in combat positions, including the Republic of Korea, Canada, Australia, Sweden, and Israel.

Women have demonstrated a desire and ability to serve in combat positions. This past year, scores of women have volunteered to participate in combat training programs and experiments to further gender integration efforts.²⁰ In some cases, these women have delayed or negatively affected their careers even without any guarantee of earning the occupational specialty upon successfully completing the training. Many of these women have volunteered because they passionately believe in the need to change DoD policy. On August 21, 2015, two women successfully completed the rigorous Army Ranger School combat training course.

A survey conducted by the Center for Naval Analysis for the Marine Corps in 2011 indicated that 31 percent of female respondents would be interested in a lateral move to a combat occupational specialty if given the opportunity; 43 percent of female respondents would have chosen a combat arms occupational specialty when they joined the Marine Corps had it been an option; and 34 percent of female respondents would volunteer for a Ground Combat Element assignment if allowed.²² To date, more than 140 female Marines have successfully completed the enlisted School of Infantry combat training course.²³

Until women have the same opportunity as men to serve in all positions and occupational specialties, with their performance evaluated by the same standards and criteria, they will never compete fairly “head to head” in selection and screening boards. The Committee believes this affects women’s ability to attain the most senior levels of responsibility and authority. This discrepancy in standards also creates a ripple effect down the ranks, discouraging some junior women from continuing their military careers and civilian women from considering military service.

It is an unfortunate fact that some Services are having problems recruiting racial/ethnic minority officers into the infantry and other combat arms branches.²⁴ It would be unthinkable to argue that minorities should be restricted from such positions due to a low propensity to serve, lack of critical mass, or an assumed inability to meet standards. These arguments are no less specious when applied to women.

Recommendation 2: The Secretary of Defense should monitor, validate, and verify the Services’ implementation of their integration efforts and progress in opening positions to women.

Reasoning

The policy change eliminating the ground combat exclusion rule was announced on January 24, 2013.²⁵ According to a report issued in 2015 by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Services had opened only 91,600 positions and 22 occupational specialties as of the date of the report.²⁶ Nearly 250,000 positions and 53 occupational specialties remain closed to women solely based on gender. Once decisions have been made to open positions and occupations to women, a lengthy implementation process will follow. DoD must ensure the growth and evolution of women in these newly opened positions and occupations throughout the lifecycle of leadership development and career progression. DACOWITS agrees with the GAO report findings: without an ongoing monitoring process, it will be difficult for DoD to maintain necessary visibility over the extent to which the Services and the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) are integrating.

Recommendation 3: The Secretary of Defense should recommend legislation that mandates women between the ages of 18 and 26 fulfill the same Selective Service registration requirements as men.

Reasoning

The present Military Selective Service Act (MSSA)²⁷ says that men (to include undocumented immigrants; legal permanent residents; refugees; incarcerated men upon release; transgender women born as men; and U.S. citizens) have a civil obligation to serve the Nation, but specifically excludes women from that same civil obligation. In the case of *Rostker v. Goldberg* (1981), the U.S. Supreme Court determined that there was not sufficient need for women to register because they were excluded from combat military occupational specialties and positions.²⁸ This rationale no longer applies since the SECDEF and the CJCS rescinded the ground combat

exclusion rule in 2013.²⁹ More than 90,000 additional positions are now available to women in the Services, with 250,000 more remaining to be opened by January 2016. The ground combat exclusion rule was also cited as a reason not to change the MSSA.³⁰ The Committee strongly believes that with equal opportunity comes equal responsibility; therefore, women must be required to register for the Selective Service as their male counterparts must do.

Summary of Briefings Presented to DACOWITS

DACOWITS received several briefings from DoD and the Services on the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units. In December 2014, DACOWITS received two briefings on the Selective Service System (SSS)—one providing an overview of the SSS and another discussing the constitutionality of the MSSA. DoD also briefed the Committee in December 2014 on the timeline and plans for the implementation process before and after the January 1, 2016 deadline. In March 2015, the Army briefed the Committee on its experimental opening of Ranger School, the Navy provided the Committee with an update on the Enlisted Women in Submarines Task Force (EWSTF), and the Australian Defence Force informed the Committee of its ongoing process of integrating women into combat positions. The Marine Corps briefed the Committee in June 2015 with an update on the Marine Corps Infantry Officer Course (IOC); USSOCOM also briefed the Committee in June, describing the studies being conducted as part of its Women in the Services Review (WISR) plan. In September 2015, the Army provided another update on the Ranger School assessment, and the Navy and the Coast Guard provided an overview of the detailing and assignment process used for opening positions for women to serve on ships. This section presents highlights from the briefings the Committee received on these topics. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in fiscal year (FY) 2015, see Appendix H.)

In addition to these briefings, the Committee made five requests for information on the topic of gender integration. In December, it requested that the Services provide an update on their WISR implementation plans. In June 2015, it requested that the Marine Corps provide a written report on the research it completed through the IOC. In June, the Committee also requested the Services to provide specific written information on its gender integration efforts. (For a full list of DACOWITS' requests for information in FY 2015, see Appendix I).

Selective Service System Program Overview, December 2014

At the DACOWITS quarterly meeting in September 2014, Committee members expressed an interest in learning about SSS program rules and regulations. The Committee was interested in the background of the SSS, how it operates, and what would be required to allow the SSS to continue to operate if the MSSA were amended to require women to register for military service.

Ms. Jessica Myers, Deputy Director, DACOWITS

Ms. Myers led the Committee members through a review of the "Selective Service System Annual Report to the Congress of the United States: Fiscal Year 2013."³¹ According to its mission, the SSS will be an active partner in the national preparedness community that anticipates and responds to the changing needs of the Nation. The SSS is a small, independent

federal agency within the Executive Branch, operating with permanent authorization under the MSSA. The agency exists to serve the emergency manpower needs of the military by conscripting untrained men, or personnel with professional health care skills, if the agency is directed to do so by Congress and the President because of a national crisis. The current registration program for men born on or after 1960 has been in effect since 1980; it requires all men in the United States to register with the Selective Service within 30 days of reaching age 18. By registering with the Selective Service, every young man is reminded of his potential civic obligation to serve the Nation in an emergency. If a draft becomes necessary, the public must see that it is fair and equitable. For that to happen, the maximum number of eligible men must be registered. By registering, men comply with federal law and remain eligible for student financial aid, job training, and government employment opportunities. In 2012, the estimated registration compliance rate was 92 percent.

As a means of increasing registration compliance, the SSS uses a driver's license initiative, on-line registration, early submission opportunities, and registrar programs at high schools. If a man fails to register, his name is referred to the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) for possible investigation and prosecution for his failure to register; during FY 2013, 35,669 names and addresses of suspected violators were provided to DoJ.

Six bills affecting the SSS were introduced during the 113th Congress (2013–2014) prior to September 30, 2013. H.R. 747³² was introduced to amend the MSSA to require the registration of women in light of DoD elimination of the rule excluding women from direct ground combat assignments; no action was taken. H.R. 748³³ was introduced to require every U.S. citizen and every other person ages 18 to 25 residing in the United States, including women, to perform a two-year period of national service; no action was taken.

Another year of budget constraints limited but did not eliminate SSS efforts to increase public awareness of the registration requirement. Outreach activities included the “It’s What a Man’s Got to Do!” outreach campaign. Outreach exhibits target educational organizations’ annual meetings, radio and television public service announcements, high school publicity kits, outreach meetings with educators, print advertisements and social media, immigrant services, churches, and social service organizations. The SSS conducted a registration awareness program with State prisons to verify registrar contacts and to send supplies to correctional facilities for “men out of the mainstream.” On the local level, outreach also was conducted in three field regions covering all States and territories. Since 6,300 men turn 18 every day, the primary emphasis markets are both U.S. male citizens and immigrant men ages 16 through 25.

From a human resources and logistics standpoint, the SSS relies on a diverse workforce of full- and part-time civil servants, civilian volunteers, and part-time military reserve component personnel. The agency must be ready to recruit and process a massive influx of employees in case of a general mobilization. According to an e-mail sent to DACOWITS staff by the associate director for operations of the SSS, the agency would be capable of registering women. According to the e-mail, current projections indicate that SSS would require an additional 30 full-time equivalents and approximately \$7.5 million in additional funding to accommodate the registration of women.³⁴

Ms. Myers then briefed the Committee on the 1998 GAO report “Gender Issues: Changes Would Be Needed to Expand Selective Service Registration to Women.” According to this report, DoD views exemption of women from registration as concurrent with its policy on ground combat. DoD also cites a 1981 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court (*Rostker v. Goldberg*) that upheld the exemption of women from registration as additional support for this view.³⁵

One Committee member commented that the cost implications seemed minimal, especially when compared with the much larger marketing and advertising budgets for each of the Services. Concerns were raised regarding SSS’ theme and the subliminal message the exhibits send to an already low propensed population of women. A Committee member felt offended to learn that the SSS targets convicted criminals rather than qualified women. Another Committee member commented that there were implications for the SSS as a result of rescinding the combat exclusion policy.

DoD Office of the General Counsel, December 2014

To learn more about SSS rules and regulations, DACOWITS requested a briefing on the constitutionality of the MSSA.

Ms. Maria Fried, Associate Deputy General Counsel (Personnel and Health Policy)

From 1940 to 1973, during both peacetime and periods of conflict, men were drafted to fill vacancies in the military that could not be filled through voluntary means. In 1973, a policy of voluntary military service was implemented, but the MSSA still requires registration by males between ages 18 and 26 to augment the all-volunteer force in the event it is needed. Before 1991, women were precluded statutorily from flying Air Force or Navy combat aircraft or from serving on combat Navy vessels. The DoD risk rule precluded women from being assigned to non-combat units and positions and in other assignments where the combat risks equaled or exceeded those of combat assignments (e.g., infantry and artillery). With the enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1992, Congress repealed statutory limitations on assignment of women to combat aircraft and required the establishment of a Presidential Commission to study and to make recommendations on combat assignment restrictions for military women. In 1994, the SECDEF issued a memorandum establishing the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule governing combat assignments for women;³⁶ in 2013, the SECDEF issued a memorandum rescinding this rule.³⁷

The controlling case governing the constitutionality of the MSSA is still *Rostker v. Goldberg*. With this 1981 ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Act, finding that prohibitions on women serving in combat justified exempting women from registration. The Court explained that men and women “simply were not similarly situated for purposes of a draft or registration for a draft.” Therefore, the Court concluded that male-only registration did not violate the Equal Protection Clause. The decision was based on its practice of military deference to what was necessary as well as gender discrimination case law that existed at the time. The Court made it clear that even the most fundamental rights can be modified to meet military needs and preserve national security. In the *Rostker v. Goldberg* case, the Court deferred to Congress because it had expertise and knowledge that was outside of the purview of the Court. U.S. Supreme Court litigation is pending regarding this topic.³⁸

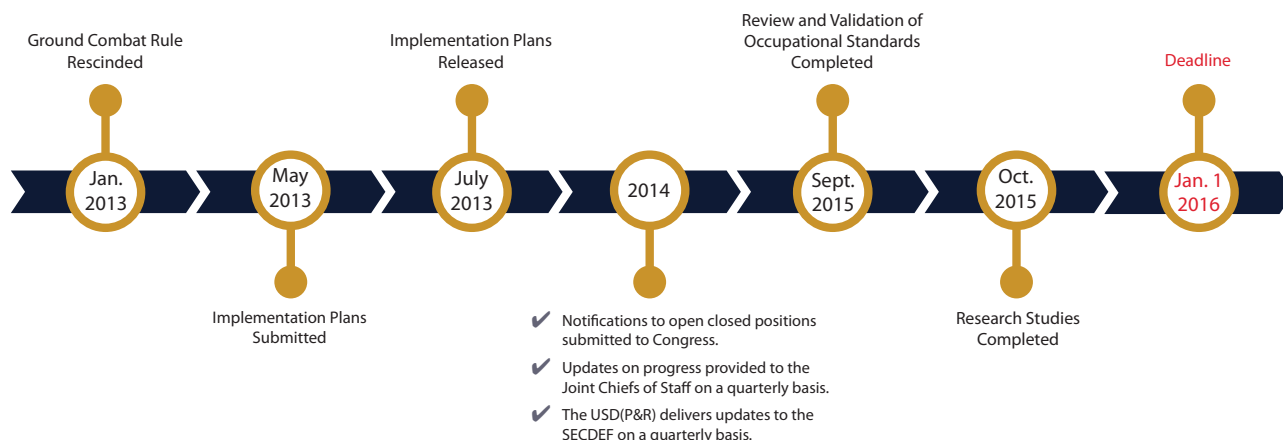
DoD Women in Service Review Implementation Plan Update, December 2014

DACOWITS requested a response from DoD regarding plans to open closed units and positions to servicewomen no later than January 1, 2016. The Committee inquired about DoD's timeline, plans, and actions that will occur before and after January 1, 2016. It requested information about how the implementation will be monitored and what end date will be/has been established for adding women into the training pipeline for previously closed occupations. Finally, the Committee inquired about how each Service defines sufficiently meeting the established implementation deadline.

Ms. Juliet Beyler, Director, Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management, Military Personnel Policy, OUSD(P&R)

Regarding plans to open closed units and positions to servicewomen, Ms. Beyler reviewed the timeline of what has happened to date and what has been planned leading up to January 2016. (See Figure 2.1.) In January 2013, the ground combat exclusion rule was rescinded; in May 2013, the Services submitted their implementation plans to DoD; in July 2013, those plans were released. Plans include the review and validation of occupational standards to be completed by September 2015 and research studies to be completed by October 2015. With regard to progress made in 2014, notifications to open closed positions were submitted to Congress. Updates on progress are provided to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on a quarterly basis, and the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) delivers updates to the SECDEF on a quarterly basis. Two congressional notifications are pending: one regarding submarines and one regarding the Army's Bradley Crew Commander Course. Ms. Beyler also discussed the GAO report pending release in February 2015 and the Marine Corps Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force that is to begin testing in California in 2015. Ms. Beyler expected additional notifications to be released after January 1, 2015.

Figure 2.1. Timeline of Process for Opening Previously Closed Positions and Units to Women



Ms. Beyler provided an overview of the typical “notification to assignment” timeline to open positions to women and DoD’s commitment to ensure that normal Service assignment processes are used even as new positions and units are opened. (See Figure 2.2 for an illustration of this process.) Typically, the Service chief first makes a recommendation, after which it is reviewed by the CJCS and then by the USD(P&R), who has the authority to notify Congress. Over the past few years, DoD has reduced the length of time it takes to submit a notification; however, current legislation mandates a review, or waiting, period of 30 continuous days when both houses of Congress are in session. The waiting period averages 93 days, but in some cases has taken as long as five months. In 2014, the last notifications had to be submitted in July to meet the deadline of December 12 (the last day of the congressional session); if the deadline is not met and the waiting period runs over, the notification has to be resubmitted again the following year. DoD cannot take any action on implementation plans until the waiting period expires.

Figure 2.2. Process for Opening a Previously Closed Position or Unit



A Committee member inquired about which entity or individual will make the January 1, 2016 decision; the SECDEF will make final announcements about any exceptions that have been approved and any additional final announcements about the issue at that time. One Committee member asked Ms. Beyler about DoD’s plan to review the occupational standards. Shortly after the ground combat exclusion rule was rescinded, DoD contracted with RAND to do a literature review to examine best practices for developing occupational standards to understand the latest and best methodology; the findings were shared with USSOCOM and the Services. For the second phase of the review, RAND studies the processes and methodologies used by each Service for its occupational standards review; DoD receives a monthly update from RAND on its findings. Additionally, DoD, the Services, and Congress have been collaborating on an occupational standards review. USSOCOM is working on validating its occupational standards, and USSOCOM and the Services have actively shared information with each other. Ms. Beyler also confirmed that the Services are required to validate all occupational standards, not just those for fields that exclude servicewomen.

The Committee asked whether it will become mandatory for servicewomen to be in each of the newly opened positions and units; currently, no Service members are forced into an occupation, the recruiting environment is good, and all Services make assignments as necessary. DoD is prepared to discuss that issue if needed. A Committee member inquired whether the number of positions that have been opened has been compared with the table of organization and manning; DoD made a note to review that suggestion.

In response to a member's question about how the Committee can assist in this endeavor, Ms. Beyler expressed the challenges DoD faces with the current 30-day congressional review period. Ms. Beyler described the challenge with the notification about the Bradley Crew Commander Course. DoD reviewed the congressional calendar for the date that Congress would adjourn and scheduled the notification to be submitted on a date one week prior to the scheduled date of adjournment. The House recessed a full week early before the 2014 midterm election and also was out for two additional days that were not scheduled to be recess days, which negatively affected DoD's timeline for having the review period completed while Congress was in session.

Concerning the infantry, one Committee member inquired about the Army's more individualized standards and how they compare to the Marine Corps' more collective (average assessment) standards. DoD is closely examining the variances among the Services' standards for similar fields, as well as how the different approaches align with the culture of each Service and whether differences are acceptable. In response to a Committee member's question about the role that ship configurations play in the ultimate decision about exceptions to policy, Ms. Beyler explained that decisions are based on a combination of cost, standards, and unit cohesion and that these factors are considered holistically rather than by using a numerical formula. Each ship and submarine configuration is unique, and reconfiguration is a difficult and costly task that needs careful consideration.

The Committee asked whether the January 1, 2016 deadline is attainable; DoD believes that the deadline is realistic, although the process will continue well past 2016 as additional decisions related to this issue are made. One Committee member questioned whether the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) will have oversight over the development of the occupational standards; Ms. Beyler explained how there are multiple leadership forums and discussions that occur among the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A Committee member expressed her concern that physical standards may lead to potential discrimination and inquired whether gender is a factor that will be examined continuously in setting and revising occupational standards. DoD confirmed the process is about the operational requirement and ensuring what it takes to do the mission; it is important to make sure the occupational standards are correct. Finally, one Committee member expressed concern that the training required for some currently closed positions could increase injury rates and prevent some highly qualified servicewomen from progressing into leadership roles. DoD is examining injury rates across genders closely. Ms. Beyler and the Committee discussed the possibility of receiving monthly updates from DoD on WISR implementation.

Ranger School Update, March 2015

The Committee has maintained interest in the assessment of opening the Army Ranger School to women and requested an update from the Army.

COL Linda Sheimo, Chief, Command Programs and Policies Division, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel

The Ranger training assessment course, which tests Ranger candidates on tasks required to pass the full Ranger training course, is two weeks long and is run by the National Guard at Fort Benning. Fifty percent of men successfully complete the course. The Army believes this

course is the best tool to prepare women for the full Ranger course. Women were given the option of taking the course in January, February, March, or April 2015; 40 slots were set aside for women in each course. To ensure that all four classes would include women, the Army sent out an All Army Activity message about the potential opportunity for women to attend.

The January course included 26 women. Five women completed all required tasks (i.e., completed 40 or more push-ups, 59 or more sit-ups, six chin-ups, and ran five miles in 40 minutes). The February class included 17 women; one woman graduated. The attrition rate for the February course was high for men as well as women. For the March class, 37 women arrived to take the course, 35 started the course, and at the time of the briefing, three had met all of the requirements.

The Army is seeing a high failure rate on push-ups in the assessment training courses for both men and women. Those who do not complete the required tasks can repeat the assessment course at Fort Benning. Ranger candidates are not permitted to fail the same element of the full course twice; they can fail an element once in each phase, but not twice. If the full training course is opened to women, female Ranger candidates who fail the course after a second attempt will be able to reapply later under a different classification. If no female candidates need to repeat the full course, the first woman is scheduled to graduate in June 2015. The Committee inquired about the Lack of Motivation form individuals who wish to drop out of the course must sign and discussed how this form is maintained as part of the soldier's permanent record at the training brigade at Fort Benning to prevent the individual from being accepted to the course again.

Enlisted Women in Submarines Task Force Update, March 2015

The Navy lifted its ban on women serving aboard submarines in 2010 and started assigning female officers to submarines shortly thereafter. It has been publicized that enlisted women will join the submarine force beginning in 2016, and that recruiting efforts have officially begun. The Committee requested a briefing from the Navy on the status of female officers assigned to submarines and the status of the EWSTF established in 2013.

CAPT Rodney Hutton, Commanding Officer, Trident Training Facility

The 2013 SECDEF memorandum rescinding the 1994 rule states, "Integration of women into newly opened positions and units will occur as expeditiously as possible, considering good order and judicious use of fiscal resources, but must be completed no later than January 1, 2016."³⁹ Accordingly, the Chief of Naval Personnel announced that all previously closed ratings and Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC) codes in the submarine force would be opened to women as of January 21, 2015. There are several foundations for decisions about opening units and positions. These include the following:

1. Using deliberate integration processes
2. Making decisions consistent with established Navy policy for mixed-gender ships
3. Considering impacts for sailors, the submarine force, and Navy
4. Ensuring equity in all training and qualification processes
5. Maintaining parity in ships' habitability
6. Maintaining parity in career management

Throughout this decision process, it will be vital to maintain opportunity and success for every sailor as well as the readiness of every ship and command in the Navy.

CAPT Hutton described several milestones that have led to the full opening of submarine ratings and NECs. In 2009, the Women in Submarines Task Force was formed. In 2011, the first female officers arrived on submarines; in 2012, the first female submarine officer qualified for submarines. In May 2013, the EWSTF was formed; later that year, the first female submarine officer qualified as Nuclear Engineer Officer. In June 2014, the Enlisted Integration plan was approved by the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations, and in December 2014, the congressional review period for the Navy's plan to integrate enlisted women on submarines was complete. By January 2015, the first Virginia-Class (VACL) submarine, the USS MINNESOTA, was integrated, and all submarine ratings/NECs were open to women. As of March 2015, 64 female officers had served or were serving on operational submarines.

When a submarine becomes certified to operate as a mixed-gender crew, the first female officers brought into the crew include one supply officer who is surface warfare qualified and two nuclear-trained officers at the beginning of their careers, representing about 20 percent of the wardroom overall. The Navy is working to bring 20 female officers into the training pipeline each year and move them into the fleet. The EWSTF is recruiting actively and selecting the initial female enlisted cohort. For officers, it is critical that the Navy can bring them back as department heads; the Service is managing the integration process deliberately to assess that aspect for women in comparison to men. In response to a member question about attrition being voluntary or based on not meeting selection criteria for promotions, CAPT Hutton explained that a low number of officers are not qualified to move on and that the decision is typically personal. There are no differences in bonuses offered to men as compared with women.

In 2015, the first female officers will be eligible to become department heads; the second VACL and the USS VIRGINIA will integrate. In 2016, two additional VACL submarines will integrate; by then, 11 submarines (18 crews, or 20 percent of the submarine force) will be integrated. Throughout this integration process, the Navy will review original assumptions about how many officers stay in the force. The Navy will continue to bring approximately 20 women per year into the force to maintain the 18 integrated crews, but starting in 2017, it will suspend integration for one to two years to assess the process. As the integration process continues, the Navy is considering its ability to modify ships and maintain community management health across the Service.

For enlisted sailors, rating conversion applications are due in April 2015. Two Chief Petty Officers (CPOs) will be selected for each crew; they will be integrated into ships that already have female officers. CPOs will spend six months on board before the female enlisted cohort of E6 and lower pay grades come onboard. CPOs will report to submarines in the first quarter of 2016, and female enlisted Service members of E6 and lower pay grades will report in the third and fourth quarters of 2016.

Ship modifications and habitability policies are designed based on quality of life equity for men and women. Modifications of guided-missile submarines and fleet ballistic missile submarines are planned during the scheduled refueling and engineering overhaul periods. CPO quarters

will provide separate berthing and shower facilities, and crew berthing will provide adequate privacy and equity for all sailors by expanding the male heads. The Navy is actively recruiting top enlisted leadership to join the submarine force and focusing on quality over quantity.

Australian Defence Update, March 2015

DACOWITS has a longstanding relationship with the Australian Defence Force, and it invited the Gender Adviser to the Chief of the Defence Force to brief the Committee on the integration of women.

Ms. Julie McKay, Gender Adviser to the Chief of the Australian Defence Force

Before being appointed to the role of Gender Adviser, Ms. McKay was the Executive Director of the National Committee for UN Women. The role of Gender Adviser was established in April 2014, and Ms. McKay described how she spent much of that year visiting installations and talking to Australian servicewomen about challenges they face in the military; information she gathered on these trips conflicted with the survey data the Defence Force had collected on those same issues. Australia has made some progress; overall participation of women and their participation in leadership roles across all three Services are increasing, but slowly. Ms. McKay reported that the period during which women are most likely to leave the Force is after they have children—something the Defence Force is working to address. The four priority areas for the Gender Adviser are recruitment, retention, promotion, and inclusion; the opening of combat arms positions and the issue of sexual misconduct do not fall under Ms. McKay's purview.

Flexibility in the workplace is important for women, but it is hard for Service members to live a "normal" life within the structure of the military. Many young female recruits in Australia are excited about joining the military, but already know at a young age they will leave before they have children. The Force is also reviewing data that show men leave the military because of lack of flexibility. The Chief of the Air Force took a three-year career break and successfully returned to work; it was the first time a leader in the Force took a career break and was not disadvantaged. Currently, 1 percent of the Force's members are permitted workforce flexibility; the Force aims to expand this privilege to 2 percent of members within five years. There are a number of informal flexibility arrangements in place; paperwork for formal flexibility scenarios has been a barrier.

Another barrier to retaining women in the Force has been childcare. Seventy-eight percent of women return to work after having a child, but eventually leave because they say childcare is too hard to manage; Chiefs said women who left the Force after having a child cited childcare as the reason in 50 percent to 60 percent of cases. Ms. McKay has heard many women complain of exclusion once people learn they are pregnant; women described being taken out of their roles and treated differently. The Defence Force Gender Equality Advisory Board will continue to study the aspect of inclusion for women in the Force. Similar to the perspective held by some in the United States, there is a cultural narrative in Australia that the military is inherently masculine. Ms. McKay described several examples of putting leaders into positions to experience the potential discrimination and lack of inclusion that women regularly face.

Marine Corps Infantry Officer Course Update, June 2015

DACOWITS continues to be interested in the Marine Corps' research assessments, which will assist the SECDEF in determining whether women will integrate into Marine Corps combat roles beginning in 2016. The Committee was particularly interested in learning more about the Marine Corps' IOC. Research on the course concluded in June 2015, and it is no longer open to female volunteers.

This request for information was a repeat request; previously, the Committee asked the Marine Corps to deliver a written response. It asked for details about the following: weight requirements for marches; the attrition rate for men and women; reasons for attrition and a description of any efforts to minimize risk of attrition due to injury; a description of any preconditioning efforts; and an explanation of when IOC requirements were established.

Mr. Leon Pappa, Deputy Branch Head, Ground Combat Standards Branch, Training and Education Command

Mr. Pappa described the Marine Corps' effort to recruit female officers for the study. Recruitment began in May 2012 and concluded in February 2015 to allow all recruits to complete the IOC before June 2015. Recruitment efforts targeted female second lieutenants who were recent graduates of the basic officer class (BOC). In summer 2014, recruitment efforts were expanded to include captains.

The Marine Corps encouraged study participation in a few ways. Though the research guidelines for this study prevented the use of incentives, each BOC received two recruitment briefs encouraging female officers to participate. Officers were also able to participate in the Marines Awaiting Training platoon prior to starting an IOC if they desired advance conditioning and training. However, women knew that even if they passed the course, they would not be allowed to join the military occupational specialty. Completing the course would instead be a point of personal pride and accomplishment.

Total recruitment efforts yielded 29 female research participants, compared with 913 participating males. The vast majority of female participants (24) were new BOC graduates, representing 5 percent of the 454 women who graduated from the BOC during the recruitment period. None of the female study participants graduated from the IOC, compared with 69 percent of males. Most women (24 of 29) failed to finish the combat endurance test, a challenging, daylong test at the beginning of the training course. By comparison, 19 percent of men failed at this stage. Of the five women who completed the combat endurance test, four failed multiple hike or tactical movements during training, and one dropped out because of injury.

The Committee requested answers to two additional questions: (1) what were the weight requirements for the IOC march, and (2) when were the IOC requirements established (including the requirement for Marines to carry their rucksacks up a rope). For the first question, Mr. Pappa explained all foot movements are executed as tactical movements, each with a prescribed load and equipment list. Though the total weight varies by movement, the maximum amount a Marine is expected to carry is 150 total pounds of equipment (consisting of weapons, ammunition, food, and water). In response to the second question, Mr. Pappa noted every training event at IOC is listed in an approved program of instruction. The program of instruction is reviewed periodically through a Course Content Review Board, most recently conducted in December 2014.

While the Committee does not support lowering standards and believes valid gender-neutral requirements should apply to all, it was concerned with the subjective versus objective method employed to evaluate performance or tactical movements at the IOC. One Committee member cited a performance movement in which none of the unit members could keep up with the pace that was set and finish in the allotted three hours, noting most of the group took four hours to finish the movement. While the whole unit failed to meet the time requirement, only six people were dropped from IOC, including the two female participants.

United States Special Operations Command Studies Update, June 2015

Recently, a survey conducted for USSOCOM by RAND received national media attention, prompting the Committee to request a briefing from USSOCOM. Topics addressed were as follows: the plans and studies being conducted for integration of women into special operations (e.g., analysis of training, facilities, education, and other policies); how officials are examining the social and cultural challenges of integrating women into jobs previously held only by men; efforts to resolve misinformation among personnel (e.g., “educate the force”); the methodology used to analyze job requirements, to best ensure standards are accurate and gender neutral; and updates on the Joint Special Operations University study of elite team performance as well as the University of Kansas study of cohesion and impacts.

Mr. Jeffrey Resko, USSOCOM Force Management and Development Directorate Liaison to the National Capital Region, and Ms. Alden Burley, Contractor, USSOCOM Force Management and Development Directorate

Mr. Resko provided a current snapshot of the number and types of special operations positions that have been integrated or are still closed since the rescindment of the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule: 7,041 positions have been integrated (including more than two-thirds of Special Operations Forces battalions), and 25,750 remain closed.

USSOCOM has completed several studies designed to identify challenges related to unit readiness, mitigate risks, and facilitate integration. These include a study on unit cohesion, led by RAND, which involved a literature review, surveys, and focus groups with male special operations forces. Another, led by the Joint Special Operations University, studied elite team performance through literature reviews and interviews with Service members from recently integrated teams and units. A University of Kansas study of cohesion and impacts examined Army Special Operations commands and included surveys and focus groups with women in open positions in Special Operations units.

A comprehensive standards validation process also supported integration efforts and ensured all standards were related to critical occupational duties. The process was based on job analyses and consisted of external research, training observations, and data analysis. RAND assisted with this effort by developing a six-step process that was administered with support from the Naval Health Research Center and the Office of Personnel Management. Mr. Resko commented on the thorough nature of this review and extensive consultation with experts in the field. USSOCOM estimated the standards validation process would be completed in summer 2015.

Finally, efforts to inform and educate the Military Services about integration and standards validation are underway at the direction of General Joseph Votel. USSOCOM has sent electronic and written communication to all commanders. Commanders' decisions have been discussed at roundtables and other meetings. More detailed communication plans are being developed.

Army Ranger Assessment Update, September 2015

In accordance with the SECDEF's January 2013 memorandum, DACOWITS continues to monitor the Services' implementation plans to further integrate women into previously closed positions and units. The Committee has maintained interest in the assessment of opening the Army's Ranger School to women and has requested an update from the Army to follow up on its March 2015 briefing on the assessment being conducted with three gender-integrated classes. In addition to discussing the Ranger School assessment, the briefers presented an update on the "Soldier 2020" initiative to the Committee.

Mr. Dave Brinkley, Assistant Deputy, Office of the Chief of Staff (G-3/5/7), Army Training and Doctrine Command

The Army launched the "Soldier 2020" initiative to integrate women into previously closed occupational specialties. For this endeavor, the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is taking a standards-based approach to build a future force that is gender integrated, stronger, and more combat ready. As of now, there is at least one woman in every combat arms battalion in the conventional Army, and all positions within open occupational specialties have been opened to women, including combat engineer positions and officer positions in ground intelligence. The plan of delivery for integrating women into previously closed positions is to integrate women into critical leadership roles before fully integrating and opening units to women. Leadership will come from two directions—transferring qualified female noncommissioned officers and officers into newly opened occupational specialties and allowing women to serve in open occupational specialties within combat battalions.

Mr. Brinkley described two separate studies TRADOC is leading as part of the "Soldier 2020" effort to identify integration challenges and develop strategies for overcoming institutional, cultural, and implementation barriers. The "Gender Integration Study," which is nearly complete, seeks to identify cultural factors (Army expectations, customs, and social behaviors associated with integration) as well as institutional factors (including Army processes and policies) that may be affected or changed because of full gender integration. The methodology for this study included interviews, focus groups, and surveys with Army leaders and soldiers. The "Physical Demand Study" is supported by the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine and aims to identify and validate reliable, accurate, gender-neutral predictive tests for accession into physically demanding occupations. As of the date of the briefing, field testing was complete and further testing and analysis were underway. In addition, two other studies have been completed: an Army Medical Command study comparing male and female injury rates, and an Army Research Institute study on recently integrated units. The Committee expressed interest in receiving further updates on all of these studies.

The Committee inquired about the remaining notifications to Congress. All remaining Service requests will be jointly submitted to Congress. Mr. Brinkley explained that the Army has coordinated with the Marine Corps throughout the whole study process but that each Service has used fundamentally different approaches for its systematic studies on integration. A member of the Committee inquired about the scientific testing that had been completed. Mr. Brinkley described the physiological testing completed by the Army Medical Command with male and female volunteers. After training for the tasks as a group, the men and women were tested in several tasks deemed by the Army as valid occupational specialty requirements for combat arms fields. At least one woman was able to successfully meet each of these standards. The standards did not change after the testing was conducted. Mr. Brinkley noted that the Army's approach followed the SECDEF's recommendations to develop gender-neutral individual requirements that must be met to qualify for each occupational specialty.

The Committee expressed concern regarding those male Service members who failed to meet the new gender-neutral standards. Mr. Brinkley assured the Committee that, although approximately 10 percent of the Service members failed to meet the requirements, there are plans to address the issue with those currently serving and to take preventative action to avoid further issues. Mr. Brinkley believes it is better to screen out unqualified soldiers in the recruiting process rather than to "force" them to leave once they are further along in their career. There is also a push to mitigate the tokenism and "tribal phobia" identified through TRADOC's gender integration study (mentioned earlier in this report).

A common theme addressed by Mr. Brinkley and Committee members was soldier readiness. The "Soldier 2020" initiative is a deliberate and standards-based approach to designing a gender-neutral, combat-ready future force. DoD and the Services need to not only create and implement gender-neutral standards but also increase soldier readiness. Mr. Brinkley emphasized that the right soldier needs to be put in the right occupational specialty to reduce the Army's attrition rate, foster a lifelong career, and ultimately create a better product. Assessing the soldier as a whole, not just assessing one's cognitive ability and physical strength, and working with the individual to find the right occupation could fundamentally change how the Army contracts. Mr. Brinkley reasoned that this could take time and that recruitment would be based on quality, not quantity.

The Committee inquired about the potential for women to join combat arms units in a battalion command role. Mr. Brinkley indicated the standard policy would be used for such transfers, which means that the decision to transfer would need to be made prior to certain career milestones; for example, before an officer attends the Captains Career Course or an enlisted soldier serves as a squad leader. Committee members discussed the concern that allowing women to follow the same career trajectory as men could take too much time and diminish the progress made thus far to change military culture; by some estimates, it takes 16 years to build a leader. However, other Committee members felt that to set women up for success, they should follow the same career trajectory and career development timeline as men. Mr. Brinkley emphasized that the Army is not going to force women down any career path and that the women who volunteer to make change happen will influence the military.

COL David Fivecoat, Commander, Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade

More than 50 years after its establishment, on August 21, 2015, the Army's elite Ranger School graduated its first two women, CPT Kristen Griest and 1LT Shaye Haver. The class started in April 2015 at Fort Benning with 381 men and 19 women. COL Fivecoat described the graduation as a historic moment in the integration of women in the military and as evidence that there are women that possess the physical and tactical ability to complete the course. The Ranger course is a 62-day combat leadership course in which students undergo a physical fitness test, several obstacle courses, four days of military mountaineering, three parachute jumps, four air assaults on helicopters, multiple rubber boat movements, and 27 days of mock combat patrols.

COL Fivecoat explained that the course is conducted in multiple locations and in multiple phases. The first phase of Ranger School is conducted by the 4th Ranger Training Battalion at Camp Rogers and Camp Darby at Fort Benning. It starts with the Ranger Assessment Phase, during which students must complete 49 push-ups, 59 sit-ups, a five-mile run in 40 minutes, six chin-ups, a swim test, a land navigation test, and a 12-mile foot march in three hours. Students learn the fundamentals of squad-level mission planning and are assessed on their physical stamina, mental toughness, and leadership abilities. The second phase is run by the 5th Ranger Training Battalion at Camp Merrill, in Dahlonaga, Georgia. Students receive instruction on military mountaineering tasks and mobility training as well as techniques for employing a platoon for continuous combat patrol operations; during this phase, their stamina and commitment are heavily tested. The third and final phase of Ranger School is conducted by the 6th Ranger Training Battalion at Camp Rudder at Eglin Air Force Base. This phase focuses on the continued development of students' combat arms functional skills. Students receive instruction on waterborne operations, small boat movements, and stream crossings, and they further develop their ability to plan and lead small units. Each student rotates through two graded leadership roles per phase.

COL Fivecoat explained that decisions regarding students' status are made during a leadership board that convenes at the end of each phase of the course. Candidates are continuously evaluated by their peers as well as Ranger School instructors. Spot reports are ways for instructors to indicate both positive and negative performances. Positive spot reports cancel out negative spot reports; however, if a student accumulates three negative spot reports during one phase, he or she is removed from the course. According to COL Fivecoat, most students do not experience "spot trouble." When a student fails to complete a task, he or she can recycle, or reattempt, the phase with the next class of Ranger trainees. Of the 19 women who started Ranger School with the class in June 2015, all 19 were recycled after the first phase into the July 2015 class.

The graduation of CPT Griest and 1LT Haver from Ranger School proves that women are able to meet the same standards as men when given the opportunity. Contrary to implications made in negative comments on social media, standards were not adjusted or lowered for the women. Ranger School standards have changed over time (e.g., elimination of desert phase, evolution of basic entry standards) but these have been a result of changing combat environments and equipment; no changes have been made since June 2014 when the integration studies began. Going forward, the Army plans to emphasize transparency inside and outside of the organization and send consistent, proactive, and factual messages through traditional and social media. COL Fivecoat noted the lessons learned from peer evaluations, a critical tool used to judge and

gather feedback on individual student performance in comparison with other peers, showed a change in culture within the Rangers, a previously all-male organization. In response to a member's inquiry, COL Fivecoat explained that none of the 19 women who entered the course left because of lack of motivation (LOM); on average, per course, 11.4 males leave the course due to LOM caused by a variety of factors. However, COL Fivecoat shared that students, both male and female, are provided counseling sessions before leaving the course, whether because of performance or LOM. The counseling addresses performance issues and instructs the student on how to improve and on which aspects of the course to focus.

The Committee inquired about any changes to Ranger School culture that might have made a positive impact and could be instructive for the future. COL Fivecoat emphasized the role of the auxiliary observer/advisor, citing that these individuals facilitated a positive culture change through work and action. It is not certain how auxiliary observers/advisors will be used in the future or how their role at the Ranger School personally enhances their careers. Social media was identified as another outlet to influence the culture; he emphasized the need to disseminate factual messages. The Army is developing a plan to continue to effectively use social media.

Detailing/Assignment Process for Women Serving at Sea, September 2015

Women were assigned to combatant ships in the Coast Guard in the 1970s and the Navy in the 1990s. With the recent opening of submarines to women and the projected integration of all seagoing billets/ratings to servicewomen in the near future, the Committee is interested in the specific detailing and assignment process for women in the ship fleets. The Committee requested a briefing from the Coast Guard and Navy on the following: the methodology behind how ships are selected to accommodate servicewomen (habitability modifications); the criteria used to billet women at sea and who provides oversight for this process; who manages the berthing available to women at sea for each ship in the Service's inventory; and how these decisions affect the career development of servicewomen (both officer and enlisted).

Navy: CDR Christine Caston, Office of Outreach and Engagement

CDR Caston described how the Navy selects ships to accommodate servicewomen. Presently, female officers are assigned to every surface combatant class in the Navy, whereas enlisted servicewomen are assigned to surface combatant ships based on available berthing space and restroom configurations. There are 31 ships that do not have female berthing areas; however, all ships that do have servicewomen on board have female berthing areas to accommodate them. CDR Caston noted that there are three ships that do not have any female petty officers on board, but all others that have space available have women assigned. CDR Caston explained that there is a ratio of commodes to female sailors that must be met to assign women to a ship.

All officers compete for available sea duty billets and are detailed to sea billets based on individual performance and professional qualifications, regardless of gender. This is not the case for enlisted servicewomen. Enlisted servicewomen are billeted to sea based on

berthing availability and ratings need. The ship's executive officer is responsible for providing female berthing accounting, tracking what is available and what can be converted, to the Navy Personnel Command.

CDR Caston affirmed that assignment to a surface combatant positively contributes to the career development of both female officers and enlisted servicewomen. When female officers are assigned to surface ships, they are able to meet the standards and obtain the operational footing equivalent to their male counterparts. The absence of milestone billets at sea can negatively affect a female officer's career progression and prevent upward mobility.

Coast Guard: Chief Jennifer Bell, Women Afloat Coordinator, Enlisted Personnel Management Division

Chief Bell reviewed the Coast Guard's methodology for selecting cutters to accommodate servicewomen. Selection is based on berthing space, head accommodations, how new the cutter is, and the modifications made to legacy cutters to accommodate mixed-gender crews. Cutters that have a mixed-gender command are being modified to accommodate both genders; however, at least nine servicewomen need to be onboard a cutter for a berthing area to be converted. If heads are to be shared by both genders, they must be able to be locked.

One Committee member expressed concern that captains could control whether women could be assigned to their cutters. Chief Bell emphasized that every cutter that can accommodate servicewomen does so, but that the number of available cutters is limited by how many women in the Coast Guard possess the interest and necessary operational ratings and seek afloat assignments. If more women take on more operational ratings, then the number of cutters that can accommodate women will rise. As the Service member responsible for coordinating berthing areas for the Coast Guard, Chief Bell is in constant communication with the 27 Enlisted Assignment Officers, cutter commands, and any servicewoman seeking afloat opportunities. She coordinates the 700 female racks located onboard 117 cutters. In response to a question from the Committee, Chief Bell indicated there are 56 additional cutters that could be converted to a mixed-gender setup, but they have not been converted because there are not enough women seeking afloat assignments.

Consideration of a servicewoman's rate/rank and desire for an afloat assignment, along with rack availability and the required sea time needed for advancement, factor into a woman's potential to be billeted to sea. Chief Bell explained that there are several ratings that require sea time for advancement; if sea time is not obtained, it will affect the servicewoman's ability for advancement. Female officers can be assigned to the majority of the available afloat positions and have the same career development opportunities as male officers, with two exceptions: operations officer on 110-foot patrol boat cutters in Bahrain and executive officer on 140-foot icebreakers. These positions require the officer to share a stateroom with an enlisted member, who most often is male. Enlisted Assignment Officers, the Enlisted Women Afloat Coordinator, and Officer Assignment Officers are responsible for the oversight of the women to sea billet process.

Summary of Focus Group Findings

In 2015, DACOWITS conducted 25 focus groups on the topic of gender integration. The groups were conducted with male and female officers and enlisted Service members. Because the Coast Guard is already gender integrated, questions on this topic were asked only of members of the other four Services. The groups addressed the following subtopics: Service members' experiences with gender integration; gender integration preparation activities by the Military Services; Service members' perceptions of gender integration; the impact of military culture on gender integration; challenges and recommendations for gender integration; and women and the Selective Service. An overview of the findings from the focus groups is provided in Sections A through F. (For a full presentation of the focus group findings, see Appendix G.)

Service Members' Experiences With Gender Integration

While few participants had personal experience in a unit undergoing integration, several participants were able to contribute to the discussion based on experiences in units or career fields with few women. Among participants who were not part of units or career fields undergoing gender integration, however, there was a lack of knowledge about gender integration efforts.

Gender Integration Preparation Activities by the Military Services

When asked what the Military Services were doing to prepare for gender integration, some participants observed that the Services were taking steps to ensure the standards in place are appropriate and gender neutral; making modifications to physical spaces (e.g., modifying berthing on ships and housing during deployments, creating separate restrooms); holding discussions or training with men in male-only units prior to integrating women into the units; and increasing vigilance for sexual harassment and sexual assault occurrences in newly integrated units. In contrast, other participants indicated the Military Services were doing nothing to prepare units for gender integration.

Service Members' Perceptions of Gender Integration

Participants were asked how they felt gender integration was proceeding overall and if they were satisfied with it. Nearly all the men who remarked on this indicated they were satisfied. In contrast, the women who responded were evenly split between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Women's dissatisfaction stemmed from the process for testing/development of gender-neutral standards and the lack of education for men and women prior to integrating women into previously male-only units.

The Impact of Military Culture on Gender Integration

When asked about the ways military culture had made it easier or more challenging for women to integrate into newly opened units and positions, participants noted fewer benefits than challenges associated with military culture. Women were particularly likely to denote ways in

which military culture hindered gender integration. Benefits mentioned included the accepting nature of the Military Services, particularly among younger Service members, and the discipline of the Military Services. Challenges of military culture included men holding stereotypical views of women, which commonly manifested in women not being assigned difficult job tasks and the mindset among older men that women should not be in traditionally male positions and units; women's perceived need to work harder than men to earn the same respect that men received; and stigmatization surrounding pregnancy.

Challenges and Recommendations for Gender Integration

Participants were asked about challenges with integrating women into previously closed units and positions and what the Military Services could do better to ensure women are successfully integrated into these units and positions. Challenges mentioned included structural barriers such as a need for modifications to housing and restrooms to accommodate women; men's misperceptions of women's physical, biological, and emotional capabilities to perform the jobs that are being integrated, such as how some men feel integration damages the cohesion of male-only units; the masculine culture of non-integrated units; and the mentality that men must protect women, including how this may interfere with men's ability to perform appropriately in combat situations.

Recommendations for improving the success of gender integration included ensuring the Military Services do not lower job standards of currently or previously closed units and positions to allow women to complete the selection and training process; enacting changes to military culture and training for both men and women prior to integrating women into previously closed units; and ensuring leadership in integrating units sets the right precedent from the beginning.

Women and the Selective Service

Focus group participants were asked a series of questions related to Selective Service registration. Despite being provided an overview of the Selective Service, several participants—particularly, though not exclusively, women—were unsure about Selective Service registration and often confused registering for the Selective Service with being drafted. Most participants believed women should have to register for the Selective Service because this would create equality between the sexes. Other participants believed Selective Service registration should be eliminated for everyone; several of them stated that if it were not eliminated, women should have to register as men do. A smaller number of the participants were opposed to forcing women to register, for various reasons.

When asked how requiring women to register for the Selective Service might affect women's interest in joining the Military Services, most felt it would not have an impact. Some participants, on the other hand, believed requiring women to register would encourage more women to consider joining the Military Services. Specific advantages participants suggested would result from requiring women to register included gender equality and an expanded candidate pool should the draft be reinstated. Specific disadvantages participants mentioned included the possibility that women would become pregnant to avoid being drafted, which would mitigate the equality gained by requiring women to register, and a belief that it would lower the quality of the Military

Services—should the draft be reinstated—because men are generally better suited for military service compared with women.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section provides relevant literature and other resources on the effective and full integration of women into closed positions and units.

In July 2015, GAO released a report describing its review of the Services' efforts to integrate women into previously closed positions and units, including the development and validation of gender-neutral occupational standards and DoD's efforts to oversee and monitor this process. GAO concluded that the Services and USSOCOM have developed appropriate plans to successfully develop and test gender-neutral occupational standards; however, GAO expressed concern that DoD does not intend to continue to formally monitor the implementation of these plans beyond January 2016. As a result, GAO recommended that DoD should continue to monitor and oversee the Services' implementation of their integration plans beyond the current January 2016 cutoff date, after which the Services will no longer be required to submit formal reports on their gender-integration efforts to the SECDEF. GAO also recommended that DoD establish a process for periodically reevaluating its requirements for the SSS.⁴⁰

Appendix J lists notifications submitted to Congress from August 2014 through October 2015 by DoD about continuing its oversight of the Services' gender-integration efforts. Table 2.1 presents the number of positions opened to women since January 2013 and the number and percentage of positions still closed to women as of March 2015 by Service.

Table 2.1. Status of Military Service Opportunities for Women as of March 2015⁴¹

	Positions Opened Since January 2013	Positions Closed as of March 2015	Percent of Positions Closed as of March 2015
Army	68,500	176,800	18%
Air Force	0	4,300	1%
Navy	17,100	9,200	2%
Marine Corps	6,000	54,800	25%
Total	91,600	245,100	—
USSOCOM	7,000	25,700	41%

For additional information on the topic of gender integration, see the Relevant Literature and Other Resources sections focused on the full integration of women into ground combat units and the development of valid gender-neutral standards provided in DACOWITS' annual reports each year from 2010 through 2014.

Female Accessions

The Committee's 2015 study of female accessions was prompted by the low percentage of women in the military and the Committee's continued concern that the Services have the strongest possible pool of highly qualified individuals to meet the need in the coming years. The Committee's 2015 study of this topic builds upon the Committee's 2013 examination of the accessions of women officers and its 2014 examination of the accession of enlisted women.

This part of Chapter 2 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendations
- Summary of Briefings Presented to DACOWITS
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendations

This section provides DACOWITS' 2015 recommendations on female accessions and summarizes the reasoning in support of these recommendations. The recommendations and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 2.

Recommendation 1: All Services should set goals to systematically increase the representation of women in the officer and enlisted ranks. These goals should be benchmarked against the pool of eligible women recruits/candidates. Furthermore, these goals should not be constrained by past or current representation of women in the Military Services or estimates of the propensity of women to enter the Service.

Recommendation 2: All Services should systematically increase the accessions of women into the officer and enlisted ranks.

Recommendation 3: All Services should devote sufficient resources to target and increase the recruitment of women into the officer and enlisted ranks.

Reasoning

DACOWITS has historically examined representation of officer and enlisted women in the Military Services. DACOWITS remains concerned about (1) the methods used to establish accession goals or the lack of methods thereof, (2) increasing the number of accessions throughput, and (3) the resources devoted to increasing the recruitment of women, to include female recruiters.

The Committee applauds the Secretary of the Navy for publically stating on September 10, 2014, at the Rutgers Aerospace and Defense Summit, "We don't have enough women in either the Navy or the Marine Corps."⁴² In briefings presented to DACOWITS in 2014, both the Navy and

Marine Corps stated that they had exceeded their female enlisted goals in the accession of recruits from 2004 to 2014 with few exceptions.⁴³ The Navy's female enlisted accession goal increased from 16 percent in 2004 to 23 percent in 2013.⁴⁴ The Marine Corps' female enlisted accession goal increased from 7 percent in 2004 to 9 percent in 2013.⁴⁵ More recently, when asked how it was going to comply with the Secretary of the Navy's desire to increase the number of women in military service, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command briefed the Committee that it has not been given a gender-specific requirement for Active Component accessions and that increasing accessions would be based on propensity, throughput, and operational requirements.⁴⁶ The Navy also said that it had no formal female accession target; however, they were successfully increasing accessions.⁴⁷ In addition, as outlined in a briefing presented to DACOWITS in 2014, CAPT Bouve reported that the Navy is taking steps to examine the issue.⁴⁸

According to a 2015 DoD report from the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), women comprised 15.4 percent of the DoD active duty force through July 2015, while men comprised 84.6 percent. Since 2000, the percentage of female active duty officers has increased 2.5 percent (from 14.4 percent in 2000 to 17.0 percent in July 2015), while the percentage of female active duty enlisted members has increased only 0.4 percent (from 14.7 percent in 2000 to 15.0 percent in July 2015). Although this data does reflect a small overall increase in the numbers of women across a 15-year span, the Committee considers an increase of slightly more than 2 percent for officers, and a less than .5 percent increase for enlisted, not acceptable.⁴⁹

In contrast, the Coast Guard established a goal of 20 percent female accessions in 2003. It did not reach that goal until 2009, but it has exceeded it every year since.⁵⁰ Additionally, the Coast Guard devoted 39 percent of its marketing resources this past year specifically to attract women.⁵¹ Because the Services are now in the process of opening units and positions previously closed to women, there is much room for growth in the representation of women in both the officer and enlisted ranks. This growth could be accomplished through setting goals, increasing accessions, and targeting additional recruiting resources.

Systematically increasing the accessions of women will entail a compendium of changes in myriad military policy areas. DACOWITS believes policy changes addressed throughout its recommendations will increase the propensity of women to serve in an institution that supports gender neutrality. Strong command emphasis on prevention and zero tolerance of sexual harassment and sexual assault, reasonable and consistent postpartum policies, supportive dual military assignments, adapted performance evaluation standards, properly fitting combat equipment, social media sexual harassment policies, and other policies described within this annual report will assist the systematic increase in accessions of women in the officer and enlisted ranks.

Summary of Briefings Presented to DACOWITS

The Committee received four briefings on the topic of female accessions. In December 2014, the Services briefed the Committee on attrition rates for men and women during delayed entry and basic military training and methods being used to lower the attrition rates for women. In March 2015, the Navy presented a briefing on the recruiting, training, and career management programs the Navy is using to expand the number of women and the method it will use to determine the new recruiting goal for women. Also in March, the Australian Defence Force briefed the Committee on recruitment, retention, promotion, and inclusion of women in the Australian Defence Force. Finally, in June 2015, the Marine Corps briefed the Committee on how it plans to expand the number of women and the methodology it will use to determine recruitment goals. This section presents highlights from the briefings the Committee received. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in FY 2015, see Appendix H.)

In addition to these briefings, the Committee made three requests for information on the topic of female accessions. In December 2014, it requested the Services provide written information on their efforts to recruit women. In March 2015, it requested written information from the Services on Reserve Officers' Training Corps scholarships. In September 2015, it requested a literature review from Insight on propensity of women to serve in the military. (For a full list of DACOWITS' requests for information in FY 2015, see Appendix I).

Delayed Entry Program and Basic Military Training Attrition, December 2014

DACOWITS believes ensuring the Services maintain low attrition rates during the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) and basic military training is vital to the replenishment of the U.S. military. The Committee requested a briefing from the Services on the current attrition rates for both men and women during delayed entry and basic military training and on what, if any, methods are being taken to lower the attrition rates for women.

Table 2.2 provides a summary of the delayed entry attrition rates reported by each Service.

Table 2.2. Delayed Entry Point Attrition Rates for FY 2014

	Total Force	Women	Men
Army, Active Component	9%	14%	8%
Army Reserve Component	7%	10%	6%
Navy	10%	14%	9%
Air Force ^a	—	15%	9%
Coast Guard ^b	—	18%	16%
Marine Corps	16%	24%	14%

^a Figures reported are for FY 2013; FY 2014 data were not yet available.

^b The Coast Guard calculates attrition based on the first service term rather than for the DEP.

Army: Mr. Tom Defilippo, Staff Program Integrator, Training and Doctrine Command

The Army Recruiting Command recruits for both the active and reserve Army, while each State recruits for its Army National Guard. The reserve Army DEP attrition numbers have been slightly lower than for the regular Army; this likely is because reservists are recruited and assigned to a specific troop unit immediately; Reservists have an organization that is already talking to future soldiers, and the unit can invite them to unit activities and functions. Soldiers recruited to active duty merely have a recruiter who maintains contact with them. The Army does not do anything different to reduce attrition for men than for women. The Future Soldier Training Program and Future Soldier Training System DEP Websites help to familiarize individuals with Basic Combat Training (BCT), customs and courtesies, Army history, and Army values. Training on Sexual Harassment/Assault Response & Prevention and suicide prevention is conducted in person by a recruiter. All aspects of the Future Soldier Training Program are voluntary. The Army has seen reduced attrition rates in recent years, but it is hard to pinpoint the cause. In FY 2014, the total attrition rate for DEP was 9 percent for the active Army (14 percent for women and 8 percent for men). For the reserve Army, the total attrition rate was 7 percent (10 percent for women and 6 percent for men).

The Committee inquired about reasons for DEP attrition; the Army cited the period of up to 14 months during which a high school student can change his or her mind about enlisting. Recruiters maintain contact with future soldiers enrolled in DEP, but that becomes more difficult over time. The average delayed-entry timeline is about four months; it is reduced to three months for high school graduates. The impacts of the Future Soldier Training Program on reducing attrition are unclear.

Army BCT attrition rates have remained steady over the past several years. In FY 2014, the total attrition rate from BCT was 7 percent (11 percent for women and 5 percent for men). Methods taken to reduce BCT attrition of women have included assigning one female drill sergeant per platoon as a model/mentor, implementing a standardized Physical Readiness Training across all training centers to reduce injuries and attrition, and implementing Musculoskeletal Action Teams to reduce injuries.

Navy: CDR Kertreck Brooks, Executive Officer, Recruit Training Command, and CDR Denise Spanier, Navy Recruiting Command Liaison

For the Navy Recruit Training Command, overall attrition for FY 2014 was 10 percent, with a rate of 14 percent for women and 9 percent for men, which is slightly below previous trends. The 15-year historical attrition rates (FY 1999 to FY 2013) were 14 percent for women and 10 percent for men. In FY 2014, out of total recruits, 3,806 individuals attrited. People attrite out of training typically due to preservice existing conditions (e.g., medical issues, drug use, psychological conditions); people also attrite because of physical fitness challenges. A Committee member inquired about the high number of attritions because of preexisting conditions and whether that was failure to report or a failure of the screening process. CDR Brooks explained that a large portion of those attritions consist of people who fail to disclose a preexisting medical condition at Military Entrance Processing Stations.

There are several initiatives underway at the Recruit Training Command to reduce attrition. The Training Command adheres to an evidence-based physical fitness training matrix that has reduced stress fracture prevalence by 50 percent. The Command has adopted best practices from other services, such as the boot wear phase-in. The Navy also uses mentoring and peer-to-peer mentorship and provides proactive psychological assets to help increase resiliency. Of people who attrite on an annual basis, 41 percent attrited for psychological reasons such as difficulty adjusting, being away from home, and anxiety. Individuals at risk are sent through the Personal Applied Skills Streaming Program. In FY 2014, 1,193 individuals saw a Counsel and Advocate in Recruit Environment counselor; empowerment groups also help recruits get through boot camp. In addition, there are specific women's health initiatives and chaplains available at Navy boot camp. One Committee member asked about the spike in attrition in FY 2014 during December; CDR Brooks cited the holidays as a common time for attrition.

The Navy has reached a historic low for DEP attrition; in 2013, the total attrition rate was 12 percent (15 percent for women, 11 percent for men). Delayed entry usually lasts four to six months. There are several initiatives underway to reduce DEP attrition. The Future Sailor DEP includes both mandatory and voluntary requirements; DEP meetings are conducted and there is a mandatory indoctrination within 72 hours, completed at home, which builds credibility and rapport with the family and future sailor. There is also voluntary participation in an Initial Fitness Assessment. The "Standards, Transition, Acknowledgement, Requirements, Training Guide" booklet covers core values, terminology, and other topics. The Navy has increased the number of female recruiters (currently at 12 percent), and it conducts a monthly review of attrition data. The Committee inquired about how the Navy has reduced DEP attrition over the years; CDR Brooks attributed it to increasing contacts, increasing family involvement, and answering the future sailor and family's questions quickly and responsively.

Air Force: LtCol Timothy Owens, Deputy Chief of Technical Training Strategic Planning and Policy Division

The Air Force DEP does not have FY 2014 data available yet; however, in FY 2013, attrition rates were 9 percent for men and 15 percent for women. For the Air Force, the key to reducing attrition is a reduction in the length of time an individual spends in DEP as well as using monthly contacts, technology, and commander's calls. The Air Force also has improved the DEP guide to better educate recruits, improved preaccession nutrition information to better prepare recruits for basic military training, and mandated an interview by the recruiter's supervisor prior to release from the DEP pool. When asked about reasons for DEP attrition, LtCol Owens described medical disqualification, moral violations, and the pursuit of a civilian job.

The Air Force has implemented several initiatives for basic military training. It has instituted an Air Force-wide developmental special duty nominative process. It also has increased Military Training Instructor (MTI) manning and improved the ratio of female MTIs, improved MTI deliberate developmental training, added Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and chaplains, and increased reporting opportunities. The Air Force is addressing anemia and iron deficiencies in the trainee population and has redesigned its basic military training. Training is now conducted over a period of 7.5 weeks and culminates with a final capstone week. Current attrition rates are higher for women than for men; the Air Force is examining that issue and taking actions to address and better understand the causes.

Coast Guard: CDR Gina Freeman, Gender Policy Advisor, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Coast Guard Headquarters

The Coast Guard Recruiting Command does not track DEP attrition rates; instead, it relies on Training Center Cape May attrition data to drive management and caretaking decisions for best preparing applicants to succeed in the Coast Guard. (The Coast Guard assesses attrition through the end of a Service member's first enlistment vice completion of basic military training.) In FY 2014, attrition rates were 16 percent overall (24 percent for women and 14 percent for men). In 2012, the Coast Guard spent \$230,000 on reversions and discharges due to injury and physical fitness failures among men and women. It conducted an in-house study on injury prevention and physical fitness and determined that the Coast Guard's overall attrition and reversion rates were impacted not only by physical conditioning, but also by an applicant's personal readiness to transition to military life. The results of the study led to a number of initiatives. While not explicitly targeting attrition rates for women, the Coast Guard Recruiting Command's "Standardized Applicant Caretaking Guide," implemented in September 2013, prepares civilians mentally, culturally, and physically for the rigors of military training. Arrangements can also be made for recruits to visit various Coast Guard units for indoctrination into the culture, courtesies, ranks, and rates. Together, the recruit and the recruiter develop a schedule to guide their interactions; because of liability issues, recruiters do not have the ability to provide workouts for their recruits.

CDR Freeman described several recruit attrition efforts the Coast Guard is using. It has conducted aggressive social media outreach through the social media service Facebook's "Come Ready" campaign, which encourages recruits to arrive at Cape May as prepared as possible. It has instituted arrival physical fitness standards to identify and separate immediately those at greatest risk of costly injury attrition. In conjunction with Service-wide sexual assault prevention and response efforts, the Coast Guard has taken proactive measures to ensure that every recruit finds a training environment that is free of discrimination, recrimination, or intimidation. The Coast Guard also formalized the process by which it addresses recruits who want to leave or refuse to continue training. Prior to being discharged, the member is required to meet with a mental health professional and the commanding officer of Training Center Cape May. Finally, recruits that are being considered for discharge because of poor performance or general unsuitability are given the opportunity to be heard by a Recruit Evaluation Board.

Marine Corps: LtCol Jonathan Swope, Branch Head, Enlisted Recruiting Operations, Marine Corps Recruiting Command

The Marine Corps has reduced the DEP attrition rate steadily over the past several years. In FY 2014, the attrition rate was 16 percent for men and 18 percent for women. The attrition rate was higher in FY 2011 and FY 2012 due to a higher operational pace, but now the Marine Corps is back to a steady state and it can implement its full recruiting program more efficiently and effectively. To reduce attrition, the Marine Corps conducts a detailed briefing with the recruit and parents within 72 hours of enlistment. The Marine Corps also offers weekly "pool functions" designed to inform and prepare the pool of applicants for the mental and physical rigors of Marine Corps Recruitment Training; these functions include physical training, education on the history and customs of the Marine Corps, and preparation for the

mental transition. For women, the Marine Corps offers female-only pool functions and mentorship programs at recruiting stations. Recruiters are held accountable for DEP attrition; each recruiter has a goal of 2–3 successful recruits per month.

One Committee member asked how recruiters are selected; a team goes to Marine Corps commands and finds men and women at the rank of sergeant or higher who have a clean record and are mentally, morally, and physically qualified. About 10 percent of recruiters are volunteers; the average recruiter works with 10–15 recruits and up to five high schools in the assigned area. Attrition at basic training is reported separately for Recruit Depot San Diego (5 percent male attrition in FY 2014; women do not attend Recruit Depot San Diego) and Recruit Depot Parris Island (8 percent male attrition and 15 percent female attrition in FY 2014).

To mitigate attrition at basic training, the Marine Corps is using several initiatives. Both male and female recruits benefit from evidence-based physical training by individuals specifically trained in kinesiology, performance enhancement, and sports medicine. Physical training at the recruit depots is led by trained individuals who are Physical Fitness Advisors to the commanding generals. Civilian, certified athletic trainers treat recruits as part of the Sports Medicine and Injury Prevention program; these trainers have the dual role of assisting the Physical Fitness Advisors and complementing existing Navy Medicine assets in dealing with musculoskeletal injuries. In response to a Committee member's question, LtCol Swope described how the Marine Corps is working on increasing the number of female recruiters.

Increasing Female Accessions, March 2015

On September 10, 2014, at the Rutgers Aerospace and Defense Summit, U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus said, “We don’t have enough women in either the Navy or the Marine Corps.”⁵² Additionally, he cited the importance of a diverse force as a reason for bringing more women into the Services. The Committee requested a briefing on the recruiting, training, and career management programs the Navy is using to expand the number of women and what method it will use to determine the new recruiting goal for the number of women in the Service.

CDR Renee Squier, Director, Navy Diversity and Inclusion Office

CDR Squier described how the Navy has worked since 1978 to increase its population of women from 7 percent in the 1970s to 18 percent in 2015. Despite this progress, women remain the Navy’s most underrepresented demographic. At the time of the briefing, there were 9,178 female officers (17.0 percent of the total force) and 47,527 female enlisted (17.6 percent of the total force). The Navy has worked to integrate female officers first, followed by female chiefs and then female enlisted. Of female Navy officers, 54 percent are in the staff corps, 12 percent are in a restricted line (i.e., positions that support the warfare effort, such as human resources), and 30 percent are in an unrestricted line (i.e., warfighting communities such as surface warfare, and aviation). For positions held by female enlisted, 14 percent are sea intensive (e.g., mechanic), 30 percent are sea centric, 30 percent are shore centric, 17 percent are shore intensive (e.g., legalman), and 9 percent are undesignated (i.e., generalists who are part of the Professional Apprenticeship Career Tracks program and have not yet chosen their ratings).

Gender diversity in the Navy is improving overall. Officer and enlisted accession trends for women match the increasing overall percentages of women in the Navy, and the Service is focusing

on retaining these women. The hardest time to retain sailors is when they reach the end of their respective initial service obligation periods. The Navy is working with individuals at that juncture to help them meet their personal and professional aspirations as well as to achieve work-life balance and geographic stability.

Concerning gender integration, CDR Squier reported the Navy is increasing the presence of women in operational billets as well as across all jobs and ranks. The Navy is increasing professional opportunities for women; by January 1, 2016, there will be no closed occupations and a limited number of closed positions. All submarine occupations/NECs are now open. The Navy is also increasing the number of gender-neutral racks at sea; since 1994, all surface ship berthing has been built to be gender neutral. The Navy is increasing female accessions and has a goal to increase the proportion of enlisted women in the Service to 25 percent. The current freshman class at the United States Naval Academy is 28.8 percent women. In addition, the Navy has worked to improve retention by increasing career flexibility and expanding family resources. A member of the Committee asked about the number of positions the Navy expects to keep closed to women after the January 1, 2016 decision; CDR Squier said that number has not been finalized, but she does not expect it to pose much of a challenge for women.

The Committee also inquired about the Navy's Career Intermission Program, which allows individuals to take a leave of absence and then return to their careers. In the six years since the program has been operating, there have been 82 participants; 31 were officers and 51 were enlisted. Thirty-four participants have returned to their jobs, 36 are participating in the leave program, and 12 are waiting for their intermissions to start. Of the total participants, 43 percent were men and 57 percent were women. The Navy is seeing positive retention trends, with individuals being able to resume their careers after intermission without penalty; of the three officers who have come up for promotion or review after their intermissions, one was promoted to O6 and the other two were selected at their milestone career points. The program was written into legislation, and the Navy expects it to continue. Most participants cite one of the following reasons for participating: family planning; furthering education; family hardship; or, for participants and partners who are dual military, ensuring continuity of care for their children and/or aligning their careers. The Navy established a contract with participants through which they are obligated to perform two months of service for every month of intermission. The Navy's focus is on retaining quality individuals, and not all who apply to the program are accepted.

Australian Defence Update, March 2015

DACOWITS has a longstanding relationship with the Australian Defence Force, and it invited the Gender Adviser to the Chief of the Defence Force to brief the Committee on the integration of women.

Ms. Julie McKay, Gender Adviser to the Chief of the Australian Defence Force

Before being appointed to the role of Gender Adviser, Ms. McKay was the Executive Director of the National Committee for UN Women. The role of Gender Adviser was established in April 2014, and Ms. McKay described how she spent much of that year visiting installations

and talking to Australian servicewomen about challenges they face in the military; information she gathered on these trips conflicted with the survey data the Defence Force had collected on those same issues. Australia has made some progress; overall participation of women and their participation in leadership roles across all three Services are increasing, but slowly. Ms. McKay reported that the period during which women are most likely to leave the Force is after they have children—something the Defence Force is working to address. The four priority areas for the Gender Adviser are recruitment, retention, promotion, and inclusion.

As it has been for the U.S. military, establishing targets and goals for the number of women in the Defence Force is controversial. The Force is working on creating performance measures to monitor the progress of each Service. To gain support for the creation of targets and goals, the Force looked to the corporate sector and CEOs. These private-sector representatives confirmed the need for performance measures to motivate progress and cited findings that show that in the civilian world, women need to make up 30 percent of a workplace for them to feel empowered. The Army's female enrollment goal for 2025 is 15 percent, up from the current rate of 12.8 percent, and 25 percent for the Navy and Air Force, up from their current rates of 16 percent and 18 percent, respectively. Ms. McKay has noticed that the more conversations that are held about these enrollment targets and that focus on merit, performance, and potential, the less controversial the targets become. Again leveraging private-sector findings and recommendations, the business case for integrating the Defence Force is strong. Given that recruitment goals have not been met for years, there is a need for more inclusive recruitment standards. From an intelligence standpoint, integrating more women into the Force would increase its capability and safety in areas of the world where men are not allowed to talk to women; in those areas, male troops can collect information from only 50 percent of the population. In addition, research has shown that co-ed teams are more effective than single-gender teams; mixed-gender platoons have outperformed all-male platoons. The Defence Force cited private sector research from the rail freight-control industry, which went from an all-male workforce to a 40-percent female workforce over four years. This industry found that performance and safety improved over that time.

Flexibility in the workplace is important for women, but it is hard for Service members to live a "normal" life within the structure of the military. Many young female recruits in Australia are excited about joining the military, but already know at a young age they will leave before they have children. The Force is also reviewing data that show men leave the military because of lack of flexibility. The Chief of the Air Force took a three-year career break and successfully returned to work; it was the first time a leader in the Force took a career break and was not disadvantaged. Currently, 1 percent of the Force's members are permitted workforce flexibility; the Force aims to expand this privilege to 2 percent of members within five years. There are a number of informal flexibility arrangements in place; paperwork for formal flexibility scenarios has been a barrier.

Another barrier to retaining women in the Force has been childcare. Seventy-eight percent of women return to work after having a child, but eventually leave because they say childcare is too hard to manage; Chiefs said women who left the Force after having a child cited childcare as the reason in 50 percent to 60 percent of cases. Ms. McKay has heard many women complain of exclusion once people learn they are pregnant; women described being taken out of their roles and treated differently. The Defence Force Gender Equality Advisory Board will continue to study the aspect of inclusion for women in the Force. Similar to the perspective held by some in the

United States, there is a cultural narrative in Australia that the military is inherently masculine. Ms. McKay described several examples of putting leaders into positions to experience the potential discrimination and lack of inclusion that women regularly face.

Increasing Female Marine Corps Accessions, June 2015

On September 10, 2014, at the Rutgers Aerospace and Defense Summit, U.S. Navy Secretary Mabus said, “We don’t have enough women in either the Navy or the Marine Corps.”⁵³ Secretary Mabus went on to cite the importance of a diverse force as a reason for bringing more women into the Military Services. The Committee requested a briefing on ways the Marine Corps plans to expand the number of women in the Service and the methodology it will use to determine recruitment goals.

LtCol Jonathan Swope, Branch Head, Enlisted Recruiting Operations, Marine Corps Recruiting Command

LtCol Swope began by stating the Marine Corps recognizes the need to recruit more high-quality female candidates. With support from three members of his team, he reviewed his Service’s efforts to reach this population. The Marine Corps faces several obstacles to female recruitment. Overall, female propensity to serve in the Military Services (including all branches) is relatively low; among youth ages 16 to 21, only 8 percent of women said they were likely to serve. Research on potential female recruits shows a career in the Military Services is largely outside the area of consideration for women, and they may lack knowledge about the mission of the different branches. Of those young women who were interested in military careers, most were considering the Air Force, Navy, or Army; only 17 percent named the Marine Corps as their Service of choice. This may be due in part to the narrower scope of jobs available to Marines; propensed women may also be less likely to see themselves fitting in as traditional Marine “warriors.” Through their recruitment efforts, the Marine Corps hopes to provide women with better information and recognition of what it means to be a Marine.

Despite these challenges, LtCol Swope reported positive momentum in recent years. For example, Marine Corps female officer accessions have increased, and more women have started to accept Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarships. He described Marine Corps leadership’s commitment to female recruitment and his team’s research-based efforts to effectively market to women. For example, research has shown prospective female Service members want to see examples of women leading men and working alongside men, and they want to know Service members can have work-life balance and a family. These findings have been incorporated into recent Marine Corps recruitment projects targeting women. The briefing included several promotional videos, including a video for the “Women on a Mission” campaign. In contrast to the old concept of “A Few Good Men,” this campaign emphasizes recruiting talented women and allows current female Marines to share their stories across various social media platforms.

In addition to advertising, the Marine Corps has developed a range of outreach efforts. In 2014, the Marine Corps conducted more than 15 events specifically targeting women. These allow in-depth educational experiences for prospective female Marines as well as for their key influencers. Events include the Women in Aviation symposium, where Marines can share

their stories with women interested in a range of aviation careers; there is also an immersion experience for women's basketball coaches at Marine Corps bases, so they can inform their players of opportunities in the Military Services.

The Committee inquired about the Marine Corps' target for recruiting and retaining women. Currently, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command has not been given a gender-specific requirement for Active Component accessions, and increasing accessions will be based on propensity, throughput, and operational requirements. However, if the Marine Corps were suddenly to recruit large numbers of women, LtCol Swope did not anticipate any logistical challenges that would prevent them from being trained and put to work.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

In its study of this topic in 2013 and 2014, DACOWITS received several briefings from the Services and the DoD Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies (JAMRS) program. The most relevant pieces of information from these briefings are included here; however, readers are urged to review the 2013 and 2014 reports for more detailed summaries of these briefings. This section presents relevant literature and other resources on female accessions beyond the previously referenced briefings and materials provided to the Committee. Tables 2.3 and 2.4 provide a breakdown of gender and rank for each of the Military Services as of September 2015. Appendix K provides tables with similar breakdowns for 2011–2014. Figure 2.3 presents the percentages of female members in each Service over the past five years. The percentages in Tables 2.3 and 2.4 and Figure 2.3 were calculated using DMDC workforce data.⁵⁴

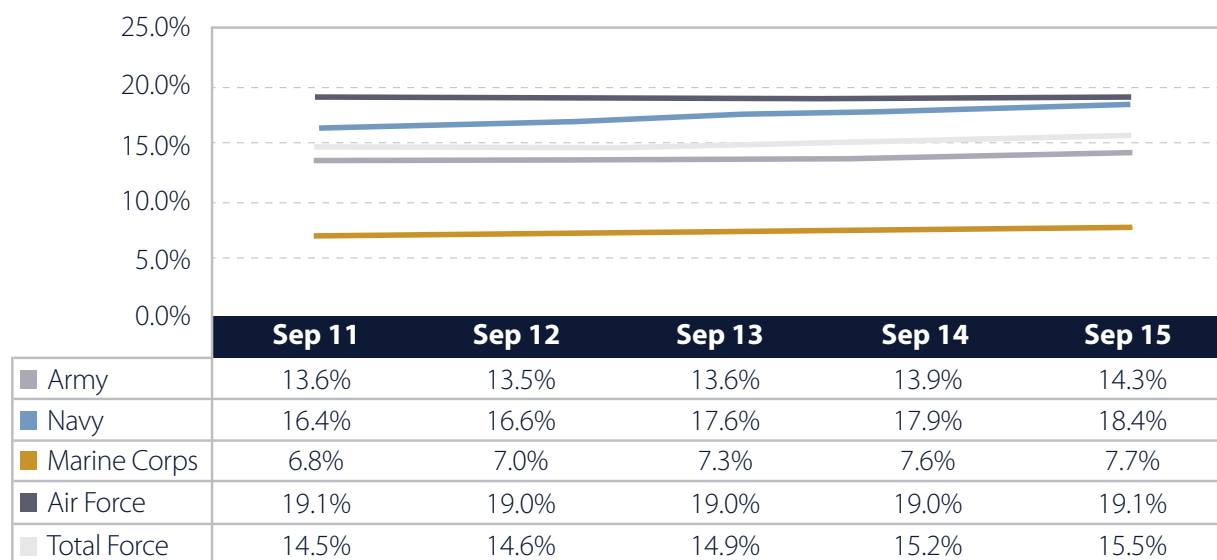
Table 2.3. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Officer by Service, September 2015

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (15,948)	% Male (78,662)	% Female (9,414)	% Male (44,792)	% Female (1,456)	% Male (19,192)	% Female (12,367)	% Male (48,637)	% Female (39,185)	% Male (191,283)
O10	0.00	100.00	10.00	90.00	0.00	100.00	15.38	84.62	7.89	92.11
O9	8.33	91.67	8.57	91.43	0.00	100.00	4.88	95.12	6.38	93.62
O8	6.50	93.50	11.11	88.89	0.00	100.00	10.31	89.69	8.06	91.94
O7	5.22	94.78	9.26	90.74	3.03	96.97	3.45	96.55	5.48	94.52
O6	11.40	88.60	12.13	87.88	2.38	97.62	13.67	86.33	11.72	88.28
O5	13.41	86.59	11.59	88.41	3.85	96.15	14.88	85.12	12.81	87.19
O4	17.73	82.27	15.49	84.51	5.59	94.41	18.83	81.17	16.46	83.54
O3	20.22	79.78	19.59	80.41	6.58	93.42	22.09	77.91	19.43	80.57
O2	19.20	80.80	22.14	77.86	10.06	89.94	24.53	75.47	20.07	79.93
O1	20.36	79.64	20.82	79.18	11.60	88.40	23.90	76.10	20.66	79.34
W5	6.14	93.86	8.33	91.67	2.83	97.17	0.00	100.00	5.90	94.10
W4	8.65	91.35	5.79	94.21	5.36	94.64	0.00	100.00	7.91	92.09
W3	9.07	90.93	4.35	95.65	4.71	95.29	0.00	100.00	8.04	91.96
W2	10.31	89.69	8.93	91.07	7.05	92.95	0.00	100.00	9.84	90.16
W1	9.51	90.49	0.00	100.00	5.85	94.15	0.00	100.00	9.18	90.82
Total	16.86	83.14	17.37	82.63	7.05	92.95	20.27	79.73	17.00	83.00

Table 2.4. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Enlisted Service Members by Service, September 2015

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (53,405)	% Male (338,922)	% Female (49,855)	% Male (219,273)	% Female (12,625)	% Male (150,144)	% Female (46,289)	% Male (200,033)	% Female (162,174)	% Male (908,372)
E09	8.08	91.92	6.22	93.78	3.70	96.30	13.57	86.43	8.27	91.73
E08	11.15	88.85	8.29	91.71	4.95	95.05	19.78	80.22	11.18	88.82
E07	11.80	88.20	11.67	88.33	5.76	94.24	19.30	80.70	13.23	86.77
E06	10.60	89.40	13.20	86.80	6.63	93.37	19.68	80.32	13.30	86.70
E05	13.60	86.40	17.57	82.43	8.26	91.74	18.93	81.07	15.54	84.46
E04	14.75	85.25	20.87	79.13	8.28	91.72	17.75	82.25	15.85	84.15
E03	15.38	84.62	23.91	76.09	7.77	92.23	19.16	80.84	16.68	83.32
E02	15.54	84.46	23.77	76.23	8.86	91.14	19.30	80.70	15.69	84.31
E01	14.55	85.45	27.28	72.72	7.06	92.94	18.79	81.21	16.21	83.79
Total	13.61	86.39	18.52	81.48	7.76	92.24	18.79	81.21	15.15	84.85

Figure 2.3. Percentages of Women in Each Service, 2011–2015



Recruitment Goals

As part of its 2011 recommendations to address the underrepresentation of women in the Military Services, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC) recommended that the Services develop goals for minority applicants, including women, and develop and submit a strategic plan to DoD (or, for the Coast Guard, to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security) that includes “. . . robust metrics to track the success of recruiting from underrepresented demographic groups.”⁵⁵ Based on the information provided during the Services’ briefings to DACOWITS in 2013 and 2014, the Services took varied approaches to recruitment

goals. Both the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard indicated they had goals for female officer accessions; the Air Force had recently begun setting goals for this as well. For enlisted accessions, the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard all reported having recruitment goals for women. During these briefings, both the Army and the Air Force reported a belief that recruitment goals for women were prohibited by law; however, a representative from OSD's Office of General Counsel indicated there was no legal basis for the concern that goals, including numerical goals, are unconstitutional. As long as goals are not tied to specific actions, there is no legal conflict with having them; for recruitment, goals can be used because outreach activities do not necessarily correlate with enrollment in the military.

Propensity to Serve

In addition to the use of recruitment goals, the Committee received information on the basis for these goals. Nearly all of the Services indicated that research by JAMRS on propensity to serve at least partially informed the development of their recruitment goals for women. The Army cited the research as a primary factor in its goal development, and the Marine Corps reported its accession goals are based on an algorithm of propensity, retention, and throughput capacity. The other Services indicated that propensity affects their recruitment but did not specify by how much. Despite the Services' emphasis on propensity, research indicates it is important to reach out to the non-propensed as well as the propensed.^{56,57} The Committee on the Youth Population and Military Recruitment undertook an examination of the effects of the attitudes and aspirations of America's youth on military recruitment, culminating in a 2003 report.⁵⁸ The Committee concluded that though recruitment of the propensed appeared to be the Services' primary strategy, there would soon be too few propensed youth to satisfy the Services' recruitment needs. MLDC's recommendation that "A key objective of the Office of the Secretary of Defense advertising should be to increase the propensity of the youth population to enlist" acknowledged this problem.⁵⁹ In 2014, DoD publicly acknowledged the concern regarding propensity; as reported in an article in *TIME*, "Only 1 percent of young people are both 'eligible and inclined to have conversation with' the military about possible service."⁶⁰

Given the Services' emphasis on JAMRS propensity studies, DACOWITS received a separate briefing from JAMRS to explain the findings of its research. JAMRS' research revealed that very few women have an interest in military service, with 8 percent of women and 21 percent of men showing a propensity to serve. JAMRS attributed this in part to women's greater interests in education and professional careers, which women often see as incompatible with military service. In addition, many women lack confidence in their ability to succeed in the military, and women recruits expressed more concerns than their male counterparts did about leaving family and friends and completing boot camp. In addition, women often come to the decision to join the military later in life than men. Among women, the Air Force is the most desired Service, with the Army and Navy as the next most desired, followed by the Marine Corps.

When DACOWITS focus group participants in 2013 and 2014 were asked for suggestions on recruiting more women, they most commonly recommended retaining more female recruiters. Participants felt female recruiters could show the diversity of women who successfully serve and could answer women's questions about being in the military in a way that male recruiters were

often unable to do. Participants also felt female recruiters were better able to relate to other women and could show how success in the military is possible for women. JAMRS research similarly revealed that recruiters play a particularly important role in sparking women's interest in the military and in influencing their decisions to join.

Recruitment Efforts Targeting Women

All of the Services indicated they have recruiting activities focused on women, from the more traditional approach of disseminating targeted marketing materials to other efforts such as sponsoring female athletic events and engaging women through professional affinity groups. Having recruitment efforts designed to target women is important, as research has shown that men and women do not respond the same way to marketing, and marketing campaigns designed for men are not as effective at reaching women.⁶¹ According to Mollet and Weir (2005), "To effectively portray women, advertisers should consider that the gender of the model be congruent with the audience's perception of the product, the role setting of the woman should fit the environment and product benefits, the portrayal of the woman be modern rather than conventional, and the depiction of the woman be in a believable manner."⁶² DACOWITS focus group participants in both 2013 and 2014 felt that more advertisements showing women in the military would increase female accessions, though research shows that other recruitment efforts may be more effective. While early research on the effectiveness of military advertisements showed the advertisements had a significant positive effect on short-term enlistment behaviors, more recent research has shown such advertisements were less likely than other factors to influence individuals' decisions. In other words, while the advertisements could enhance beliefs about the Services, they did not influence interest in the Services.^{63,64,65,66}

Properly Fitting Combat Equipment

In 2015, DACOWITS continued to monitor the Services' responses to its 2012, 2013, and 2014 recommendations that the Services work collaboratively to provide women with properly designed and fitted combat equipment as soon as possible.

This part of Chapter 2 is organized into the following sections:

- Continuing Concern
- Summary of Briefing Presented to DACOWITS
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Continuing Concern

This section provides DACOWITS' 2015 continuing concern related to properly fitting combat equipment and summarizes the reasoning in support of this continuing concern. The continuing concern and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 2.

Continuing Concern: Properly Fitting Combat Equipment

This continuing concern is similar to ones expressed by DACOWITS in 2013 and 2014. Providing servicewomen with properly designed and fitted combat equipment is essential to their safety and well-being, unhindered performance of military duties, and overall military readiness. Therefore, continued collaboration between the Marine Corps and Army on product development, testing, and procurement of properly fitting combat equipment for servicewomen is crucial.

One provision of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2015 requires that combat equipment for women be properly designed and fitted and meet standards for wear and survivability.⁶⁷ The Army's approach has been to procure and field combat gear sized for females: the Female Improved Outer Tactical Vest, Protective Insert Sizing Improvements, Family of Concealable Body Armor, and the Protective Under Garment.⁶⁸ The Marine Corps, on the other hand, views the fit of combat gear as an issue of stature, not an issue of differences in male/female physiques.⁶⁹ Over the past few years, the Marine Corps has recognized a need for combat equipment that is adjustable and fits smaller stature Marines, the majority of which are female. It has also identified the need to modify its inventory to better accommodate the female population. To that end, the previous combat gear inventory was designed to fit male Marines in the 5th to 95th body size percentile. The new inventory will be expanded to cover a wider range of body sizes, from the 5th percentile for women up to the 95th percentile for men.

Furthermore, in a brief to DACOWITS, the Marine Corps told the Committee it believes the current gender-integration effort could potentially lead to the development of new gender-specific equipment.⁷⁰ With that in mind, the Committee remains concerned that without future communication and collaboration between the Marine Corps and the Army, there could be additional lost opportunities for economies of scale in procurement and delays in timely development and distribution of this equipment. DACOWITS believes that all Service members should have properly fitted individual combat equipment so that they are safe and can perform at the highest level.

Summary of Briefing Presented to DACOWITS

The Committee received one briefing on properly fitting combat equipment. In June 2015, the Marine Corps updated the Committee on its efforts to develop personal protective equipment and clothing that properly fits female Marines. This section presents highlights from that briefing. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in FY 2015, see Appendix H.)

Marine Corps Personal Protective Equipment Presentation, June 2015

At the Marine Corps' request, an update on the latest efforts for Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing for female Marines was provided to the Committee.

Col Daryl Crane, Product Manager, Infantry Combat Equipment, Marine Corps System Command

Properly fitting combat equipment is imperative for all Marines to accomplish their missions. In recent years, the Marine Corps has recognized the need for combat equipment that fits smaller

stature Marines, including women. Combat equipment is designed to be modular and to fit a range of body sizes. It has also identified the need to modify its inventory to better accommodate the female population. The previous combat gear inventory was designed to fit male Marines in the 5th to 95th body size percentile. The new inventory will be expanded to cover a wider range of body sizes, from the 5th percentile for women up to the 95th percentile for men. However, while there is a small amount of funding to conduct equipment research and development, the current budget for new equipment is very limited.

Body armor systems were covered in additional detail. There are two primary systems: Plate Carriers and Improved Modular Tactical Vests. Plate Carriers are smaller and designed to allow for more mobility, which is a particular concern for the Marine Corps. The Improved Modular Tactical Vest provides additional neck, groin, and lower back protection against direct fire and fragmentation, but weighs roughly four pounds more than an equivalently sized Plate Carrier.

Col Crane said current equipment meets the needs of female Marines. However, the current gender-integration effort could potentially lead to the development of gender-specific equipment. Training on combat equipment is available at all major Marine Corps bases and online through the social media service YouTube. He also indicated the Marine Corps works with the Army to leverage its efforts where appropriate; for example, in developing protective undergarments and the Soldier Protective System.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section provides relevant literature and other resources on properly fitting body armor. The concern around properly fitting combat equipment is not new; however, it has become even more pertinent in recent years as additional combat-related positions are being opened to women. Women in the military and other male-dominated, physically demanding career fields have long struggled with the lack of properly fitting personal protective equipment. For example, a 1999 report by the U.S. Department of Labor on personal protective equipment for women construction workers references studies by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the Department of the Army that showed “most tools, equipment, and clothing are not designed for a women’s physique.”⁷¹

Research in biological anthropology (the study of body height, weight, and size) has shown that ill-fitting equipment can lead to both injuries and diminished performance. According to Gordon (2012), “If you go into combat with a chemical protective ensemble or body armor that doesn’t fit, you are at higher risk. The mildest thing that could happen is that it will impair your physical performance because it doesn’t fit you well, so your biomechanics are off. The worst thing that can happen is that it can increase your risk of injury.”⁷² For example, women have an increased risk for stress fractures as a result of training in combat boots that are not designed for women’s smaller and narrower feet. This issue was raised by members of Congress in a recent report issued by the Senate and House Armed Services Committees on FY 2016 spending.⁷³ Similar concerns have been raised regarding the deleterious effects of body armor issued to Service members; the armor was shown to diminish one’s ability to shoot a weapon and to cause pain during extended wear.⁷⁴



Chapter 3

Wellness Research and Recommendations

The Committee examined six Wellness topics in 2015: military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault; strengthening the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program; the impact of social media on Service members; pregnancy and postpartum policies; improvements in the use of protected health information; and Marine Corps PES improvements. This chapter is divided into six sections aligning with each of the Wellness study topics. The Committee's recommendations, continuing concerns, and reasoning are provided for each section.

Military Culture and the Elimination of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

The Committee's focus in 2015 included military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault, following a long history of DACOWITS research on this topic. In 2011, the Committee hosted focus groups among active duty Service members to inquire about the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault, prevention programs, reporting procedures, and the impact of sexual harassment and sexual assault on mission readiness. During its 2013 focus groups, the Committee studied the increase in reports of sexual assaults at the Military Service Academies and examined the effectiveness of sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention programs. In 2014, the Committee focused on initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to sexual harassment and sexual assault throughout DoD and the Services. In 2015, the Committee's primary research was centered on gaining a better understanding of the facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault; much of this discussion focused on military culture.

This part of Chapter 3 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendations and Continuing Concern
- Summary of Briefing Presented to DACOWITS
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendations and Continuing Concern

This section provides DACOWITS' 2015 recommendations on military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as its continuing concern surrounding sexual harassment and sexual assault training and retaliation. The recommendations, continuing concern, and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 3.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary of Defense, Service Secretaries, and Joint Chiefs of Staff should communicate a united, passionate, and powerful message to the Armed Forces that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not part of our military culture.

Recommendation 2: The Service Chiefs should send verbal and written communications to Service members emphasizing that sexual harassment and sexual assault are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The message should embrace aggressive accountability of sexual harassment and sexual assault offenders, and those who were knowledgeable of the attacks and did nothing.

Reasoning

The Committee believes that the first step toward changing this negative aspect of our culture requires overt actions from the top leaders of each Military Service, enforcing strict accountability as passionately and seriously as mission accomplishment itself.

Military culture emphasizes tenets such as discipline, professional ethos, cohesion, and hierarchy, prioritizing the group above the individual to achieve the highest level of mission readiness. Military culture prides itself on being a family as well as a workplace. Notwithstanding this strong culture, startling statistics on sexual harassment and sexual assault continue to provide evidence that there remain within the military offenders of sexual harassment and sexual assault; this tarnishes military culture and undermines mission readiness and the dignity and safety of all Service members.

DACOWITS has consistently reported the impact of sexual harassment and sexual assault issues on the recruitment and retention of women in the military. Over the years, we have learned that this is not only a women's issue. RAND's 2014 "RAND Military Workplace Study"⁷⁵ revealed that more servicemen experienced sexual assaults than servicewomen, based on the number of assaults by gender and the higher proportion of men to women (a 6:1 ratio) serving in the military. Thousands of Service members have experienced sexual assault. Workplace violence has serious social, economic, and security consequences. Whether these attacks occur on or off duty, sexual assaults are criminal acts. The RAND research also identified that military culture tends to socially isolate those who report sexual assault. This retaliation undermines workplace safety and security and undermines cohesion and the goal of mission readiness. The RAND military workplace study report states that 62 percent of Active Component women who officially reported a sexual assault perceived experiencing professional or social retaliation.⁷⁶ Reporting an offender needs to be viewed as strengthening unit cohesion. Only when the military environment and culture changes can sexual harassment and sexual assault be eliminated.

The Forbes Magazine article “The Key to Changing Organizational Culture,”⁷⁷ published in 2012, lists three key findings:

1. “Culture consists of group norms of behavior and the underlying shared values that help keep those norms in place.”⁷⁸
2. “A powerful person at the top, or a large enough group from anywhere in the organization, decides the old ways are not working, figures out a change vision, starts acting differently, and enlists others to act differently. If the new actions produce better results, if the results are communicated and celebrated, and if they are not killed off by the old culture fighting its rear-guard action, new norms will form and new shared values will grow.”⁷⁹
3. “Some group decides what the new culture should be. It turns a list of values over to the communications or Human Resource departments with the order that they tell people what the new culture is. They cascade the message down the hierarchy, and little to nothing changes.”⁸⁰

It is important to know that this discussion is not just an issue of honor, dignity, and respect; it is an issue of leadership that directly affects mission accomplishment. If there is a failure of leadership in supporting the high moral standards of respect for one another, then unit cohesion suffers, and operational mission success is directly degraded.

Embracing the importance of completely eliminating this unacceptable behavior is most clearly exhibited in the now-famous speech given by the Chief of the Australian Army, Lieutenant General David Morrison. He very deliberately and forcefully spoke to the Australian Army about the scourge of sexual harassment and sexual assault. He told his Service members, “Those who think that it is OK to behave in a way that demeans or exploits their colleagues have no place in this Army.” He added, “On all operations, female soldiers and officers have proven themselves worthy of the best traditions of the Australian Army. They are vital to us maintaining our capability now and into the future. If that does not suit you, then get out.” He also stated—in the best example of a top-down effort toward accountability in his Service—“I will be ruthless in ridding the Army of people who cannot live up to its values and I need every one of you to support me in achieving this.”⁸¹

In an effort to stop sexual assault within DoD, DoD’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) reported to DACOWITS in late 2014 that there are reforms being developed to reinforce a culture of honor, dignity, and respect in the military.⁸² The Military Services need to eliminate this unacceptable behavior by embracing an aggressive accountability of all offenders—both those who committed the crimes and those who did nothing to prevent and/or stop them. In DoD’s recent “Report to the President of the United States on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response,”⁸³ surveys showed a decrease in the prevalence of sexual assault since the establishment of SAPRO. SAPRO’s prevention line of effort is centered on the climate assessment process, which is designed to cause organizational change. It uses Service member feedback to hold commanders accountable for encouraging and supporting a climate of dignity and respect. The DMDC “Survivor Experience Survey”⁸⁴ and

DMDC focus groups⁸⁵ on sexual assault prevention and response showed improvements in DoD leadership's support, treatment, and response toward sexual assault. These improvements are excellent and noteworthy; however, sexual assault and sexual harassment are still occurring in our Military Services.

U.S. military culture can be changed. The Committee believes that modeling behavior and communicating an overt, passionate, and powerful message from leaders at all levels (starting at the top) reinforces our military culture of professionalism, teamwork, and unit cohesion—to include all Service members, all the time. We believe this not only will reduce incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault but also will strengthen our Armed Forces and improve our mission readiness.

Continuing Concern: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Training and Retaliation

Retaliation. Since 2011, the Committee has been studying sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military and continues to believe that combating these problems requires sustained and concentrated action, particularly in the area of retaliation and prevention training. RAND's 2014 study found that an estimated 20,300 of the approximately 1.3 million Active Component Service members were sexually assaulted in the past year. The risk of sexual assault varied substantially by branch of service. Men and women in the Air Force experienced substantially lower rates of sexual assault than those in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. The majority of sexual assaults for both Active Component and Reserve Component members were perpetrated by other military personnel and occurred in military settings. Many who reported sexual assault perceived some type of retaliation. The study found that 62 percent of Active Component servicewomen perceived that they experienced professional or social retaliation after reporting a sexual assault.⁸⁶ Since DoD's last administration of its "Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members" to gather information on sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military, conducted in 2012,⁸⁷ there has been improvement in all areas except retaliation. The SECDEF has requested the development of a strategy to prevent retaliation associated with reporting crimes and other misconduct.⁸⁸ DACOWITS intends to follow this issue and DoD ongoing initiatives closely in the coming year.

Prevention Training. During the 2015 focus groups, Service members said that sexual harassment and sexual assault training had started to change military culture and attitudes. While the training was regarded as necessary and useful by most, participants criticized the content, delivery, and frequency of the training. Some of the participants perceived Microsoft PowerPoint lectures and computer-based training to be less effective than interactive skits and lectures in cultivating awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault. With that in mind, The Department of the Navy SAPRO retained the interACT performance troupe to engage sailors, Marines, and civilians in theatrical role-playing to break the cycle of sexual assault, eliminate stereotypes associated with sexual assault, and enforce the Navy's zero-tolerance policy toward sexual assault. Rather than be passive observers, to date, more than 50,000 audience members have been invited on stage to become active participants.⁸⁹ Because training is so important in the prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment, DACOWITS would like to see the other Services adopt this interactive approach to training.

Summary of Briefing

DACOWITS received one briefing related to military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault. In June 2015, representatives from RAND briefed DACOWITS on gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in FY 2015, see Appendix H.)

In addition to this briefing, the Committee made one request for information on the topic of military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault. In June 2015, it requested information from DoD SAPRO, the DoD Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO), and the Services on the potential career effects on women who report sexual harassment and sexual assault. (For a full list of DACOWITS' requests for information in FY 2015, see Appendix I).

Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Assault Briefs, June 2015

In early 2014, at the request of SAPRO, the RAND National Defense Research Institute conducted an independent assessment of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination in the Military Services. The Committee requested briefings from SAPRO on the findings of this study, with particular focus on the following: the number of active duty men and women who have experienced gender discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault in the past year; the differences in rates of these offenses by Military Service; Service members' experiences with support and prosecution; and a summary of actions taken by SAPRO and the Military Services as a result of these findings.

Dr. Nathan Galbreath, Senior Executive Advisor, SAPRO, and Ms. Kayla Williams, Senior Project Associate, RAND

Since 2012, SAPRO has been moving forward on addressing more than 100 NDAA provisions, 50 SECDEF initiatives, and 132 Response Systems Panel recommendations, including initiatives designed to prevent retaliation for reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. In past years, DoD collected information on sexual harassment and sexual assault through its workplace and gender relations survey. When 2012 survey results reflected an increase in incidents compared with previous years, SAPRO sought outside assistance to ensure the instrument captured accurate and useful information on sexual harassment and sexual assault. This led to RAND's newly launched military workplace survey.

Ms. Williams described the methodology and results from RAND's study, which featured an improved survey instrument that more closely aligned with the sexual harassment and sexual assault language used in the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Approximately 560,000 Service members were invited to complete the survey, including all female Service members, 25 percent of male Service members, and a random sample from the National Guard. The survey received 170,000 responses for a roughly 33-percent response rate. From these responses, RAND estimated 20,300 Active Component Service members were sexually assaulted in the past year, 43,900 experienced gender discrimination, and 116,000 were sexually harassed. Rates of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault varied by Service.

Since the survey data were representative of both men and women, RAND was able to capture differences in sexual harassment and sexual assault between male and female Service members. For example, relative to women, men who were sexually assaulted were more likely to experience multiple incidents over the course of a year; be assaulted by multiple offenders at work or during duty hours; describe events as “hazing”; and experience physical injuries or threats of physical injuries during a penetrative sexual assault. Relative to men, women were more likely to experience a sexual assault that involves alcohol use and were more likely to tell someone else about the event or file a report. There were several other noteworthy findings from the study. For example, there was a close correlation between past-year sexual harassment and past-year sexual assault, meaning preventing sexual harassment might also help prevent sexual assault. Additionally, more than half of the Active Component women who officially reported a sexual assault perceived experiencing social retaliation. RAND made several policy and research recommendations based on its findings.

Dr. Galbreath described SAPRO’s efforts related to sexual assault prevention and response, focusing on the justice and reporting process. He first described actions taken against offenders, noting DoD authorities had sufficient evidence to take disciplinary action against three out of four military suspects in FY 2014. For cases where DoD was able to take action, the majority of sexual assault allegations were addressed through court-martial. Dr. Galbreath also mentioned changes to the training for commanders and criminal investigators and changes to the Article 32 process, including not requiring survivors to testify at the hearing. Of the 12 metrics and six non-metrics SAPRO used to examine its progress in addressing the NDAA provisions, SECDEF initiatives, and Response Systems Panel recommendations, perceived retaliation was the one metric that did not show improvement.

SAPRO also tracked sexual assault survivors’ experiences throughout the reporting process. In the past year, a record number of survivors chose to participate in the justice process and access care—an estimated 25 percent, up from only 7 percent in 2006. To learn more about their experiences, DoD administered the “Survivor Experience Survey,” which is the first DoD-wide survey effort designed to assess the use and effectiveness of sexual assault services and resources available to military survivors of sexual assault. The survey revealed survivors were largely satisfied with the level of support they received, and an increasing number of restricted reports were being converted to unrestricted, a potential sign of increased trust in the system. This year, SAPRO will continue this line of inquiry by conducting a new “Victim Justice Experience Survey” to examine survivors’ satisfaction and experiences with the legal process.

Summary of Focus Group Findings

The Wellness Working Group has maintained its interest in studying sexual harassment and sexual assault in the Military Services as it has over the past several years. In 2015, the Committee focused on facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. Among other topics, the Committee asked participants about the impact of military culture, and the effects of the chain of command and offender’s rank, on reporting. DACOWITS conducted 41 focus groups on facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. A summary of focus group findings is provided in Sections A through D. (For a full presentation of the focus group findings, see Appendix G.)

The Impact of Military Culture on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Participants were asked to describe the ways that military culture supports the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Respondents discussed how military culture and policy have changed over the years and have fostered a climate that better supports reporting. Participants also described how the Military Services had developed a formalized process to handle allegations. The representatives and victim/survivor advocates that assist sexual harassment victims and sexual assault survivors were viewed as a useful resource that facilitated reporting. Men and women described how increased training, awareness, and avenues for reporting have led to increases in the number of sexual harassment and sexual assault cases being reported. Although reporting has increased, some participants emphasized that there still is room for improvement in how the Military Services handle this issue.

In the context of military culture, several participants discussed how the values, morals, and camaraderie of the Military Services could help curtail sexual harassment and sexual assault and create an environment that supports reporting. These values encourage individuals to look out for one another and ensure they receive the support they need. Although the Committee did not raise the issue during the focus group discussion, a few individuals spontaneously noted that the Military Services have provided a means for reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as an emphasis on reporting, that is not found in the civilian sector. While participants generally agreed reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault had increased, some noted that certain aspects of military culture could dissuade individuals from reporting, such as anticipated unintended consequences (i.e., stigmatization and career concerns), male reluctance to report, and uncertainty about reporting outcomes. Circumstances unique to small units and remote locations also were mentioned as a barrier to reporting.

The Impact of Chain of Command on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Participants observed that efforts by one's chain of command to address sexual harassment and sexual assault were highly visible and could inspire confidence in those considering reporting. Many participants said it was important to be able to trust one's command. Without trust, individuals might be less likely to report because they might lack confidence that anything would be done. A few men and women discussed how sexual harassment and sexual assault by leaders could erode trust in the chain of command and discourage individuals from reporting. Some men and women described how removing one's immediate chain of command from the restricted reporting process has helped encourage reporting. They noted that the restricted reporting process has helped those who lacked trust in their leadership, were concerned about bias or inaction, or were embarrassed to report to their superiors. A small number of women observed that women might be more willing to report sexual harassment or sexual assault if there were a woman in their chain of command. Female leaders were viewed as being more likely to address inappropriate behavior.

The Impact of Offender's Rank on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Many men and women reported that an offender's rank could discourage someone from reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault. Reporting peers was regarded as being considerably easier than reporting a superior. Participants noted that some individuals might be dissuaded from reporting out of fear of retaliation by the accused. Participants indicated there was a perception that higher ranking individuals were more credible than lower ranking ones. Fear that others would dismiss the accusation of a superior by a subordinate might decrease reporting.

Perceptions of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Training and Its Effects on Military Culture

While training on sexual harassment and sexual assault varied across Services, many men and women discussed how the focus on sexual harassment and sexual assault training has started to change military culture and attitudes. Many men and women emphasized the importance of their command in cultivating an environment that encourages the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section presents relevant literature and other resources on the topic of military culture and the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Role of Leadership and Accountability

The role of leadership in preventing sexual harassment and sexual assault has been of continuing concern to DACOWITS. From 2011 through 2014, DACOWITS focus groups have addressed this topic. In 2013, for example, focus group participants at military academies were asked what they could do as leaders to prevent and address sexual harassment and sexual assault. Participants talked mostly about how they would set the tone of their command by having zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior; modeling good behavior; creating an environment of professionalism, respect, and empathy; and engaging with their subordinates. Focus group participants in 2014 were also asked how confident they were that the system would hold sexual harassment and sexual assault offenders accountable. Although some were confident in the system, many expressed frustration with double standards, favoritism, a lack of anonymity, and insufficient overall accountability. The importance of leaders being receptive to information from subordinates has been widely reported.⁹⁰ In one 2014 article, the author examined the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs scandal in 2014 and noted how employees' fear of reporting "bad news" led to a culture of malpractice and acceptance of negative norms. The author concluded that it is the responsibility of leaders to encourage employees not only to report a problem but also to help address the problem. Retaliation against those who report sexual harassment and sexual assault poses a major threat to increasing accountability and changing military culture.

Increasing accountability can help prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault. Education and training programs that focus on bystander intervention can help members of an organization

hold peers accountable.⁹¹ Empowered members are a part of the solution in bystander approaches; they often create organizational and cultural shifts by intervening in situations of sexual harassment and sexual assault. To empower members, it is necessary for leadership both to increase accountability and reporting as well as to communicate a message that leadership is receptive to these changes and is itself making changes. According to John Kotter, an expert on organizational change, leaders need to “walk the talk.”⁹² When leaders from the lowest to the most senior levels of leadership become living examples of the new culture, it motivates organization members to change. Kotter recommended that the vision of the change be “communicated in hour-by-hour activities, anywhere and everywhere—the vision must be referred to in emails, meetings, presentations, company newsletters, and internal training programs.”⁹³ He suggested communication should be simple and repetitive, explain inconsistencies, and encourage feedback. Communication that aims to change organizational cultures must inform and create a community among members.⁹⁴ Clear, consistent information helps to increase the feeling of community among members, which in turn will promote accountability and mutual respect.

Sexual Assault Education Programs in the Military

DoD continues to address recommendations made by GAO through SAPRO. In 2004, DoD created the SAPRO Task Force, and by January 2005, DoD had presented a comprehensive policy on prevention and response on sexual assault to Congress. This policy was implemented in October 2005, and the SAPRO Task Force began transitioning into a permanent office that very month.⁹⁵

According to the 2014 study “Sexual Assault Training in the Military: Evaluating Efforts to End ‘The Invisible War,’” SAPRO training initiatives have undergone little evaluation by outside researchers; it is standard practice in the military to use participant self-reporting to evaluate the effectiveness of military sexual assault training efforts. The study found exposure to comprehensive training predicted lower sexual assault incidence and superior knowledge of sexual harassment and sexual assault issues. However, comprehensive training differed as a function of military branch, rank, gender, and sexual assault history. Judgments of training effectiveness also varied across these dimensions. The results highlight the importance of considering context, gender, and victimization history when evaluating institutional efforts to end sexual violence.⁹⁶ In its 2010 annual report on military sexual assault, DoD concluded that “most active duty members receive effective training on sexual assault”⁹⁷ but the findings of Holland, Rabelo, and Cortina (2014) cast doubt on that assertion.⁹⁸

Effectiveness of Sexual Assault Education Approaches

In a meta-analysis conducted by Anderson and Whiston (2005), researchers found “longer interventions (length of time in minutes) seemed to be more effective in altering both rape and rape-related attitudes.”⁹⁹ In 2011, another meta-analysis on sexual assault programs found “programs that have multiple sessions with long session lengths particularly those with a lecture-based format are effective at improving rape attitudes and rape myth acceptance.”¹⁰⁰ At the same time, single-session programs such as the Men’s Program, which is

aimed at men in college fraternities and uses an intense visual teaching aid (the “NO MORE” video), and the InterACT performance troupe, which uses audience participation in role-playing, have been shown to have a lasting effect on participants.

Another debate in the literature focuses on whether programs designed for a single-sex audience or a mixed-sex audience are more effective in educating participants about sexual assault and promoting participants’ efficacy against assault culture and actual threats. Anderson and Whiston (2005) found in their meta-analysis that there was no statistically significant difference in benefits for men in all-male groups compared with men in mixed-gender groups.¹⁰¹ However, Vladutiu, Martin, and Macy (2010) found “interventions targeted toward a single-gender audience are effective at improving rape attitudes, behavioral intent, rape awareness, rape knowledge, rape empathy, and rape myth acceptance”¹⁰² as compared with mixed-sex programs.

Finally, another major difference in how programs are implemented is whether they are led by trained peer facilitators or professional presenters. Anderson and Whiston (2005) found “professional presenters [were] more successful while graduate students and peer presenters were less successful in promoting positive change.”¹⁰³

Strengthening the Effectiveness of the Sexual Harassment Program

The Committee’s focus in 2015 included strengthening the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program following a long history of DACOWITS research on this topic. In 2015, the Committee’s primary research centered on gaining a better understanding of the facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault; much of the focus of this research was on the sexual harassment program.

This part of Chapter 3 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendations
- Summary of Briefing Presented to DACOWITS
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendations

This section provides DACOWITS’ 2015 recommendations on strengthening the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program. The recommendations and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 3.

Recommendation 1: The Department of Defense should immediately complete the report required by Congress on the effectiveness of the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in addressing sexual harassment.

Recommendation 2: The Department of Defense should require that the Services provide at least the same attention to preventing and responding to sexual harassment as they do to preventing and responding to sexual assault.

Reasoning

The 2011 GAO report “Preventing Sexual Harassment: DoD Needs Greater Leadership Commitment and an Oversight Framework”¹⁰⁴ pointed out that sexual harassment programs in DoD suffered from limited staff resources, lack of oversight, no plan to monitor incidents, no way to measure progress, and no method to communicate results. GAO recommended improving leadership commitment to preventing and responding to sexual harassment, compliance, accountability, and oversight of the sexual harassment program. DoD concurred with GAO’s recommendations and reported to DACOWITS in 2013 that it was in the process of implementing the recommendations and making changes to DoD Directive (DoDD) 1350.2 with respect to sexual harassment and sexual assault.^{105,106}

Although ODMEIO has implemented a few of the GAO recommendations, it remains severely underresourced, and sexual harassment cases continue to receive insufficient attention. In its 2013 report, DACOWITS recommended that DoD and the Services combine efforts to develop one program to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault.¹⁰⁷ This has been successfully accomplished by some of the Services.

Following the 2013 DACOWITS annual report, NDAA 2014 required a review of ODMEIO to be completed by January 2016.¹⁰⁸ The purpose of this review was to determine whether sexual harassment cases should continue to be evaluated and addressed by ODMEIO; evaluate the working relationship between ODMEIO and SAPRO in addressing sexual harassment; identify and evaluate ODMEIO resource and personnel gaps; and determine ODMEIO’s ability to track sexual harassment cases.

DoD reported to DACOWITS in June 2015 that it still had not completed its required congressional report nor revised DoDD 1350.2 with respect to sexual harassment, including social media harassment. Yet RAND’s 2014 military workplace study found that sexual harassment remains a persistent and serious problem and that there is a close correlation between sexual harassment and sexual assault.¹⁰⁹ The RAND study was based on a representative sample of 170,000 respondents; the data revealed an estimated 116,600 Service members were sexually harassed in the previous year, far more than were sexually assaulted. However, ODMEIO received only 736 reported formal complaints and 686 informal complaints of sexual harassment in FY 2014. The variance between the number of incidents reported in the study and that reported by ODMEIO is disturbing. RAND recommended that DoD expand sexual harassment and gender discrimination monitoring, prevention, and accountability practices and that it equip commanders with data and guidance to take effective actions. With the creation of SAPRO, DoD has in recent years significantly increased efforts by the Services to prevent and respond to sexual assault. It is well past time for DoD to ensure that the Services provide the same attention to preventing and responding to sexual harassment.

Summary of Briefing

DACOWITS received one briefing related to strengthening the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program; this briefing is summarized in Section A. In June 2015, a representative from ODMEIO briefed DACOWITS on gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in FY 2015, see Appendix H.)

In addition to this briefing, the Committee made two requests for information on the sexual harassment program. In September 2015, the Committee requested written responses from the Services on sexual harassment training provided to Service members. In September, it also requested a literature review from Insight on successful proactive sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention programs. (For a full list of DACOWITS' requests for information in FY 2015, see Appendix I).

Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Assault Briefs, June 2015

In early 2014, at the request of SAPRO, the RAND National Defense Research Institute conducted an independent assessment of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination in the Military Services. The Committee requested briefings from ODMEIO on the findings of this study, with particular focus on the following: the number of active duty men and women who have experienced gender discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault in the past year; the differences in rates of these offenses by Military Service; Service members' experiences with support and prosecution; and a summary of actions SAPRO and the Military Services have taken as a result of these findings. ODMEIO presented data it had collected on sexual harassment incidents in the Military Services.

Mr. James E. Love, Acting Director, ODMEIO

Mr. Love opened by differentiating sexual harassment—the topic of his briefing—from sexual assault. While sexual harassment is commonly monitored and tracked by equal opportunity advisors, including ODMEIO, sexual assault is considered a crime and handled by military and criminal investigative offices. Mr. Love stated that the DoDD that governs sexual harassment is being converted to a DoD Instruction (DoDI) expected to be released in fall 2015. The current DoDD on this topic was published in 1995. The new DoDI will include strengthened requirements for addressing sexual harassment, policies that hold commanders and DoD responsible for developing and conducting training to combat sexual harassment, and procedures for filing formal and informal complaints as well as handling anonymous complaints.

ODMEIO has collected data on sexual harassment for two years. This data comes directly from the Military Services; ODMEIO has no access to data on individual cases. Many of the findings Mr. Love presented focused on substantiated cases of sexual harassment, meaning reported cases that have undergone a standard investigation or inquiry process and contain at least one founded allegation. In the past year, ODMEIO tracked 1,422 formal and informal sexual harassment complaints. It found 57 percent of overall complaints were substantiated at similar rates across formal and informal reporting channels. Most offenders (83 percent) and complainants

(94 percent) were enlisted Service members, with males more likely to be offenders and females more likely to be complainants. Other top-level findings involved the location, timing, and nature of complaints. Mr. Love noted that Service members were most commonly sexually harassed while on duty, most complaints were made within 60 days, and the most frequent type of complaint involved crude and offensive behavior. He described each of these findings in further detail over the course of the briefing and reported on the ways in which offenders were held accountable for their actions.

The Committee expressed concern about ODMEO's capacity to monitor and track sexual harassment cases effectively. Members commented, for example, on the seemingly low number of reported cases as compared with estimated numbers of actual incidents, and the lack of detail on individual incidents. Mr. Love acknowledged there are likely more instances of sexual harassment than there are reported cases, since some cases are not reported and others may be resolved informally. ODMEO has employed additional methods to get a better sense of the problem; this includes the annual administration, starting in 2013, of the "Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute's Organizational Climate Survey." Some of the information captured by this survey was also captured by the 2014 RAND study on which the Committee was briefed at the June meeting (described in Section A of this chapter). Nonetheless, many of the Committee's concerns about sexual harassment tracking are not being addressed under the current system.

In the briefing materials provided to the Committee, Mr. Love noted that a report on ODMEO's role regarding sexual harassment cases was scheduled to be submitted to Congress on June 1, 2015, and may address some of these challenges. It included a review of ODMEO's current capabilities, including any resource, personnel, and technological gaps (for example, Mr. Love noted the current process to collect sexual harassment data is laborious and not automated). It also examined the relationship between ODMEO and SAPRO in developing initiatives to prevent sexual harassment.

Summary of Focus Group Findings

In 2015, DACOWITS conducted 41 focus groups on facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. In these focus groups, DACOWITS also studied and reported on sexual harassment and sexual assault training in 2013 and 2014; while training was not a specific focus of the 2015 groups, the topic was repeatedly mentioned by participants, often in the context of broader discussions on military culture. An overview of the findings from the focus groups is provided in the next Section A. (For a full presentation of the focus group findings, see Appendix G.)

Perceptions of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Training

Participants were asked to describe the ways that military culture supports the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Respondents discussed how military culture and policy have changed over the years and fostered a climate that better supports reporting. Participants also described how the Military Services had developed a formalized process to handle allegations. The representatives and victim advocates that assist sexual harassment

victims and sexual assault survivors were viewed as a useful resource that facilitated reporting. Men and women described how increased training, awareness, and avenues for reporting have helped increase reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault cases. Although reporting has increased, some participants emphasized that there still is room for improvement in how the Military Services handle this issue.

While training on sexual harassment and sexual assault varied across Services, many men and women discussed how the focus on sexual harassment and sexual assault training has started to change military culture and attitudes. While the training was regarded as necessary and useful by most, participants criticized the content, delivery, and frequency of the training. Some men and women noted that training has been excessive; however, these individuals also recognized the importance of training in conveying the message that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated. Some participants perceived Microsoft PowerPoint lectures or computer-based training to be less effective than interactive skits in cultivating awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault. A small number of women thought training was overly focused on sexual assault and did not sufficiently explore sexual harassment. A few individuals also observed a lack of training on sexual harassment and sexual assault against men.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section presents relevant literature and other resources on the effectiveness of the sexual harassment program.

Congressional Directive to Review the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity Role in Sexual Harassment Cases

In Section 550 of the NDAA for FY 2014, Congress required the SECDEF to conduct a review of ODMEO.¹¹⁰ The purposes of the study as outlined in the NDAA were as follows:

- Identify and evaluate the resource and personnel gaps in the Office.
- Identify and evaluate the role of the Office in sexual harassment cases.
- Evaluate how the Office works with SAPRO to address sexual harassment in the Armed Forces.

One month following the enactment of the FY 2014 NDAA, the SECDEF issued a memorandum regarding the annual review of the “Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Strategic Plan.”¹¹¹ According to the 2015 version of the plan, one of the specific tasks directed at ODMEO was to “review ODMEO role in sexual harassment cases—identify how ODMEO works with SAPRO to address sexual harassment.”¹¹² This task was given a “short” time frame for completion (one year from the date the memorandum was issued: January 26, 2015).

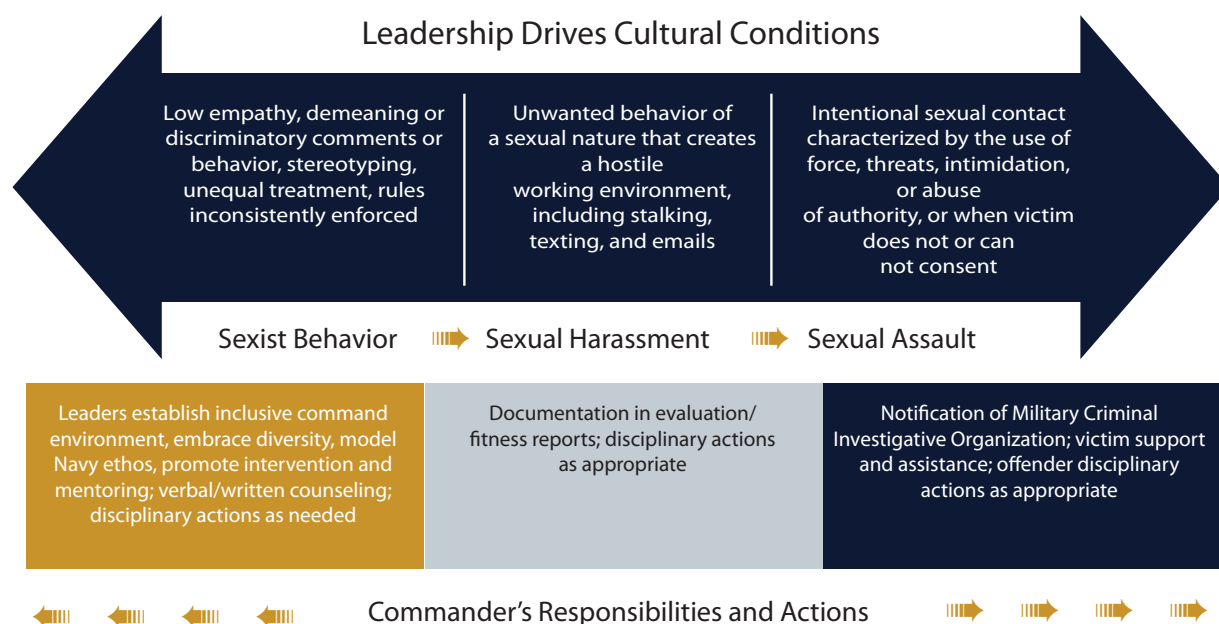
Link Between Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a widespread phenomenon with negative consequences for both individuals and organizations. In his 2007 report to the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute,¹¹³ sociologist Dr. Richard Harris described how individuals who have

experienced sexual harassment have been found to experience career interruptions, lowered productivity, lessened job satisfaction, lowered self-confidence, loss of motivation, physical health ailments, and loss of commitment to work. Organizations can suffer reduced productivity, turnover, absenteeism, employee transfers, loss of loyalty, lowered levels of job satisfaction, and health costs.

In the 2013 DACOWITS annual report, the Committee cited numerous studies demonstrating that creating an environment free of sexual harassment is an important step in preventing sexual assault;¹¹⁴ readers are encouraged to review the 2013 annual report for more information. The results of the 2006–2012 administrations of DoD's workplace and gender relations survey show that both men and women were more likely to be sexually assaulted in situations in which environmental sexual harassment was present than when it was not;¹¹⁵ 50 percent of women and 40 percent of men who had experienced sexual assault were sexually harassed by the offender before or after the incident.¹¹⁶ In September 2014, RADM Rick Snyder, Director of the Navy's Twenty-First Century Sailor Office, briefed DACOWITS on his Office's efforts toward strengthening its sexual harassment prevention and response efforts.¹¹⁷ He presented a framework that guides the Office's activities. (See Figure 3.1.)

Figure 3.1. Association Between Leadership, Sexist Behavior, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Assault¹¹⁸



The framework illustrates the role of leadership in driving the culture and working environment for sailors and the specific responsibilities and actions of commanders to do so.

The Impact of Social Media on Service Members

In 2015, DACOWITS began a new line of study, the impact of social media on Service members. The study was prompted by the Committee's concern surrounding social media use and online bullying and harassment.

This part of Chapter 3 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendations
- Summary of Request for Information
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendations

This section provides DACOWITS' 2015 recommendations on the impact of social media on Service members. The recommendations and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 3.

Recommendation 1: The Department of Defense and the Services should revise their definition of sexual harassment and any regulations pertaining to the use of social media to clarify that conduct or speech that takes place wholly online can itself constitute sexual harassment.

Recommendation 2: The Services should revise and implement sexual harassment training that addresses online harassment, anonymity, and the consequences of online behavior both on- and off-duty.

Reasoning

Online harassment is a growing and pervasive part of our society, both inside and outside the workplace. The Pew Research Center's 2014 report on online harassment estimates 40 percent of all Internet users and 65 percent of young people ages 18–29 who use the Internet have been harassed online.¹¹⁹ As those statistics pertain to young women, 25 percent reported being sexually harassed, 23 percent being physically threatened, and 18 percent being harassed over a sustained period of time. While males of the same age group were more likely than women to experience online harassment, including threats of physical harm and sustained harassing, women were more likely to experience the more severe forms of harassment, including stalking, sexual harassment, and inferences of sexual assault. Additionally, 92 percent of Internet users agree that online environments allow people a level of anonymity that potentially could encourage sexual predators. With that in mind, the increased use of social media across all aspects of the military makes it necessary to directly address varying forms of online harassment, accountability, and consequences.

DoD's accepted definition of sexual harassment is "a form of sexual discrimination that involves unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. . . ." ¹²⁰ DACOWITS believes that this should be amended to include wording that clearly states that "verbal and physical conduct" includes online/Internet/social media contact as well. Sexual and gender harassment on the Internet can occur in a variety of ways and through a variety of mediums. Some of these media include chat rooms, Internet forums, message boards, social networking sites, instant messaging, and e-mail. The fluidity of online terms and technology requires that any wording added to the definition be all encompassing to include all future technological social media changes.

Summary of Request for Information

The Committee made one request for information on the topic of social media. In March 2015, it requested the Services provide written information on its social media policies. (For a full list of DACOWITS' requests for information in FY 2015, see Appendix I).

Summary of Focus Group Findings

The impact of social media on Service members was a new focus group topic in 2015. DACOWITS conducted 30 focus groups on the topic of social media in 2015. Social media was also a topic of discussion in the 41 focus groups conducted on facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. Participants were prompted to discuss their use of social media; military culture surrounding social media; changes in attitudes over time toward social media; advantages and disadvantages to using social media; policies and training around their use of social media; the impact of social media on bullying, harassment, and gender-integration efforts; and social media's potential impact on reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. An overview of the findings from the focus groups is provided in Sections A through D. (For a full presentation of the focus group findings, see Appendix G.)

Impact of Social Media on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Opinions about the influence of social media on reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault varied among Service members. Participants were more likely to say social media would discourage rather than encourage reporting. Service members spoke about how social media could be used to blackmail or slander individuals who were contemplating reporting. Social media could also be used as a form of retribution to revictimize someone who has already reported an act of sexual harassment or sexual assault, therefore deterring others from following suit; this theme was more commonly reported among women. Social media could affect whether a report was restricted or unrestricted, sometimes without the awareness of the victim/survivor. Service members described how social media has made it hard to keep incidents and reporting private. Service members were less likely to say that social media could have a positive impact in encouraging reporting of sexual harassment or sexual

assault. However, they did describe some positive aspects; for example, social media could be used by victims/survivors to share their experiences and encourage others to stand up for themselves and could encourage victims/survivors who are feeling vulnerable or alone to speak up. Some Service members believed that social media had no impact on reporting. Participants expressed how social media could be used in positive or negative ways after a report of sexual harassment or sexual assault has been filed, such as to paint the victim/survivor in a negative light, to show support for the victim/survivor, or to show how offenders were held accountable, which could encourage other victims/survivors to report.

Understanding of Social Media Policies and Guidelines

Focus group participants were asked about social media policies and guidelines in general rather than in the specific context of sexual harassment and sexual assault; however, many of their comments in this section are relevant to social media's impact on sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Focus group participants had varying opinions about military social media policies. Senior Service members felt social media use was at least partially governed through broader policies pertaining to general conduct such as the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Some participants' comments, however, suggested that these policies could be difficult to apply to social media; they recognized the challenges leaders face in deciding when online behavior violates policy, and if it does, what to do about it. Many Service members referred to guidance and recommendations they received on social media use, rather than to strictly enforced official policies. Many focus group participants felt existing policies and guidelines pertaining to social media were unclear, inconsistent, or poorly communicated. Some were unsure whether social media policies or guidance existed at all. Many participants noted social media provided new ways to monitor Service members' behavior and ensure their compliance with relevant policies. The majority of participants agreed being a member of the Military Services was more than a 9-to-5 job; it dictated behavior outside of conventional working hours and thus limited what Service members should be able to post online. Though participants generally agreed that Service members were restricted in what they could say on social media, some felt the Military Services were limited in their ability to curtail personal social media use. Just as focus group members felt policies and guidelines on social media could be inconsistent, they perceived inconsistency in punishments or expressed differing expectations about what would result in punishment.

Assessment of Social Media Training

As with the section above, focus group participants were asked about social media training in general rather than in the specific context of sexual harassment and sexual assault; however, many of their comments in this section are relevant to social media's impact on sexual harassment and sexual assault. Opinions on social media training were mixed. Some Service members commented positively on the amount and quality of social media training they received. Most focus group participants agreed the Military Services provide education related to security (including operations security) in particular. Although some participants indicated Service members received adequate training on social media use, many others identified a need for more training or different kinds of training. Participants questioned the effectiveness of computer-based training in this area.

Impact of Social Media on Bullying and Sexual Harassment

Focus group participants were asked about the role social media might play in bullying and sexual harassment. Many participants said that social media was used to bully and/or harass, while others said it either did not play a role or was not something the Military Services should regulate. Focus group discussions yielded more examples of online sexual harassment than bullying, though many participants noted issues with both. In discussions of sexual harassment and social media, focus group participants were more likely to provide examples of women than men being sexually harassed. Sometimes, rather than attacking an individual, bullying or sexual harassment took place through broader forums such as websites, such as by propagating memes. Female participants from one Service discussed derogatory content targeting women on social media. Many focus group participants perceived that bullies or harassers benefited from the distance social media provides from their targets; they were more likely to say things that they might not say in person. A number of focus group participants felt that bullying and sexual harassment on social media were not major issues. Participants had different opinions about whether the Military Services should address the problem. Participants in a few focus groups felt victims of online bullying or harassment could avoid the issue by terminating contact with offenders; these individuals felt it was the victim's responsibility to prevent being bullied/harassed. A few participants also thought victims could be blamed for the problem in some cases.

Many participants agreed social media could be used as evidence of online bullying and harassment in cases when Service leadership becomes involved to address the situation.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section presents literature and other resources pertaining to online sexual harassment. We briefly discuss the history of the military response to sexual harassment, provide definitions, describe online sexual harassment and its particular impact on women, and highlight efforts to address online sexual harassment.

Current Definitions of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is an ongoing problem in workplaces across the United States. First established as a sociolegal phenomenon in the 1970s, sexual harassment continues to be experienced by many women and some men in various organizational settings. Research consistently shows that individuals who experience workplace sexual harassment suffer significant psychological, health, and job-related consequences.¹²¹

To protect Service members against these negative impacts, the military has enacted mechanisms to combat sexual harassment. These include informal and formal complaint procedures for victims of sexual harassment and training courses on the subject. DoD currently defines sexual harassment as the following:

"...a form of sex discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when—

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, or career, or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."¹²²

This definition is broad and encompasses both quid pro quo types of harassment: (1) the exchange of work-related benefits or consequences for sexual favors through bribes, threats, or even physical force, and (2) environmental harassment, including unwanted sexualized actions to alter, interfere with, or affect one's work performance by creating a hostile and offensive work climate.¹²³ Due to the nature of the military, the definition of "working environment" can be broadly interpreted to potentially include conduct on or off duty, 24 hours per day.

Online Sexual Harassment

While DoD definitions of sexual harassment are deliberately broad, the Internet provides new and sometimes unanticipated forums for sexual harassment that may not be specifically addressed in DoD's current definition. Furthermore, the online environment provides harassers with relative anonymity, constant access to their victims, and the ability to disseminate harmful information quickly and widely.

Types of online sexual harassment evolve as quickly as the Internet. Sometimes, forms of sexual harassment that occur in person, including in the workplace, take a similar form online. For example, gender harassment is a form of sexual harassment that involves unwelcome verbal and visual comments and remarks that insult individuals because of their gender. In person, this may include behaviors such as posting pornographic pictures in public places or making gender-related degrading remarks; online, this may take the form of posting inappropriate images or making negative gender-related comments in a group on social media or through direct online communication.¹²⁴ Other forms of sexual harassment are unique to the online medium. These include:

- **Cyberstalking.** This is a group of behaviors in which the use of information and communications technology is intended to cause emotional distress to another person. This may include making threats, false accusations, abusing the victim, attacking data and equipment, attempting to gather information about the victim, impersonating the victim, encouraging others to harass the victim, ordering goods and services on behalf of the victim, arranging to meet the victim, and physical assault.¹²⁵
- **Nonconsensual Pornography.** This behavior involves the distribution of sexually graphic images of individuals without their consent. This includes images originally obtained without consent (e.g., hidden recordings or recordings of sexual assaults) as well as images originally obtained with consent, usually within the context of a private or confidential relationship (e.g., images consensually given to an intimate partner who later distributes them without consent, popularly referred to as "revenge porn").¹²⁶

Researchers and policymakers alike have identified harms associated with these newer forms of sexual harassment. Legal scholar Danielle Citron noted that harms from sexual harassment in networked spaces are as tangible as those inflicted by sexual harassment in the workplace.¹²⁷

She adds that cyber harassment can have severe and serious consequences for victims, who may struggle to keep jobs when searches of their names online yield compromising photographs, withdraw from activities when anonymous posters threaten to rape them, or miss opportunities when they sign offline to avoid abuse. In sum, online sexual harassment is a serious problem, and victims may be deprived of crucial life opportunities because of online sexual harassment.¹²⁸

Online Sexual Harassment's Impact on Women

Research indicates that women are disproportionately affected by online sexual harassment. For example, a 2014 report from the Pew Research Center highlighted young women's vulnerability to particularly harmful forms of online harassment.¹²⁹ These researchers identified two distinct but overlapping categories of online harassment. The first, less severe form included name-calling and embarrassment—a common form of online harassment that people often ignore. The second, more severe form targeted a smaller segment of the online public but involved worse experiences such as physical threats, harassment over a sustained period, stalking, and sexual harassment. While young men were more likely to experience the first form of harassment, young women were more likely to experience the second form. Of women between the ages of 18 and 24 years old who had experienced online harassment, 26 percent had been stalked online (compared with 7 percent of men) and 25 percent were the target of online sexual harassment (compared with 13 percent of men). Relatedly, women were more likely to describe their recent experiences with online harassment as extremely or very upsetting (38 percent of harassed women, compared with 17 percent of harassed men). Additional research supports the prevalence of sexual harassment among women and suggests that spreading images of nonconsensual pornography primarily affects women and girls.¹³⁰

Recent news stories have drawn attention to issues in online sexual harassment. For example, following the “Gamergate” controversy over online attacks against women in video game culture, Representative Katherine Clark urged DoJ to investigate and prosecute online threats and cyber abuse crimes targeting women. In an editorial published in *The Hill* earlier this year, she noted that federal prosecutors “pursued only 10 cyber stalking cases between 2010 and 2013.”¹³¹ News outlets have highlighted other cybercrimes, including a hacker's accessing and disseminating celebrity nude photos¹³² and the challenges of regulating cyberstalking.¹³³

Regulation of Online Sexual Harassment

Regulating and prosecuting online harassment is a complex matter. Federal and local laws address the issue in various ways. For example, federal laws on stalking allow prosecutors to pursue individuals who use electronic means to harass others,¹³⁴ and some States have enacted specific cyberstalking and cyber harassment laws.¹³⁵ However, in her 2012 article “Sexual Harassment 2.0,”¹³⁶ Mary Anne Franks suggested that discrimination law has not kept pace with the evolving nature of sexual discrimination: “Its two principal limitations are (1) it treats only sexual harassment that occurs in certain protected settings (e.g., the workplace or school) as actionable and (2) it assumes that both the activity and the resulting harm of sexual harassment occur in the same protected setting. Thus, it is unable to address

any harassment that occurs completely or partially outside of traditionally protected settings.” Additionally, a federal working group formed to determine if new laws were needed to address Internet crime found that laws governing online conduct should be “analyzed through a policy framework that ensures that online conduct is treated in a manner consistent with the way offline conduct is treated, in a technology-neutral manner, and in a manner that takes account of other important societal interests, such as privacy and protection of civil liberties.”¹³⁷ This literature suggests that laws intended to protect individuals from online harassment should both explicitly address online harassment while also using language broad enough to accommodate constant changes in the online environment.

Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies

The Committee’s interest in pregnancy and postpartum policies is based on its belief that these issues are critical to the wellness and readiness of military women and, therefore, the overall force. DACOWITS studied pregnancy and postpartum issues in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2013. The Committee’s focus in 2015 was on pregnancy and postpartum policies, specifically operational deferment, breastfeeding, and postpartum physical fitness testing.

This part of Chapter 3 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendations and Continuing Concern
- Summary of Briefings Presented to DACOWITS
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendations and Continuing Concern

This section provides DACOWITS’ 2015 recommendations and continuing concern about pregnancy and postpartum policies. The recommendations, continuing concern, and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 3.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary of Defense should require that the Services evaluate, at least every two years, their policies regarding operational deferment in the case of pregnancy.

Reasoning

DoD has established a floor of four months of operational deferment for servicewomen who have given birth to a child.¹³⁸ The Services differ on how much time they have opted to grant for operational deferment. The Air Force¹³⁹ and Navy¹⁴⁰ have decided, in the current operational environment, that they can grant up to 12 months of deferment. On the other hand, the Army¹⁴¹ and Marine Corps¹⁴² have decided that operational needs require a shorter operational deferment period of six months. The Committee understands the need for flexibility in operational deferment policies and Service-specific policies, consistent with the floor set by DoD. However, the Committee also

believes that to ensure these policies are informed by current actual operational needs, they should be reviewed on a regular basis, no less frequently than every two years. The same logic would apply to the operational deferments provided in the case of adoption.

Recommendation 2: Given the importance of breastfeeding to healthy children and mothers, the Department of Defense should require the Services to increase the number and quality of lactation rooms available throughout the Military Services.

Reasoning

There is a growing emphasis on breastfeeding nationwide. According to the “2014 Breastfeeding Report Card,” breastfeeding rates continue to rise in the United States.¹⁴³ Currently, 27 States and the District of Columbia have laws protecting breastfeeding in the workplace.¹⁴⁴ Data from the breastfeeding report card show that 79.2 percent of newborns have breastfed; 49.4 percent were breastfeeding at six months, decreasing to 26.7 percent breastfeeding by 12 months.¹⁴⁵

Breastfeeding offers proven health benefits for children and mothers. In her 2011 “Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding,” the Surgeon General called breastfeeding “One of the most highly effective preventative measures a mother can take to protect the health of her infant and herself.”¹⁴⁶ In 2012, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) reaffirmed its breastfeeding guidelines.¹⁴⁷ Breastfeeding provides the healthiest start for an infant and promotes a unique bond between mother and baby. AAP, the American College of Nurse-Midwives, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the World Health Organization, and the United Nations Children’s Fund all recommend exclusive breastfeeding for approximately the first six months of a child’s life, followed by breastfeeding and the introduction of complementary foods until at least 12 months of age, and continuation of breastfeeding for as long as mutually desired by mother and baby.^{148,149,150,151} This recommendation is supported by infant health outcomes; breastfeeding protects against a number of infant health problems (e.g., respiratory illness, ear infections) and has even been shown to have a positive impact on adolescent and adult obesity. Choosing to breastfeed should be considered an investment in the short- and long-term health of the infant rather than a lifestyle choice.

The 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act’s Break Time for Nursing Mothers Provision¹⁵² requires employers to provide employees with the right to pump breast milk on the job. Employers must grant employees the following: reasonable break time to express milk for a nursing child for one year after the child’s birth; and a place, other than the bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used to express breast milk. Additionally, the law also protects workers from retaliation (e.g., reassignment to a less desirable job, taking away job duties or benefits) for asserting their rights on the job or filing a complaint about these issues.

Challenges in the workplace include lack of break time and inadequate facilities for pumping and storing breast milk. The committee believes many of these workplace challenges can be reduced with a small investment of time and flexibility. Providing accommodations for

breastfeeding can offer tremendous rewards for DoD in cost savings for health care, reduced absenteeism, improved morale, and Service member retention. This policy should parallel the other postpartum policies and be equitable across the Armed Forces.

Recommendation 3: The Department of Defense should require that all of the Services create a consolidated pregnancy and parenthood instruction.

Reasoning

Pregnancy and parenthood are natural events that occur in the lives of Service members and can be compatible with a successful military career. There are responsibilities that come with parenthood, and for those in uniform, these responsibilities require consideration and planning because of military commitments. Service members are expected to balance the demands of a military career with their family plans and responsibilities. To assist commanding officers, supervisory personnel, and Service members, the Navy¹⁵³ and the Marine Corps¹⁵⁴ each created a pregnancy and parenthood regulation, which consolidates and outlines all administrative regulations pertaining to expecting personnel. These policies address parenthood issues to include the adoption of children and single-parent Service members. Policies and procedures developed by the Navy and the Marine Corps provide administrative support and ensure the health and welfare of pregnant servicewomen while minimizing the impact pregnancy and parenthood have on mission readiness. The Navy and Marine Corps serve as examples for the other Services.

Continuing Concern: Postpartum Policies

The Committee is closely following changes to postpartum policies, including operational deferment, maternity leave, convalescent leave, and physical training assessment exemptions. These issues have been evolving significantly over the last year, driven by policy changes in some of the Services. The Committee intends to continue to examine these issues closely in the coming year.

Summary of Briefings

DACOWITS received three briefings or sets of briefings related to pregnancy and postpartum policies. In December 2014, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs (OASD(HA)) briefed DACOWITS on the results of the comprehensive review of the military health system (MHS) that specifically pertain to military servicewomen. In June 2015, each of the Military Services briefed DACOWITS on their respective pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies. In September 2015, OASD(HA) briefed DACOWITS on the DoD forms and terminology used to document pregnancy for military servicewomen and what policies existed on reproductive and lactation hazards, deployment, and physical fitness testing. This section presents highlights from the briefings the Committee received. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in FY 2015, see Appendix H.)

In addition to these briefings, the Committee made two requests for information on the topic of pregnancy and postpartum issues. In June 2015, the Committee requested background information from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs (OSD(HA)) on pregnancy and postpartum policies for DoD and the Services. In September 2015, it also requested a literature review from Insight Policy Research pregnancy, breastfeeding, and postpartum policies in the federal and civilian sectors. (For a full list of DACOWITS' requests for information in FY 2015, see Appendix I).

Health Affairs Briefing: Military Health System Review, December 2014

On May 28, 2014, the SECDEF directed a 90-day comprehensive review of the MHS. The SECDEF directed the review to be performed in a fully transparent manner and to focus on the core areas of access to care, safety of care, and quality of care. A final report, complete with specific recommendations to address standards of care and implementation timelines, was to be delivered to the SECDEF by August 29, 2014. DACOWITS requested a briefing from OASD(HA)) on the results of the MHS review, highlighting results and recommendations that may affect servicewomen in particular.

Dr. Cara Krulewitch, Director, Women's Health, Medical Ethics and Patient Advocacy, Clinical and Policy Programs, OASD(HA), OUSD(P&R)

Dr. Krulewitch provided data specific to perinatal care and outcomes. She described how there were no "national averages" for obstetric/perinatal quality outcomes. In the absence of national standards, DoD participates in a comparative analysis through the National Perinatal Information Center (NPIC); these data come from 85 high-volume perinatal hospitals. From 2010 to the time of the briefing, DoD facilities' inborn mortality rates for infants were notably lower than NPIC benchmarks. MHS caesarean-section rates were consistently lower than for participating NPIC civilian-sector facilities. However, DoD facilities performed poorly when compared with civilian-sector facilities in the area of postpartum hemorrhage and birth trauma. Following trends across the country, DoD postpartum hemorrhage rates were higher than NPIC comparison rates; DoD is working to improve these rates and is collaborating with external partners to more effectively address postpartum hemorrhage. Infant trauma rates are significantly higher in the MHS as compared with the NPIC average; this may be a result of erroneous coding of administrative data in identifying what constitutes "trauma." Dr. Krulewitch also described the differences in the population included in NPIC data as compared with MHS data that may affect outcomes (e.g., a younger population within MHS).

Services' Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies Review, June 2015

The Committee requested briefings from each of the Military Services on pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies, all of which potentially affect the retention of servicewomen. It requested the following details: the frequency of policy updates; the methodology used to design the policies; programs that exist to support the policies and resources for servicewomen; and a comparison of the Military Services' policies with broader DoD policies.

Army: COL Cheryl Martinez, Chief, Distribution and Readiness; Director, Military Personnel Management

COL Martinez described the Army's pregnancy and postpartum policies. The intent of Army policies is to protect the mother and baby while ensuring productive use of the soldier and to provide regulations that are in accordance with clinical practice guidelines. Most guidelines can be found under two Army Regulations (ARs): AR 40–501, Standards of Medical Fitness,¹⁵⁵ and AR 614–30, Overseas Service.¹⁵⁶ AR 40–501, last updated in 2007 but currently undergoing revisions with a target publication date of late 2015, outlines duty limitation guidelines such as rules governing exposure to hazardous material on the job.¹⁵⁷ AR 614–30, last updated in January 2015, outlines commanders' assignment limitations.¹⁵⁸ The Army is developing a formal breastfeeding policy, which is expected to be finalized in January 2016. Despite the current lack of policy on the topic, lactation support programs are found on many Army installations.

Several policies on leave and operational deferment serve expectant and new parents. The Army provides six weeks of convalescent leave (CONLV) for new mothers and one week of leave for new fathers. Additionally, mothers are given a six-month operational deferment from the date of the child's birth (compared with the four-month operational deferment required by DoD). These timelines apply regardless of the conditions of the birth (vaginal, caesarian section, miscarriage, or stillbirth). A commander may further extend the deferment period if it is deemed operationally feasible; conversely, soldiers may waive their deferments and deploy before six months.

The Army also has policies and procedures covering pregnant women and new mothers in the workplace. Several formal programs exist to prevent pregnancy-related discrimination and help military women balance their careers with parenthood. COL Martinez noted pregnancy does not affect promotion, although it does limit certain assignments such as deployments. Women who have given birth have up to 12 months to complete a physical fitness test, and pregnancy is not named as the reason for deferring the test (it could be any medical condition).

Navy: CDR Christine Caston, Branch Head of Diversity, Inclusion and Women's Policy

CDR Caston reviewed the instructions and guidelines pertaining to expectant and new mothers. Current policies are based on civilian health care community practices and strive to achieve balance within three areas: a sailor's health, career development, and the operational needs of the ship during deployment. These policies are covered under a range of instructions updated at varying points in time. A primary policy governing these issues is Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction (OPNAVINST) 6000.1C, Navy Guidelines Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood, which was last updated in 2007 and is undergoing revision.¹⁵⁹

The Navy has leave and operational deferment policies for expectant and new mothers. Postpartum leave policies for the Navy are comparable to those for the Army; Navy mothers receive 42 days, or six weeks, of CONLV. Additionally, the Navy's postpartum operational deferment is up to 12 months—three times the required DoD period of four months. Leave periods are determined with criteria similar to that used by the Army; the Navy grants the same amount of postpartum leave regardless of birth circumstances. Pregnant servicewomen may remain on board a ship until the 20th week of pregnancy (if obstetric care is accessible within six hours)

and aviators may continue flying until the third trimester of pregnancy; however, no service-women may be assigned overseas or travel overseas after the 28th week of pregnancy. The Navy was also one of the first Services to pilot the career intermission program, with roughly 91 sailors participating to date.

In the workplace, policies and practices support new parents and pregnant sailors. Pregnant sailors should not be subject to harassment or discrimination, and they have access to a range of services and resources to help them both prepare to start a family and return to the workforce postpartum. These include budgeting programs, lactation specialists, parental support groups, quality health care services, and daycare. To protect the soldier against potential discrimination that could hinder her career advancement, pregnancy cannot be cited on fitness reports; pregnant servicewomen can advance and be promoted if they meet the necessary criteria. Women who give birth have six months to meet physical requirements. Breastfeeding policies protect the rights of new mothers; for example, ensuring breaks and access to facilities to breastfeed or pump.

Marine Corps: Col Brendan Reilly, Branch Head, Manpower Military Policy, Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

The Marine Corps governing directive for pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies falls under Marine Corps Order (MCO) 5000.12E, Marine Corps Policy Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood; this directive was published in 2004, updated in 2007, and is undergoing revision.¹⁶⁰ The policy aims to balance the medical and safety needs of the pregnant or postpartum Marine and her unborn child or baby with the needs of the Marine Corps while maintaining optimum job and career performance. Policies were formulated in consultation with the Marine Corps Director of Health Services, among others.

Marine leave and operational deferment policies align with the other Services. The operational deferment period is six months (compared with the required DoD four-month period), though the Marine may choose to waive this deferment period.

Pregnant or postpartum Marines at work are protected and supported by several policies and practices. Policies against discrimination are comparable to those for other Services; pregnant Marines are protected from discrimination, and pregnancy cannot affect advancement or retention (although assignments may be limited to protect the health of the Marine and her unborn child—for example, travel restrictions and avoidance of hazardous duties). Marines are provided with a number of career and family balancing resources once they return to work. They are initially exempt from physical training and have up to six months after returning to full duty to complete a physical fitness test. In contrast to other Services, Marines document pregnancy on performance evaluations to explain fitness report outcomes. Current policies ensure breastfeeding mothers are not separated from their infants for at least six months and are exempt from training requirements that may be hazardous to lactation.

Air Force: Maj David Miller, Chief, Physical Standards Development, Air Force Medical Support Agency, Pentagon

The Air Force's policies pertaining to pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding are governed by several different instructions, all of which have been updated within the past two years (2013 or later). These policies were driven by operational requirements and advised by a consensus of experts, and policies are regularly reviewed or changed to reflect the latest medical evidence. While the overriding goal of the Air Force is to win the Nation's conflicts, policies related to pregnancy and parenthood are given high priority. Leave policies in the Air Force have been newly modified (as of the morning of the briefing); as a result, female airmen who sign on after March 6, 2016, will receive 12 months of postpartum leave, as compared with the current policy that awards six months of leave.

Female airmen have access to pregnancy and parenthood programs and are protected from adverse treatment in several ways. They can use programs designed to help balance a career and parenthood through resources such as the Airman Family and Readiness Center and family advocacy programs. Proactive discrimination prevention is provided through Human Resources Education, and guidelines preventing discrimination are enforced. Pregnancy is not a consideration for promotion, assignment, or retention in the Air Force or any other Service; however, starting in 2015, developmental teams for each career field will conduct barrier analyses to determine whether there are any artificial limitations. Female airmen are also protected from reproductive hazards.

Regarding fitness tests, any woman who carries a pregnancy for 20 weeks or more is exempt from fitness assessments for 180 days after completion of a pregnancy (i.e., live birth, miscarriage, stillbirth). Fitness requirements for pregnancies of 20 or fewer weeks are determined on a case-by-case basis in collaboration with a health care provider. In contrast to the other Services (except the Marine Corps), neither pregnancy nor unspecified medical reasons are noted on physical training forms for Air Force members; there is only a checkbox to indicate whether Service members have met their requirements (if they are pregnant and have not taken the test, they are considered exempt; therefore, it will be indicated that they have met their requirements). The various pregnancy and postpartum policies have been designed to encourage and support breastfeeding, and members of the Air Force have access to lactation consultants and other resources.

Coast Guard: LCDR Russell Mayer, Team-Leader, Policy and Standards Division, Office of Military Personnel

LCDR Mayer reviewed the Coast Guard's pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies. These policies are governed by Commandant Instruction (COMDTINST) 1000.9, Pregnancy in the Coast Guard.¹⁶¹ The instruction is under revision with a target publication date of early 2016. The instruction will be retitled Pregnancy and Parenthood to better represent the updated range of pregnancy and postpartum issues it will cover. Other revisions underway include better coverage of breastfeeding and postpartum policies, along with coverage for nontraditional pregnancies such as surrogacies.

Leave and deferment policies in the Coast Guard are comparable to those of other Services. The postpartum operational deferment period is six months, as in the Army, Marine Corps, and (until 2016) Air Force.

As has been done by other Services, the Coast Guard has established policies to protect the rights of pregnant servicewomen and support new mothers. It has robust civil rights and affinity groups and provides a range of support programs, including a temporary separation program. Pregnancy should have no effect on retention and advancement, and the Coast Guard does not have a fitness testing policy for all Service members (while fitness testing is required for certain assignments, postpartum servicewomen are exempt for six to 12 months). Service members in the Coast Guard are able to breastfeed or pump at work and are protected by policies concerning safety and health instruction.

Medical Review of the Services' Pregnancy/Postpartum Policies, September 2015

The Committee has concerns about DoD's and the Services' pregnancy and postpartum policies and how they align with the medical community's current research and recommendations. The Committee also has concerns about how pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies in the military differ from those in the civilian sector. The Committee requested that OASD(HA) specifically address what forms and terminology are used to document pregnancy for servicewomen and what policies and/or programs exist to ensure servicewomen are not exposed to reproductive and lactation hazards. In addition, the Committee has asked why two DoD policies deferring deployment and physical fitness testing for new mothers are not methodologically aligned. DoDI 1342.19, Family Care Plans, states, "Military mothers of newborns shall receive a 4-month deferment from duty away from the home station for the period immediately following the birth of a child,"¹⁶² while DoDD 1308.1, Physical Fitness and Body Fat Program, states, "Pregnant Service members shall not be held to the standards of fitness and body fat testing until at least 6 months after pregnancy termination."¹⁶³ The Committee also has asked why postpartum servicewomen are eligible to serve in a deployable operational unit/command prior to completing a fitness test.

Dr. Cara Krulewitch, Director, Women's Health, Medical Ethics and Patient Advocacy, Clinical and Policy Programs, OASD(HA), OUSD(P&R)

To start her presentation, Dr. Krulewitch announced that her intentions were not to provide a medical briefing, as indicated by the briefing title, but to directly address the research questions submitted by the Committee. After a thorough review of the literature, Dr. Krulewitch found that aside from the AAP recommendation for babies to be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life, the civilian sector has no equivalent to operational deferment; therefore, there are no medical recommendations that could inform on postpartum operational deferment specifically. Similarly, aside from the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force 2008 recommendation for interventions during pregnancy and after birth that promote and support breastfeeding, there are no cohesive evidence-based policies on maternity or pregnancy leave or consensus from the civilian sector on what constitutes proper maternity leave. Within the last three years, all Services have made efforts to meet or exceed DoD's assignment policy that a military mother be deferred from deployment for at least four months and deferred from physical training testing for six months after giving birth. Many of the Services were preparing policy updates for 2016.

Concerning policy or programs that ensure servicewomen are not exposed to reproductive and lactation hazards, Dr. Krulewitch reported that there are several specific DoD policies that ensure environmental exposures are addressed in a health context for all active duty Service members. These policies include DoDI 6055.05, Occupational and Environmental Health (OEH);¹⁶⁴ DoDD 4715.1E, Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health (ESOH);¹⁶⁵ DoDI 6490.03, Deployment Health;¹⁶⁶ and DoDD 6490.02E, Comprehensive Health Surveillance.¹⁶⁷ However, DoDI 6055.08, Occupational Ionizing Radiation Protection Program,¹⁶⁸ is the only policy that explicitly references stipulations related to pregnancy. Dr. Krulewitch indicated that individual Services have adopted policies that supplement these DoD policies; some of the Services' policies may contain more specific information about pregnancy exposures.

Dr. Krulewitch also described the specific forms and terminology used to document pregnancy for servicewomen. There are no OSD-level forms; instead, each Service uses a generic limitation of duty form to note postpartum or pregnancy conditions (or any other medical condition) that may warrant limited-duty status. Dr. Krulewitch noted that some Services had forms that did specifically identify pregnancy, and she encouraged the Committee to inquire further with each Service. Dr. Krulewitch was not aware of any forms that documented abortion or loss of pregnancy by the Services.

Dr. Krulewitch stated that DoDI 1342.19¹⁶⁹ on postpartum deployment deferment should not be methodologically aligned with DoDD 1308.1¹⁷⁰ on fitness and body fat testing postpartum. Whereas fitness testing relates to physical body measures and physical health, namely postpartum weight loss, deployment deferment is medically determined and contingent on several factors, including family support, bonding, physiologic involution, and readiness. Postpartum weight loss can take up to 12 months; however, a servicewoman may be ready to deploy in less time if given medical clearance, even if she has not lost all of her pregnancy weight and/or is still lactating. If the policies were to align, some servicewomen would be prevented from deploying when medically able, unless the ability for a waiver was instituted. As such, the Services strongly encouraged the Committee to view postpartum deployment deferment and fitness testing policies as separate, as the results of a physical test and a medical exam are intended for different purposes.

The Committee inquired about the association between maternal mortality, postpartum depression, and the impacts of deployment. Dr. Krulewitch reported that she found little research available on postpartum depression in a military context and that quantitative evidence would be necessary to show a causal relationship is lacking. Qualitative data, however, suggested a need for further investigation.

Summary of Focus Group Findings

While not a specific topic of the 2015 focus groups, challenges related to pregnancy, postpartum issues, and breastfeeding were identified by several focus group participants during the final section of the focus group protocols that addressed general topics of concern for servicewomen. These challenges included separation, co-location, and deployment concerns for

families, as well as challenges related to not having adequate breastfeeding support or lactation facilities, and physical challenges after giving birth.

Separation, Co-Location, and Deployment Concerns for Families

Participants noted deployment-related challenges for those Service members involved in dual-military relationships and those Service members with children. Participants raised concerns about how to handle the circumstances of both spouses being deployed. The challenge of being a single parent in the Military Services was also a notable subtheme.

Parental Leave

Inadequate maternity leave was reported as a major challenge for women in the Military Services and a concern participants wanted to be brought to the SECDEF's attention. Both male and female participants mentioned that postpartum leave was not long enough for either mothers or fathers.

Breastfeeding and Postpartum Physical Fitness

Upon returning to duty postpartum, women have struggled with obtaining the support and time needed for breastfeeding and recovery. Women participants, more commonly than men, reported a lack of space and time given to lactating women for pumping. In addition, women commonly expressed concern with the amount of time allotted to get back into shape after having children, explaining that it was inadequate and does not accommodate any potential physical complications that may come with a woman's pregnancy and recovery.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section presents some of the relevant literature and other resources on pregnancy and postpartum policies for military women, beyond the information provided above.

Overview of the Services' Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies

Table 3.1 outlines the Services' pregnancy and postpartum policies as of October 30, 2015.

Table 3.1. Overview of DoD's and the Services' Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies

	Pregnancy	Postpartum Operational Deferment	Postpartum Physical Fitness	Breastfeeding
DoD	DoDI 1327.06, Leave and Liberty Policy and Procedures (issued June 16, 2009; updated August 13, 2013): Instruction across Armed Forces on means to ensure maximum benefit from annual leave programs, including maternity leave ¹⁷¹	DoDI 1315.18, Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments (issued January 12, 2005): Allows for 4-month operational deferment ¹⁷²	DoDI 1308.3, DoD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs and Procedures (issued November 5, 2002): A pregnant Service member's postpartum weight loss should be consistent with medical recommendations and Service guidelines ¹⁷³	
Army	AR 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness (issued December 14, 2007; updated August 11, 2015): Information on medical fitness standards for induction, enlistment, appointment, and related policies and procedures ¹⁷⁴ AR 600-8-19, Enlisted Promotions and Reductions ¹⁷⁵ (issued February 2, 2015) and AR 600-8-29, Officer Promotions ¹⁷⁶ (issued February 25, 2005): Policies and procedures governing promotions and reductions of Army enlisted personnel	AR 614-30, Overseas Service (issued January 27, 2015): Reasonable efforts are made to minimize periods of forced family separations (e.g., policy limits overseas assignments and deployments); military mothers of a newborn are non-deployable for 6 months from the date of the child's birth ¹⁷⁷	AR 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development (issued August 19, 2014): Soldiers who are pregnant or recovering from childbirth are exempt from regular physical readiness training and APFT for duration of pregnancy and 180 days past pregnancy termination ¹⁷⁸	Army Directive 2015-37, Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy (issued September 20, 2015): Directs soldiers to notify their chain of command as soon as possible if soldier wants to continue to breastfeed upon returning to duty; commanders should work with soldier to support her and should provide the time and space needed (lactation consultants are available to assist) ¹⁷⁹
Air Force	AFI 10-203, Duty Limiting Conditions (issued November 20, 2014): Procedures for the documentation and administrative management of airmen with injuries or illnesses that may affect their ability to perform their military duty ¹⁸⁰ AFI 48-145, Occupational and Environmental Health Program (issued March 5, 2008; updated September 15, 2011, and July 22, 2014): To protect health while enhancing combat and operational capabilities; identify, assess, and eliminate or control health hazards associated with day-to-day operations across the full lifecycle of acquisition, sustainment, and support for weapons systems, munitions, and other materiel systems ¹⁸¹	AFI 36-2110, Assignments (issued September 22, 2009; updated March 27, 2015): Allows for 12-month operational deferment ¹⁸²	AFI 36-2905: Fitness Program (issued October 29, 2013): Members with pregnancies lasting 20 weeks are more are exempt from fitness assessment for 180 days after completion of pregnancy. For cases where pregnancy ends prior to 20 weeks, providers will consider physical and psychological changes when determining days required for recovery ¹⁸³	AFI 44-102, Medical Care Management (issued March 17, 2015): To encourage and support breastfeeding for first 6 months of life; supervisors should work with the AF member to arrange their work schedules to allow 15-30 minutes every 3-4 hours to pump breast milk in a room or an area that provides adequate privacy and cleanliness (not restroom); member must supply the equipment needed to pump and store the breast milk ¹⁸⁴

	Pregnancy	Postpartum Operational Deferment	Postpartum Physical Fitness	Breastfeeding
Coast Guard	COMDTINST 1000.9 Series, Pregnancy in the Coast Guard (issued September 29, 2011; under revision): Policy and procedures concerning the retention, assignment and separation of pregnant Service members; requirement to support all Service members attempting to balance their commitment to the Coast Guard and their parental responsibilities; guidance for management and protection of pregnant Service members ¹⁸⁵	COMDTINST 1000.9, Pregnancy in the Coast Guard (issued September 29, 2011; under revision): Allows for 6-month operational deferment ¹⁸⁶	Coast Guard does not have a fitness testing policy for all Service members	COMDTINST 1000.9, Pregnancy in the Coast Guard (issued September 29, 2011; under revision): Service women should communicate with command to address any concerns or issues, including a lack of adequate facilities and limited time during the workday for expressing milk ¹⁸⁷
Marine Corps	MCO 5000.12E, Marine Corps Policy Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood (issued December 4, 2008; under revision): Policy and procedures for pregnant servicewomen assigned to Marine units regarding the assignment, retention, separation, prescribed standards of conduct, and medical management of normal pregnancies per references; this policy also pertains to Marines considering the adoption of an infant/child and single male parent Marines ¹⁸⁸	MCO 5000.12E, Marine Corps Policy Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood (issued December 4, 2008; under revision): Allows for 6-month operational deferment ¹⁸⁹	MCO 6110.3, Marine Corps Body Composition and Military Appearance Program (issued August 8, 2011): Marines are exempt from taking the physical fitness test for 6 months after returning to full duty unless extended by health care provider ¹⁹⁰	MCO 5000.12E, Marine Corps Policy Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood (issued December 8, 2004; under revision): Ensures a breastfeeding Marine is not separated from her infant for more than 6 months ¹⁹¹
Navy	OPNAVINST 6000.1C, Navy Guidelines Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood (issued June 14, 2007; under revision): Guidance concerning servicewomen assigned to Navy units regarding the assignment, retention, separation, standards of conduct, and medical management of normal pregnancies; addresses parenthood issues to include the adoption of an infant/child and single male sailors as parents ¹⁹² SECNAVINST 1000.10A, Department of the Navy Policy on Parenthood and Pregnancy (September 9, 2005): Policy for all military personnel on issues related to parenthood and pregnancy; to ensure equality of opportunity while maintaining operational readiness and supporting a high performing workforce; and to establish reporting requirements	OPNAVINST 6000.1C, Navy Guidelines Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood (issued June 14, 2007; under revision): Allows for 12-month operational deferment ¹⁹³	OPNAVINST 6110.1J, Physical Readiness Program (issued July 11, 2011): Pregnant servicewomen shall not be required to meet physical readiness standards from pregnancy confirmation through 6 months following convalescent leave; guidance 8 provides direction on managing physical fitness assessment records for pregnant servicewomen ¹⁹⁴	OPNAVINST 600.1C, Navy Guidelines Concerning Pregnancy and Parenthood (issued June 14, 2007): Servicewomen should notify chain of command for accommodations; commanding officers are responsible for developing written policies to support women who breastfeed and create a supportive work environment ¹⁹⁵ BUMEDINST 6000.14A, Support of Servicewomen in Lactation and Breastfeeding (issued August 27, 2014): Sets guidelines to support commands with servicewomen in lactation and breastfeeding; applies to Navy Medical Department personnel at medical treatment facilities ¹⁹⁶

AFI = Air Force Instruction

BUMEDINST = Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Instruction

Postpartum Operational Deferment

In 2009, DoD published a report to the White House Council on Women and Girls in which it described, among other things, its rationale for the four-month minimum postpartum deferment period. According to the report, “the 4-month minimum deferment period was established to provide for medical recovery from childbirth (normally 6 weeks) and to provide military mothers and their families with additional time to prepare family care plans and to establish a pattern of childcare.”¹⁹⁷ The report states, “Our policies also acknowledge that too long a mandatory deferment postpartum may prove injurious to women’s career aspirations.”¹⁹⁸ The authors further described how the Military Services’ differing policies, as well as ongoing reviews and adjustments, reflect the discretion of the Secretaries of the Military Departments to balance force readiness, high operational demand, and deployable manpower requirements with the time needed for a new military mother to bond with her child and recover from childbirth.

Although there is no clear equivalent of operational deferment for most private sector workers, there is an abundance of evidence to support paid leave for new parents. In March 2015, the Minnesota Department of Health, Center for Health Equity published its “White Paper on Paid Leave and Health” that outlined the social and medical benefits of paid leave policies for individuals and families.¹⁹⁹ Key findings from this report are outlined below.

- Paid leave allows parents to spend time with new infants, resulting in better health for both infants and mothers. Many studies have shown experience and environment play critical roles in developing the capacity and functionality of the brain. The nature of parent-infant relationships is critical to the healthy development of young children.²⁰⁰ Research into adverse childhood experiences, trauma, and toxic stress for infants and toddlers lacking these types of relationships also shows that adverse experiences can negatively influence the health, economic standing, and educational success of individuals and have an intergenerational impact.²⁰¹ Conditions resulting from overtime work, multiple jobs, or shift work can lead to high levels of stress in families’ everyday environments, which in turn can affect children’s development.²⁰²
- Maternity leave is associated with higher rates of breastfeeding and breastfeeding for longer periods of time. The benefits of breastfeeding to children’s health have been widely researched and documented.²⁰³ In one study, duration of breastfeeding increased by one-third of a month for every additional month not at work.²⁰⁴
- Paid parental leave is associated with significantly better infant health, including fewer infant deaths.²⁰⁵ The positive effects of parental leave on infant mortality were observed only when the leave was paid. There were “no significant effects with unpaid or non-job-protected leave.”²⁰⁶ Maternity leave is associated with higher rates of vaccinations, well child check-ups, and timely health care provider visits when infants become sick.²⁰⁷
- Parental leave provides more time for maternal health recovery. Although it has been shown that it is both safe and beneficial to exercise during pregnancy (with some limitations), the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists guidelines for exercise during the postpartum period²⁰⁸ indicate that, while the rapid resumption of physical activity has no adverse effects, gradual return to former activities is recommended. Traditionally, the medical perspective of the postpartum period refers to the time after childbirth that is required for the reproductive organs to return to their nonpregnant state.²⁰⁹ The physiological

and morphologic changes of pregnancy vary for each woman, but can persist four to six weeks postpartum. However, findings from longitudinal studies suggest that recovery from childbirth involves more than the healing of reproductive organs.²¹⁰ Most women contend with minor to moderate symptoms (e.g., fatigue, physical discomfort, constipation, hemorrhoids) and the risk of infection for many weeks and can face more serious problems (e.g., depression) beyond three months.²¹¹ Such health issues may limit daily activities, and already having undergone a reduction in activity level when pregnant, women should return to a baseline level of activity gradually.²¹²

Monitoring Changes in Medical Guidelines

Despite improvements in medicine, technological advancements, and a shift in ethics and culture, there will always remain some uncertainty when treating patients. Doctors and other health care providers are often faced with difficult decisions, and they must rely on the scientific literature in addition to their knowledge, experience, and patient preferences to inform their assessments.

Clinical practice guidelines are statements and recommendations intended to optimize patient care. They are informed by a systematic review of evidence and an assessment of the benefits and harms of alternative care options.²¹³ There is no single source for medical guidelines; due to the large number of clinical practice guidelines available, there can be conflicting recommendations. Therefore, it is important to collect data and monitor trends and outcomes related to maternal health.

Breastfeeding

Because of the many proven physical, psychological, emotional, and economic benefits of breastfeeding for both the mother and the infant, broad support for breastfeeding has continued to grow. Many national and international bodies have published guidelines and recommendations on breastfeeding, and progress has been made toward establishing consistent workplace support for women who choose to breastfeed. For example, since 2010, U.S. federal law requires most workplaces to provide adequate physical space and time for lactating women to express milk.²¹⁴ However, despite the value of breastfeeding being well understood and promoted, there remain numerous challenges for mothers, and many women in the United States are not able to breastfeed for the recommended amount of time.

The workplace can be a particularly challenging environment for mothers who are breastfeeding. Mothers are one of the fastest growing groups of the U.S. labor force. In 2014, 57 percent of all mothers with infants were employed.²¹⁵ However, if a woman wants to continue to breastfeed after returning to work, she must express and store milk at the times she would normally feed her child. Key findings from the 2011 “Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding” are outlined below.²¹⁶

- Many women mistakenly think they cannot breastfeed if they plan to return to work after childbirth and may not talk with their employers about their desire to breastfeed or how breastfeeding might be supported in the workplace.²¹⁷
- Because most lactating mothers who are employed express milk at work for a childcare provider to bottle feed to the infant later, these providers are essential in helping employed

mothers continue to breastfeed after returning to work. However, a mother feeding her infant directly from the breast during the workday is the most effective strategy of combining employment and breastfeeding because it promotes the duration and intensity of breastfeeding and strengthens the relationship between mother and infant in the critical first months of life. The skin-to-skin closeness that occurs during breastfeeding promotes bonding and attachment between mother and infant, increases the efficiency of breastfeeding, and enhances the neurological and psychosocial development of the infant.²¹⁸

- As such, among employed mothers, studies have found lower initiation rates and shorter duration of breastfeeding. Rates of breastfeeding initiation and duration are higher in women who have longer maternity leave, work part time rather than full time, and have breastfeeding support programs in the workplace.²¹⁹

Improvements in the Use of Protected Health Information

While DACOWITS has been studying the health care needs of servicewomen for many years, in 2015, it began a new line of study, improvements in the use of protected health information. The study was prompted by the Committee's concern surrounding the documentation of pregnancy on medical records available to commanders.

This part of Chapter 3 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendation
- Summary of Briefing Presented to DACOWITS
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendation

This section provides DACOWITS' 2015 recommendation on protected health information. The recommendation and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 3.

Recommendation 1: The Department of Defense should issue a policy regarding the proper use and distribution of the computer generated OB MultiID Discharge Summaries and make every effort to eliminate the release of this protected health information.

Reasoning

The Committee is concerned about the improper release and/or use of protected health information (PHI). When servicewomen go to a military obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN) for initial treatment, they are required to complete a form regarding their pregnancy history. The OB/GYN then enters this information into the DoD OB Multidisciplinary Intake form. After treatment and release from the hospital, this information is used to generate the OB MultiID Discharge Summary.

Currently, the appropriate use and distribution of the OB MultiID Discharge Summary is not governed by DoD policy. DACOWITS is aware of several cases in which active duty women were directed to take the discharge summary to their commanders to request convalescent leave. In other cases, they were told to attach the discharge summary to a separate internal hospital form and provide that to their commanders to receive convalescent leave.

Medical documents, such as the discharge summary, can be misinterpreted by nonmedical personnel when presented with technical medical terminologies such as pregnancy/gestational numbers and final outcomes of each pregnancy/gestation. This misinterpreted information can adversely affect a Service member's career because of the potential introduction of personal bias into the decision-making matrix of that Service member's chain of command. Service members' leadership need only know that the Service member is medically cleared to perform or restricted from performing required duties. It is not generally necessary for the chain of command to know specifically why that medical limitation is in place.

The discharge summary is designed to communicate to the patient the aftercare plan following discharge from a hospital setting. This summary belongs to the patient. A discharge summary should be treated as a personal medical record and protected as such and should never be used as a leave request for the commanding officer.

Summary of Briefing

DACOWITS received one briefing in June 2015 related to protected health information; this briefing is summarized in Section A. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in FY 2015, see Appendix H.)

Office of the Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs Briefing, June 2015

The Committee is concerned with policies/practices that may potentially violate the Privacy Act of 1974 and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), adversely affecting servicewomen. To examine this, the Committee requested a briefing from OSD(HA) on the OB MultiID Discharge Summary, which is a form designed to communicate the patient's care plan after the patient's discharge from a hospital setting. Committee members raised concerns about the content and use of the current form, noting potential Privacy Act and HIPAA violation issues, the provision of information outside a commander's "need to know," potential inaccuracies on the form concerning a woman's pregnancy history, and the possible withholding of information from an OB/GYN. Several women have made this complaint.

Dr. Kathleen Charters, Nurse Consultant to the Defense Health Agency, Healthcare Operations Directorate, Clinical Support Division

The OB MultiID Discharge Summary is handled through a routine DoD process that is intended to engage the patient in her medical care but that is not governed by a specific DoD policy. According to hospital joint commission and accreditation processes, patients should receive written summaries of their hospitalizations along with a description of next steps—for example, the recommended timing of a follow-up appointment. Printed discharge summaries belong to patients and should help them to better understand and manage their health care.

Patients do not have to provide their discharge summaries to commanding officers when requesting CONLV. Under HIPAA, they have the right to access their own medical information as well as to restrict access to it by others.²²⁰ The discharge summary is designed to inform only the patient and the patient's clinician. Expectant mothers and others requiring maternity-related leave submit a separate CONLV request form to commanding officers, which ideally is accompanied by a prescription for CONLV from a clinician.

OSD(HA) recognizes the need to educate medical personnel and patients about these processes (which forms to use and what backup documentation is needed). OSD(HA) offers medical professionals web-based training through its online learning resource center and is building up its cadre of trainers to provide individual training if desired. For future parents, OSD(HA) staff explain in childcare classes how to request a prescription for CONLV.

OSD(HA) also recognizes the need to improve the forms patients receive and is working to make changes by the end of FY 2015. Some of the terminology on discharge summaries can be problematic for patients; for example, the use of "abortion" to indicate a pregnancy has been terminated, regardless of how (e.g., miscarriage (spontaneous abortion)). To address this issue, OSD(HA) is developing a new discharge summary in lay-friendly language and outlining new processes to deliver this and other appropriate forms to servicewomen requesting CONLV.

In response, the Committee indicated it understands the intended discharge summary and CONLV request process, but it believes some medical personnel and Service members remain unaware of proper procedures. For example, the Committee heard of numerous instances where discharge summaries were stapled to orders that Service members were instructed to give to their commanding officers; the Committee emphasized that it was not referring to isolated cases. The OSD(HA) team agreed this should never happen and suggested that in addition to providing additional training and composing a memorandum on the topic, a reminder could be added to the top of each discharge form stating that the form is for the patient's use only. OSD(HA) will revisit the issue to determine if additional changes to standard procedures should be made.

Summary of Focus Group Findings

While not a specific topic of the 2015 focus groups, challenges related to pregnancy in the Military Services were identified by several focus group participants including men and women. Male participants suggested being pregnant could keep women from performing certain job tasks, while female participants tended to suggest being pregnant was viewed as a handicap. Some women expressed safety concerns such as exposure to harmful chemicals. The difficulty of getting back into shape after having children was also a widely mentioned subtheme among women.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section presents relevant literature and other resources on protected health information.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Privacy Rule

HIPAA was passed in 1996 with the dual goals of making health care delivery more efficient and increasing the number of Americans with health insurance coverage.²²¹ In response to the administrative simplification provision of the Act, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) developed the HIPAA Privacy Rule, which set out detailed regulations regarding the types of use and disclosures of personally identifiable health information.²²² The rule establishes national standards to protect individuals' medical records and other personal health information. The rule requires appropriate safeguards to protect the privacy of personal health information and sets limits and conditions on the use and disclosures that may be made of such information without patient authorization. The rule also gives patients' rights over their health information, including rights to examine and obtain a copy of their health records and to request corrections.²²³ HHS defines PHI as health information including demographic information that identifies the individual and relates to the following:

- The individual's health condition
- The health care the individual receives
- The payment for the individual's care.²²⁴

Protected Health Information in a Military Context

HIPAA applies to Armed Forces personnel; however, it permits protected health information to be disclosed under special circumstances. Commonly referred to as the Military Command Exception, covered entities such as military treatment facilities may disclose the PHI of Armed Forces personnel to commanders for authorized activities.²²⁵ These activities include fitness for duty determinations, fitness to perform a particular assignment, or other activities necessary for the military mission.²²⁶

In January 2003, DoD issued its Health Information Privacy Regulation (DoD 6025.18-R). This regulation explains the need for commanders to know which subordinates are physically and mentally able to serve and deploy to fight and gives the commanders access to information in their subordinates' medical and mental health records.²²⁷ However, when disclosing PHI in any form, the MHS must make "reasonable efforts" to limit the use or disclosure of PHI to "the minimum necessary" to accomplish its intended purposes.²²⁸

Concerns Surrounding Pregnancy for Military Servicewomen

Issues surrounding pregnancy and associated stigma for Service women have been a concern of DACOWITS for many years. The Committee has made many pregnancy-related recommendations over the past decade, and focus group participants have discussed pregnancy concerns during the installation visits from 2011 to 2015. For example, focus group participants in 2011 discussed pregnancy as a challenge that could affect the whole unit. In 2012, participants mentioned pregnancy as a barrier to promotion. In 2013, women at the Service academies expressed concern about the timing of pregnancy with respect to their careers and the effect of pregnancy on their evaluations. In 2014, challenges related to pregnancy were also mentioned by participants who were concerned about postpartum fitness testing and the impact it could have on their careers.

Marine Corps Performance Evaluation System Improvements

In 2015, DACOWITS adopted a new study topic, the Marine Corps' PES and its references to pregnancy and postpartum convalescent periods. The study was prompted by the Committee's concern surrounding the documentation of pregnancy in PES records.

This part of Chapter 3 is organized into the following sections:

- Recommendation
- Summary of Briefings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources

Recommendation

This section provides DACOWITS' 2015 recommendation on the Marine Corps PES. The recommendation and associated reasoning are based on the research and resources summarized in the remaining sections of this part of Chapter 3.

Recommendation 1: The Marine Corps Performance Evaluation System should not differentiate between women's and men's temporary medical conditions and all references to pregnancy and postpartum convalescent periods should be removed from fitness reports to ensure fairness and the individual's medical privacy.

Reasoning

MCO 1610.7, Performance Evaluation System, issued February 13, 2015, states the completed fitness report is the most important information component in manpower management.²²⁹ It is the primary means of evaluating a Marine's performance (Sergeant through Major General) and is the Commandant's primary tool for the selection of personnel for promotion, augmentation, resident schooling, command, and duty assignments. Therefore, throughout one's career, fitness reports are routinely reviewed by a selection board made up of Marines in order to select individuals for augmentation, advancement, schooling, and command. A promotion/selection board is a nonmedically qualified group of experienced Marines whose sole focus is to evaluate a Marine's career performance for advancement in duty or pay grade.

The PES states that it is unacceptable to note if the Marine Reported On (MRO) is pregnant unless the note is related to adherence to weight standards or completing the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) or Combat Fitness Test (CFT). However, pregnancy is the only medical condition that is required to be divulged on a fitness report.

When a Marine is unable to take or pass the PFT or CFT, the code NMED (Not Medical Qualified) is entered in the fitness report. When NMED is used, the Reporting Senior must provide an amplifying comment in the narrative section of the fitness report. To ensure fairness to all Marines, a gender-neutral statement to address the NMED code should be directed. For example, "MRO was exempt taking the PFT/CFT due to a temporary medical condition."

When the MRO's weight exceeds the maximum allowable standard, the MRO's body fat percentage is recorded. However, if the Marine is pregnant, the instructions state that the weight should be omitted and the four-letter code "PREG" should be entered on the report.

MCO 1610.7 states that if the body fat percentage reported is greater than the maximum allowed for the MRO's age grouping, the report is considered adverse unless a statement is included that says (1) an appropriately credentialed health care provider diagnosed the individual's weight condition to be the result of an underlying cause or associated disease process, or (2) the Marine is within the 42-day postpartum convalescent period, or (3) the Marine is within the six months following a medical officer declaring the Marine fit for full duty following child delivery. Since a pregnant woman's weight gain is the result of an underlying cause certified by an appropriately credentialed health provider, there is no reason or justification for documenting an authorized waiver differently for men and women. Any reference to the Marine's weight gain because of her postpartum status, child delivery, etc., is inappropriate and an improper release of PHI.

Marine Corps servicewomen should be provided the same medical confidentiality as their male counterparts on fitness reports regarding authorized waivers for the PFT, CFT, or not meeting the weight standards. It should be noted that none of the other Services include pregnancy-related comments on personnel evaluations.

Summary of Briefings

DACOWITS received two briefings in June 2015 related to protected health information and documentation of pregnancy in the Marine Corps PES reports; these briefings are summarized in Sections A through B. While each Service briefed the Committee on its pregnancy and postpartum policies (each Services' briefings are included in Chapter 3, Section D), the relevant information from the Marine Corps briefing is provided in the next section. (For a full list of briefings and related information presented to DACOWITS in FY 2015, see Appendix H.)

Office of the Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs Briefing, June 2015

The Committee is concerned with policies/practices that may potentially violate the Privacy Act of 1974 and HIPAA, adversely affecting servicewomen. To examine this, the Committee requested a briefing from OSD(HA) on the OB MultiID Discharge Summary. Committee members raised concerns about the content and use of the current form, noting potential Privacy Act and HIPAA violation issues, the provision of information outside a commander's "need to know," potential inaccuracies on the form concerning a woman's pregnancy history, and the possible withholding of information from an OB/GYN. Several women have made this complaint.

Dr. Kathleen Charters, Nurse Consultant to the Defense Health Agency, Healthcare Operations Directorate, Clinical Support Division

The OB MultiID Discharge Summary is handled through a routine DoD process that is intended to engage the patient in her medical care, but that is not governed by a specific DoD policy. According to hospital joint commission and accreditation processes, patients should receive written summaries of their hospitalizations, along with a description

of next steps—for example, the recommended timing of a follow-up appointment. Printed discharge summaries belong to patients and should help them to better understand and manage their health care.

Patients do not have to provide their discharge summaries to commanding officers when requesting CONLV. Under HIPAA, they have the right to access their own medical information as well as to restrict access to it by others. The discharge summary is designed to inform only the patient and the patient's clinician. Expectant mothers and others requiring maternity-related leave submit a separate CONLV request form to commanding officers, which ideally is accompanied by a prescription for CONLV from a clinician.

OSD(HA) recognizes the need to educate medical personnel and patients about these processes (which forms to use and what backup documentation is needed). OSD(HA) offers medical professionals web-based training through its online learning resource center and is building up its cadre of trainers to provide individual training if desired. For future parents, OSD(HA) staff explain in childcare classes how to request a prescription for CONLV.

OSD(HA) also recognizes the need to improve the forms patients receive and is working to make changes by the end of FY 2015. Some of the terminology on discharge summaries can be problematic for patients; for example, the use of "abortion" to indicate a pregnancy has been terminated, regardless of how (e.g., miscarriage (spontaneous abortion)). To address this issue, OSD(HA) is developing a new discharge summary in lay-friendly language and outlining new processes to deliver this and other appropriate forms to servicewomen requesting CONLV.

While the Committee understands the intended discharge summary and CONLV request process, it believes some medical personnel and Service members remain unaware of proper procedures. For example, the Committee heard of numerous instances where discharge summaries were stapled to orders that Service members were instructed to give to their commanding officers. The Committee emphasized that it was not referring to isolated cases. The OSD(HA) team agreed this should never happen and suggested that in addition to providing additional training and composing a memorandum on the topic, a reminder could be added to the top of each discharge form stating that the form is for the patient's use only. OSD(HA) will revisit the issue to determine if additional changes to standard procedures should be made.

Services' Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies Review, June 2015

The Committee requested briefings from each of the Military Services on pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies, all of which potentially affect the retention of servicewomen. The Marine Corps briefing addressed the documentation of pregnancy through its PES.

Marine Corps: Col Brendan Reilly, Branch Head, Manpower Military Policy, Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Pregnant or postpartum Marines at work are protected and supported by several policies and practices. Policies against discrimination are comparable to those for other Services; pregnant Marines are protected from discrimination, and pregnancy cannot affect advancement or retention (although assignments may be limited in order to protect the health of the Marine and her unborn child—for example, travel restrictions and avoidance of hazardous duties). Marines are

provided with a number of career and family balancing resources once they return to work. They are initially exempt from physical training and have up to six months after returning to full duty to complete a physical fitness test. In contrast to other Services, Marines document pregnancy on performance evaluations to explain fitness report outcomes. Current policies ensure breastfeeding mothers are not separated from their infants for at least six months and are exempt from training requirements that may be hazardous to lactation.

Relevant Literature and Other Resources

This section presents relevant literature and other resources on pregnancy and its relation to career progression.

Effect of Pregnancy on Career Progression

Historically, policies focusing on the pregnancy of servicewomen have created an environment of stigma and negative career repercussions surrounding motherhood. In a recent Military Medicine article by Fitzgerald and colleagues (2013), the authors provided a history of such discriminatory policies.²³⁰ Executive Order 10240, signed by President Truman in 1951, allowed DoD Secretaries to discharge a female for being a parent, being pregnant, or giving live birth while in commissioned service.²³¹ Although Pub. L. 90–130, signed by President Johnson in 1967, reduced some of the barriers to women in the military,²³² the authority of Service secretaries to discharge women for reasons of pregnancy and provisions barring women from child custody remained and prompted many court cases. In June 1974, the SECDEF directed Secretaries of the Military Departments to discontinue involuntary separations for pregnancy; the Army resisted, and in 1976, the Second Circuit Court held that a discharge from the military for reason of pregnancy violated the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.²³³ In 2009, pregnancy became a punishable offense for soldiers deployed in Iraq; this policy applied to both the woman who became pregnant and the man who impregnated her, and married couples serving jointly were not exempt. The policy was rescinded shortly after it was enacted.²³⁴ Given the history of policies punishing pregnancy and the controversy even recently surrounding this issue, Fitzgerald and colleagues (2013) suggested how a female soldier's actions could be driven by a real or perceived "motherhood penalty" in the workplace that could affect her position, ability to be promoted, and overall advancement potential.²³⁵

Issues surrounding pregnancy and associated stigma for servicewomen have been a concern of DACOWITS for many years. The Committee has made many pregnancy-related recommendations over the past decade, and focus group participants have discussed pregnancy concerns, including concerns about how pregnancy affects servicewomen's careers, during installation visits from 2011 to 2015. In 2012, participants mentioned pregnancy as a barrier to promotion. In 2013, women at the Service academies expressed concern about the timing of pregnancy with respect to their careers and the effect of pregnancy on their evaluations. In 2014, challenges related to pregnancy were also mentioned by participants who were concerned about postpartum fitness testing and the impact it could have on their careers.



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**Defense Advisory Committee on
Women in the Services (DACOWITS)**
4800 Mark Center Drive, Suite 04J25-01
Alexandria, Virginia 22350-9000
December 10, 2015

We, the appointed members of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), do hereby submit the results of our findings and offer our recommendations to improve the policies, procedures, and climate within the Department of Defense.



LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson
DACOWITS Chair



CMSgt (Ret) Bernise Belcer
DACOWITS Vice-Chair



Dr. Kristy Anderson



Teresa Christenson



FLTCM (Ret) Jacqueline DiRosa



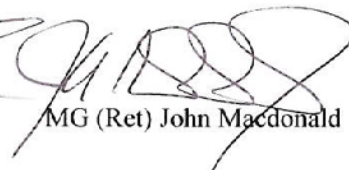
Sharlene Hawkes



CAPT (Ret) Beverly Kelley



Rev. Dr. Cynthia Lindenmeyer



MG (Ret) John Macdonald

DACOWITS Signature Page Continued

**Defense Advisory Committee on
Women in the Services (DACOWITS)**
4800 Mark Center Drive, Suite 04J25-01
Alexandria, Virginia 22350-9000
December 10, 2015



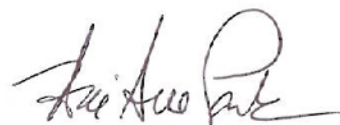
Donna McAleer



Monica Medina



Brian Morrison



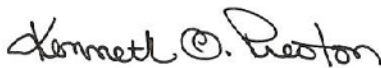
LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park



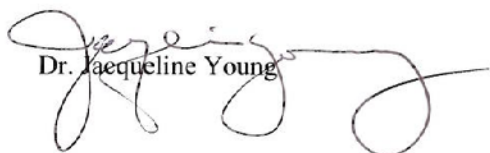
MG (Ret) Gale Pollock



VADM (Ret) Carol Pottenger



SMA (Ret) Kenneth Preston



Dr. Jacqueline Young

Prior to their departure, FORCM (Ret) Laura Martinez and RADM (Ret) Elizabeth Morris contributed to the work and recommendations of the Committee in 2015.

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Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



Appendix A

DACOWITS Charter

Committee's Official Designation: The Committee will be known as the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services ("the Committee").

Authority: The Secretary of Defense, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (5 U.S.C., Appendix, as amended) and 41 C.F.R. § 102-3.50(d), established the Committee.

Objectives and Scope of Activities: The Committee shall examine and advise on matters relating to women in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Description of Duties: The Committee shall provide the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, through the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), independent advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to women in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports: The Committee shall report to the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, through the USD(P&R). The USD(P&R), pursuant to Department of Defense (DoD) policy, may act upon the Committee's advice and recommendations.

Support: The DoD, through the Office of the USD(P&R), shall provide support, as deemed necessary, for the Committee's performance and functions, and shall ensure compliance with the requirements of the FACA, the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976 (5 U.S.C. § 552b, as amended) ("the Sunshine Act"), governing Federal statutes and regulations, and established DoD policies and procedures.

Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years: The estimated annual operating cost, to include travel, meetings, and contract support, is approximately \$975,000.00. The estimated annual personnel costs to the DoD are 4.0 full-time equivalents.

Designated Federal Officer: The Committee's Designated Federal Officer (DFO) shall be a full-time or permanent part-time DoD employee, and shall be appointed in accordance with established DoD policies and procedures.

The Committee's DFO is required to be in attendance at all meetings of the Committee and its subcommittee for the entire duration of each and every meeting. However, in the absence of the Committee's DFO, a properly approved Alternate DFO, duly appointed to the Committee according to established DoD policies and procedures, shall attend the entire duration of all meetings of the Committee and its subcommittees.

The DFO, or the Alternate DFO, shall call all meetings of the Committee and its subcommittees; prepare and approve all meeting agendas; adjourn any meeting when the DFO, or the Alternate DFO, determines adjournment to be in the public interest or required by governing regulations or DoD policies and procedures; and chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the Panel reports.

Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings: The Committee shall meet at the call of the Committee's DFO, in consultation with the Committee's Chairperson. The estimated number of Committee meetings is four per year.

Duration: The need for this advisory function is on a continuing basis; however, this charter is subject to renewal every two years.

Termination: The Committee shall terminate upon completion of its mission or two years from the date this charter is filed, whichever is sooner, unless the Secretary of Defense extends it.

Membership and Designation: The Committee shall be comprised of no more than 20 members who are appointed by the Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense and who have experience with the military or with women's workforce issues. The Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of Defense shall select and appoint the Committee's Chairperson from the total membership. All Committee member appointments must be renewed by the Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense on an annual basis.

The Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense may appoint the Director of the Center for Women Veterans for the Department of Veterans Affairs to serve as a non-voting ex-officio regular government employee (RGE) member, who participates in the Committee's deliberations. If appointed, he or she will not count toward the Committee's total membership or to determine whether a quorum exists.

The USD(P&R) may request the appointment of additional experts and consultants to advise the Committee as subject matter experts. If approved by the Secretary of Defense, these experts and consultants, appointed under the authority of title 5 U.S.C. § 3109, shall have no voting rights on the Committee or its subcommittees, shall not count toward the Committee's total membership, and shall not engage in Committee deliberations.

Committee members appointed by the Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense, who are not full-time or permanent part-time Federal employees, shall be appointed as experts and consultants, under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109, to serve as special government employee (SGE) members. Committee members appointed by the Secretary of Defense, who are full-time or permanent part-time Federal employees, shall serve as RGE members. Committee members shall serve a term of service of one-to-four years on the Committee. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms of service without Secretary of Defense or Deputy Secretary of Defense approval. This same term of service limitation also applies to any DoD authorized subcommittees.

All Committee members will be reimbursed for travel and per diem as it pertains to official business of the Committee. The Committee members, who are appointed by the Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense as SGE members, will serve without compensation.

Subcommittees: The DoD, when necessary and consistent with the Committee's mission and DoD policies and procedures, may establish subcommittees, task forces, or working groups to support the Committee. Establishment of subcommittees will be based upon a written determination, to include terms of reference, by the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, or the USD(P&R), as the DoD Sponsor.

Such subcommittees shall not work independently of the Committee, and shall report all of their recommendations and advice solely to the Committee for full and open deliberation and discussion. Subcommittees, task forces, or working groups have no authority to make decisions and recommendations, verbally or in writing, on behalf of the Committee. No subcommittee or any of its members can update or report, verbally or in writing, on behalf of the Committee, directly to the DoD or any Federal officers or employees.

The Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense will appoint subcommittee members to a term of service of one to four years, even if the member in question is already a member of the Committee. Subcommittee members shall not serve more than two consecutive terms of service, unless authorized by the Secretary of Defense or the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

All subcommittee members, if not full-time or permanent part-time Federal employees, will be appointed as experts and consultants, under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109, to serve as SGE members, whose appointments must be renewed on an annual basis. Subcommittee members appointed by the Secretary of Defense, who are full-time or permanent part-time Federal employees, shall serve as RGE members. With the exception of reimbursement of official travel and per diem related to the Committee or its subcommittees, subcommittee members shall serve without compensation.

All subcommittees operate under the provisions of FACA, the Sunshine Act, governing Federal statutes and regulations, and established DoD policies and procedures.

Recordkeeping: The records of the Committee and its subcommittees shall be handled according to Section 2, General Records Schedule 26 and governing DoD policies and procedures. These records will be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act of 1966

(5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended).

Filing Date: April 22, 2014



Appendix B

Biographies of DACOWITS Members

Lieutenant General Frances Wilson, Ed.D., USMC Retired – Virginia Beach, Virginia – Committee Chair

Dr. Fran Wilson is a past President of National Defense University (NDU). She is a veteran of nearly 37 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, retiring as a Lieutenant General in September 2009. She was a Company Officer, Brigade of Midshipmen, U.S. Naval Academy; Commanding Officer, 4th Recruit Training Battalion; Commanding Officer, Headquarters and Service Battalion, Marine Forces Pacific and Commander, Camp H.M. Smith; Commanding General, Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA; and Commanding General, 3rd Force Service Support Group in Okinawa. Prior to her assignment as President of NDU, she was the Commandant, Industrial College of the Armed Forces. In March 2009, she was awarded the French Legion of Honour in a ceremony presided by French Defense Minister Hervé Morin at the French Embassy in Washington, DC, for her work with the French Center for Higher Education in Armaments.

Dr. Wilson earned a bachelor of science degree from Michigan State University, four master's degrees, and a doctorate in Education from the University of Southern California. In addition to several military school curricula, she completed a Federal Executive Fellowship at the Brookings Institution and a Senior Executive Course in National and International Security at Harvard University's JFK School of Government.

Since retirement, Dr. Wilson has engaged in various activities with organizations in the Virginia Tidewater area. She is an appointed member of the City of Virginia Beach Mayor's Military Economic Development Advisory Committee and served as the Chair of the Board of Directors, Hampton Roads and Central Virginia United Services Organization, or USO. She was appointed by the Governor as a member of the Board of Trustees, Fort Monroe Authority, and serves on the Board of Visitors, Virginia Military Institute. She was elected to and served on the Board of Directors, Navy Federal Credit Union, and the Board of Trustees, St. John's College High School; she also served as the Vice President of the Board of Directors, Hampton Roads World Affairs Council. She was honored with the University of Southern California Alumni Association's Alumni Merit Award in 2009, recognized as one of Virginia's Most Influential Women by the Virginia Lawyers' Media in 2014, and was a 2015 Women of Distinction Awards honoree of the South Hampton Roads YWCA.

Chief Master Sergeant Bernise Belcer, USAF Retired – Columbia, South Carolina – Committee Vice-Chair

Chief Master Sergeant (Ret) Bernise F. Belcer enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in November 1982. She attended technical training in the Personnel Career field at Keesler Air Force Base, MS. She was promoted to the rank of Chief Master Sergeant in October 2002. In December 2012, she retired after 30 years of military service from the position of Chief, Enlisted Promotions, Evaluations, and Fitness Policy in the Manpower, Personnel and Services directorate at the Pentagon, Washington, DC.

CMSgt (Ret) Belcer served in many positions throughout her career, including Group Superintendent at MacDill Air Force Base, FL; Osan Air Base, Korea; and Charleston Air Force Base, SC. She also served as Command Chief Master for the 437th Airlift Wing at Charleston Air Force Base, SC, and as 19th Air Force Command Chief at Randolph Air Force Base, TX. She deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar.

Her military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with one silver and two bronze oak leaf clusters; Air Force Commendation with one oak leaf cluster; and the Outstanding Airman of the Year Ribbon.

CMSgt (Ret) Belcer earned her bachelor of arts degree in Education at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, and her master's degree in Management from Webster University. She holds a Community College of the Air Force degree and a graduate certificate from Villanova University, both in Human Resources Management.

She received advanced Senior Leadership training at National Defense University, Keystone.

Her additional academic credentials are as follows: Command Senior Enlisted Leader Course, Washington, DC; Center for Creative Leadership, LaJolla, CA; Air Force Enterprise Management Seminar, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC; and Kenan-Flagler Business School and Air Mobility Command Senior Mobility Leaders Course, USAF Expeditionary Center, Fort Dix, NJ.

While on active duty, CMSgt (Ret) Belcer served as the Air Force Military Representative to DACOWITS. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Belleclave Homeowner's Association. Bernise and her husband, Derrick, live in Columbia, SC. Derrick is also retired Air Force.

Dr. Kristy Anderson – San Antonio, Texas

Dr. Kristy Anderson is a Family Medicine Physician. As a TRICARE provider, she has seen the influence and impact of military service on every aspect of military families. Dr. Anderson's medical practice covers the spectrum of life from birth to death, and this gives her unique insight on the challenges that each individual experiences during each stage of life. Her patients have included members and their dependents from each branch of DoD.

Dr. Anderson attended medical school in San Antonio, TX, where she completed clinical clerkships at both Willford Hall Medical Center and Brooke Army Medical Center. She served as a civilian primary care physician for the community of Ft. Hood, TX, and the surrounding area.

from 2005–2009. She relocated again with her husband to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB) in 2009, where she joined a Family Medicine practice and later an Internal Medicine group, serving the extended WPAFB community. She also expanded the focus of her practice to include hospice and palliative medicine, which gave her insight into the issues facing veterans and their loved ones as life comes to an end.

Dr. Anderson is a native of Dallas, TX, and graduated from Garland High School as her class valedictorian, setting a record for the highest GPA achieved by a student in Texas. She then attended Sweet Briar College, where she graduated Summa Cum Laude with a bachelor of science degree and majored in both biology and dance. She was awarded the President's Medal by the college for her efforts above and beyond her degree program. She earned her doctorate in Medicine from The University of Texas Health Sciences Center at San Antonio, TX, in 2003. She completed her medical residency in Family Medicine with Scott & White Hospital/Texas A&M Health Sciences Center. She is board certified in Family Medicine as well as Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

Dr. Anderson is married to an active duty U.S. Air Force officer who serves as the Deputy Chief of the Warfighter Interface Division, Human Effectiveness Directorate, 711th Human Performance Wing. She is an active member of her church, where she volunteers with the children's program during Sunday school, AWANA, and vacation Bible school. Dr. Anderson is one of only two physicians serving on the church's volunteer first aid team, providing assistance to individuals who experience medical problems during church services and sports events. Additionally, she regularly steps up to assist with church outreach programs focused on reaching underprivileged children from the local community. Finally, she is a frequent volunteer with a local Cub Scout Pack, helping with organization of meetings, campouts, and community service events, as well as mentoring scouts.

Teresa Christenson – Brussels, Belgium

Ms. Teresa Christenson comes to DACOWITS with the unique perspective of a military spouse. Long interested and involved in spouse education and military family readiness, she has worked with organizations locally, nationally, and more recently, internationally for the benefit of Service families and charities. Mrs. Christenson was heavily involved with the Command Spouse Leadership Course, the Navy's only budgeted leadership course for spouses. Mrs. Christenson assisted with curriculum development, facilitation of the course, and networking, and served in various positions, including Director for the course's Advisory Board, whose members span all Navy regions and communities. Mrs. Christenson helped write and deliver the first and only Senior Enlisted Spouse Leadership course for the U.S. Navy, which continues to be taught to this day.

Mrs. Christenson additionally has worked with the Continuum of Resource Education, reaching out to spouses on family and personal issues through conferences and workshops and helping educate families on how to navigate this military lifestyle. She has also worked with the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society and local Navy (and now Army and international) spouse groups in the 16 duty stations in three countries to which her family has been assigned during 25 years of marriage.

Mrs. Christenson currently resides in Brussels, Belgium, where she is the U.S. National Representative for the NATO Charities Bazaar, raising money for international and Belgian charities focusing on children. She is also an Honorary Advisor to Americans Working Around the Globe (AWAG) for the Benelux Region (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg). AWAG is an organization that focuses on strengthening leadership in communities and volunteerism in women in different European regions; Benelux, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. While living in Germany, she was also a member of the German-American Women's Club, fostering German-American friendships.

Teresa and her husband, Vice Admiral John Christenson, have three grown children. Their daughter lives and works in Raleigh, NC, and their two sons are in college. They are immensely proud of all of them.

Fleet Master Chief Jacqueline DiRosa, USN, Retired – Fort Worth, Texas

Fleet Master Chief (Ret) Jacqueline DiRosa served 30 distinguished years in the U.S. Navy, retiring from active duty in August 2011.

FLTCM (Ret) DiRosa has served across many diverse communities—Medical, Fleet Operations, Navy Staff, Personnel Management, and Cyber Warfare—and held various senior leadership positions. She is recognized as a trailblazer for achieving many organizational “firsts,” reaching pinnacle positions never before held by a woman. She served as the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Force Master Chief/Director, US Navy Hospital Corps (2002) and as the U.S. Fleet Forces Fleet Master Chief (2006).

Throughout her Navy career, she served on four ships (two as the Command Master Chief) and completed seven deployments, including a six-month summer-support deployment to Antarctica, three Western Pacific deployments in support of Operation Desert Shield/Storm and Operation Southern Watch, a Mediterranean/Arabian Gulf deployment, and two South Pacific Forward Presence deployments.

FLTCM (Ret) DiRosa holds an associate of science degree and has received advanced leadership training at the Navy's Senior Enlisted Academy, the National Defense University's Keystone Command Senior Enlisted Leaders Course, and Navy Senior Leaders Business Course at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Kenan-Flagler Business School.

She is currently a Client Partner with FranklinCovey's Government Services business development team and resides in Fort Worth, Texas.

Sharlene Hawkes – Centerville, Utah

Since 2005, Ms. Hawkes has been President of Remember My Service (RMS) Productions. RMS specializes in both interactive and traditional publications for military units and commemorations. Recently, RMS worked with both DoD and the Republic of Korea to produce the Korean War 60th commemorative book and feature documentary, which was selected for the GI Film Festival 2014 in Washington, DC. Currently, RMS is the Vietnam 50th Commemorative Gift project coordinator on behalf of Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Naval Historical Foundation, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. In support of the troops, Ms. Hawkes has traveled to

forward operating bases in Iraq and Afghanistan to better understand the service provided by our dedicated Service members. She is a Board member of the Utah Defense Alliance, an Executive Committee member for the Association of the United States Army—Utah region, and is co-chair of the AMAR Foundation (U.S.-London) working in Middle East conflict areas. In 2008, she founded “Project Gratitude,” an annual program that brings wives and daughters of fallen heroes to a complimentary VIP weekend at the Miss America Finals, where they are formally recognized as Honorary Miss Americas.

Ms. Hawkes holds a bachelor's degree in Communications from BYU and a master's degree in Integrated Marketing Communication from the University of Utah. After college, she signed with ESPN and spent 16 years as an award-winning sportscaster, covering such world-class events as World Cup Soccer, World Cup Skiing, the Kentucky Derby 1995–2004, the French Open, and Big 10 College Football 1990–1995. She was a host and a feature producer of College Gameday, World Cup Soccer Today, Scholastic Sports America, ESPN's Sailing, and Great American Events.

Ms. Hawkes was born in Paraguay, later living in Ecuador, Chile, and Mexico, but spent most of her teenage years in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is the only foreign-born Miss America (1985) and is an accomplished musician and published author. Ms. Hawkes and her husband, Bob, have four children and live in Centerville, UT, where they enjoy skiing, biking, and camping.

Captain Beverly Kelley, USCG Retired – Chester, Maryland

Captain (Ret) Beverly Kelley served 30 years in the U.S. Coast Guard. Following graduation from the University of Miami with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics, CAPT Kelley enlisted in the Coast Guard in January 1976 and attended Officer Candidate School in Yorktown, VA, from February to June 1976. She held various staff and leadership positions during her service to the Nation. In April 1979, LTJG Kelley became the first woman to command a Coast Guard cutter, the USCGC CAPE NEWHAGEN. Two years earlier, the Coast Guard experimented with assigning women to seagoing ships. The high-endurance Coast Guard cutters MORGENTHAU and GALLATIN received 10 enlisted women and two female officers each; CAPT Kelley was one of those officers. Twenty years later, she made history again as the first female to command a Coast Guard medium-endurance cutter, the USCGC NORTHLAND.

CAPT (Ret) Kelley earned a master of arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College in Newport, RI, and a master of science degree in National Resource Management from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, DC. Currently, she serves as a school board member for the Queen Anne's County Board of Education.

The Reverend (Doctor) Cynthia Ramirez Lindenmeyer – La Vista, Nebraska

The Reverend (Doctor) Cynthia Ramirez Lindenmeyer is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She currently serves as the Associate Pastor at First United Methodist Church in Omaha and Chaplain for the American Public University System, the number one provider of higher education to the U.S. military, and parent institution to the American Public University and the American Military University. As an adjunct instructor in Ethics and

Comparative Religions, the Rev. Dr. Lindenmeyer is the course director for both the Military Ethics and Islam courses.

Upon graduation from the United States Military Academy (USMA) in 1990, the Rev. Dr. Lindenmeyer was commissioned as a Signal Corps Officer in the U.S. Army. She served in various command and staff positions from platoon leader to company command, including operations officer and West Point minority admissions officer.

A graduate of Duke Divinity School and Distinguished Honor Graduate of the Chaplain Officer Basic Course, the Rev. Dr. Lindenmeyer served as a military and then civilian chaplain at USMA from 2000–2007. She earned a Pastoral Care and Counseling certificate from the Blanton-Peale Institute and Counseling Center in New York City and a doctorate of Ministry (D.Min.) from Princeton Theological Seminary. She currently serves as a Cohort Mentor for the D.Min. program at Duke Divinity School. Licensed by the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America, her passions include ministry through teaching Spinning, Zumba, Piloxing, and Silver Sneakers. She is married to an active duty Army officer and has two energetic children.

Major General John Macdonald, USA, Retired – Alexandria, Virginia

Major General (Ret) John Macdonald completed 33 years of service to the Nation, retiring on August 31, 2012. During his time in the U.S. Army, he served 17 years outside of the United States. He led troops in combat in Grenada, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq, and most recently in Afghanistan. An attack helicopter aviator, MG (Ret) Macdonald served five years in the 82nd Airborne Division and 18th Airborne Corps; 10 years along the Demilitarized Zone in Korea; and six years in Germany before, during, and after the fall of the Iron Curtain. His last tour of duty was in Korea as the CJ3 Operations Officer for a Four Star, United Nations, Combined and Joint command, where he is credited with significantly advancing the ROK US warfighting capability with creative exercises, tough negotiations, and great team work in tense crisis situations: the North Korean sinking of the ROKS Cheonan and loss of 46 ROK sailors; the North Korean shelling of Y-P Do, killing four individuals from the Republic of Korea; and the launch of a North Korean failed satellite attempt.

MG (Ret) Macdonald is now an independent consultant, focusing on War Gaming for DoD and other Federal Government agencies; he has provided motivational talks for Jiatong University, Gannett news, Air War College, and others. He is active in assisting Korean War veterans, and will soon be helping Vietnam Veterans, by providing a commemorative book to show sponsor's appreciation for veterans' sacrifices.

He is a Master Aviator and a Master Parachutist and is Ranger Qualified. He was awarded two Distinguished Service Medals and 38 other military decorations.

MG (Ret) Macdonald has served as a member of five boards associated with the Army and DoD.

John graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1979. He holds a master of science degree in Business Administration from Central Michigan University and a master of arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College at Newport, RI.

He is most happily married to BG (Ret) Anne Macdonald. They live in Alexandria, VA, and enjoy traveling, skiing, and powerboating.

Donna McAleer – Park City, Utah

Ms. Donna McAleer is an award-winning author of the groundbreaking book *Porcelain on Steel: Women of West Point's Long Gray Line*.

Ms. McAleer graduated from West Point in 1987 and served as a U.S. Army officer in a variety of leadership positions in Germany. She earned a master's degree in Business Administration from the Darden Graduate School of the University of Virginia.

Ms. McAleer's professional career includes a variety of cross-sector leadership roles in public, private, and nonprofit corporations. She began in the private sector with the Novations Consulting Group, later moving to William M. Mercer, Inc. Donna then became a Vice President of Global Logistics and Support Services at GenRad, a leading producer of electronic test equipment. There, she was responsible for the development and implementation of a global logistics and customer support strategy. In February 2000, she relinquished her position at GenRad to begin an intensive training regimen. She committed herself to the pursuit of a lifelong dream and a unique opportunity—to represent the United States in the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in the medal debut of Women's Bobsled. As a Bobsled Driver, she finished fourth in Olympic trials.

Wanting to give back to her community, Ms. McAleer became the Executive Director of the People's Health Clinic, a nonprofit based in Park City. In this capacity, she led strategic business model transition and financial turnaround to ensure financial stability for this organization's commitment to providing quality medical and healthcare for the uninsured. Currently, she is a PSIA and ACE Level 2 ski instructor at Deer Valley Ski Resort in Park City, UT.

As a consultant to the National Parks Conservation Association, Ms. McAleer advises the organization on its veterans and military families programs.

Donna is actively involved in the West Point community. She serves as Class President and is an Admissions Field Representative. She was selected to the West Point Association of Graduates Board of Directors, West Point Women's Network, and as an advisor to the West-Point.org Website. Donna is the only graduate who has served on all three alumni organization boards. She is an avid outdoor enthusiast with a particular passion for skiing, snowshoeing, mountainbiking, hiking, golfing, and traveling.

In 2012 and 2014, Donna was the Democratic candidate for Utah's 1st Congressional District, having won the Democratic nomination by an overwhelming 66 percent. She is a keynote and inspirational speaker.

Monica Medina – Chevy Chase, Maryland

Ms. Monica Medina currently serves as the Senior Director of Ocean Policy at the National Geographic Society. Prior to joining National Geographic in 2014, Ms. Medina served as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, advising him on all issues concerning women

in the military, military sexual assault, the lifting of the combat exclusion rule, veterans' employment, wounded warriors, traumatic brain injury and suicides, military health care, same-sex partner benefits, and environment and energy issues. Previously, Ms. Medina served as the Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, where she led efforts on Arctic conservation and restoration of the Gulf of Mexico after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Earlier, Ms. Medina served on the Transition Team for the Obama Administration.

Ms. Medina has worked for nearly 30 years at the intersection of law and policy in Washington, DC. She was a partner at the law firm of Heller Ehrman and has held various other positions in the executive branch of government, on Capitol Hill, in nonprofit organizations, and in business. She attended Georgetown University on a U.S. Army ROTC scholarship and began her legal career on active duty in the Honor's Program of the Army General Counsel's office. For her service in the Army, Ms. Medina was awarded an Army Commendation Medal in 1989 and a Meritorious Service Medal in 1990. In 2013, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta awarded Ms. Medina the Department of Defense Distinguished Public Service Medal.

Brian Morrison – Falls Church, Virginia

Mr. Brian Morrison is an executive with a large international aerospace and defense company.

Before entering the private sector, he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), work for which he was awarded the Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service. He served in various positions with the U.S. House of Representatives' Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, including as Deputy Staff Director and General Counsel. Prior to that, he was an Assistant General Counsel at the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and an attorney with the law firm of Williams & Connolly LLP in Washington, DC. A graduate of the Harvard Law School and Brandeis University, Mr. Morrison was a law clerk to the Honorable Hugh H. Bownes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Brian was an officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve for nearly a decade, including a tour mobilized to active duty in Iraq during the troop surge of 2007.

Lieutenant Colonel Hae-Sue Park, USA Retired – Springfield, Virginia

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Hae-Sue Park, a U.S. Army veteran, enlisted as a Multichannel Radio Operator in 1982. Subsequently, in 1987, she received a commission in the regular Army upon graduation from the United States Military Academy, West Point. LTC (Ret) Park's 21 years of service to our Nation include information technology assignments that range from the tactical arena of command and control communication operations in the Republic of Korea's Demilitarized Zone to national strategic operations as commander of DoD's only secure satellite communications constellation. Throughout her career, LTC (Ret) Park served in a spectrum of leadership positions, beginning as a communications platoon leader in the 56th Field Artillery Command (Pershing) and culminating with selection to command the 53rd Signal Battalion. Other highlights of her military service include assignments as Assistant Professor of Economics at the United States Military Academy, West Point; Signal Corp Assignment Officer (Majors, Lieutenant Colonels, Colonels), US Army Human Resource Command; and Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff Army Pentagon.

After retirement from active duty, LTC (Ret) Park has been applying Army leadership values in private industry, serving as Management Associate at Bridgewater Associates and as Chief Operating Officer at SNVC LLC. She is currently the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Apogee Systems Corporation, a federal sector information technology services company.

LTC (Ret) Park holds a bachelor of science degree from the United States Military Academy and a master's degree in Business Administration from Harvard University.

Major General Gale Pollock, Army Nurse Corps, Retired – Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Major General (Ret) Gale Pollock served as Commander, U.S. Army Medical Command and Acting Surgeon General of the Army in 2007 (the first woman nonphysician to have this role in any of the Military Services with a \$9.7B annual budget). Simultaneously, she served as the 22nd Chief of the Army Nurse Corps. Following her retirement from the Army, she was the founding Executive Director of the Louis J. Fox Center for Vision Restoration at the University of Pittsburgh and an Associate Professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and School of Nursing. In 2011, MG (Ret) Pollock was a Fellow in Harvard University's Advanced Leadership Initiative.

MG (Ret) Pollock received the 2008 Agatha Hodgins Achievement Award from the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists; the 2007 Woman of the Year of the American Legion Auxiliary; and Distinguished Alumna of Baylor University in 2006. She was selected as a 2013/2014 Professional Woman of the Year by the National Association of Professional Women in January 2014.

MG (Ret) Pollock received a bachelor of science degree in Nursing from the University of Maryland. She is a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. She received her master's degree in Business Administration from Boston University; a master's in Healthcare Administration from Baylor University; a master's in National Security and Strategy from National Defense University; and an honorary doctorate in Public Service from the University of Maryland. She is a Fellow in The American College of Healthcare Executives and the American Academy of Nursing.

Her passion is restoration of sight; when not advancing this cause, she spends time with her "spousal-unit" Doug McAllaster and her ambassador guide dog, Cruiser, enjoying exercise and the beauty of the outdoors.

Vice Admiral Carol Pottenger, Navy, Retired – Jacksonville, Florida

Vice Admiral (Ret) Carol Pottenger graduated from Purdue University in May 1977 and was commissioned as an ensign through NROTC. One of the first women selected for sea duty, she reported aboard USS YOSEMITE (AD 19) in 1978. Subsequent sea tours included assignments aboard USS YELLOWSTONE (AD 41) and USS KISKA (AE 35).

VADM (Ret) Pottenger assumed command of USS SHASTA (AE 33) in 1996, and of USS BRIDGE (AOE 10) in 2001; she completed several deployments and was awarded the Battle E and the Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy.

Shore tours encompassed various afloat staff and Headquarters assignments and at USNA as a company officer. During several tours in the Pentagon, she served as Executive Assistant, including for the Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Upon selection to flag rank in 2005, she established a new Type Commander for 40 combat logistics and special mission ships. In 2006, she became the first female to command a strike group, Expeditionary Strike Group 7 / CTF 76. In 2008, she became the third Commander, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command as a force provider of 40,000 Active and Reserve Sailors.

In her final three years in the U.S. Navy, VADM (Ret) Pottenger was promoted to Vice Admiral and served as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Capability Development at NATO Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation. She retired in May 2013. She serves on the Board of Directors for the US Navy Memorial Foundation and for INTUIDEX, Inc., and works as a private consultant for the international oil and gas industry.

In May 2007, VADM (Ret) Pottenger received an honorary doctorate (Ph.D.) from Purdue University. Personal awards include the Defense and Navy Distinguished Service Medals, Legion of Merit, and other awards; and the Order of St. George, presented to her by Bulgaria.

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth Preston, Retired – Mount Savage, Maryland

Sergeant Major of the Army (Ret) Kenneth Preston served as the 13th Sergeant Major of the Army from January 15, 2004, to March 1, 2011. He retires as the longest serving Sergeant Major of the Army, with more than seven years in the position.

As Sergeant Major of the Army, Preston served as the Army Chief of Staff's personal adviser on all Soldier and Family-related matters, particularly areas affecting soldier training and quality of life. He devoted the majority of his time in this position to traveling throughout the Army, serving as a force provider for leaders at all levels of responsibility, overseeing soldier and unit training, manning and equipping challenges, and talking to soldiers and their families to understand their needs, personal hardships, and challenges serving a Nation at war.

SMA (Ret) Preston is a native of Mount Savage, MD. He entered the U.S. Army on June 30, 1975. He attended Basic Training and Armor Advanced Individual Training at Fort Knox, KY. Throughout his 36-year career, he served in every enlisted leadership position, from cavalry scout and tank commander to his final position as Sergeant Major of the Army. Other assignments he held as a command sergeant major were with the 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division; 3rd "Grey Wolf" Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division; 1st Armored Division in Bad Kreuznach, Germany; and V Corps in Heidelberg, Germany. His most recent assignment prior to serving as the 13th Sergeant Major of the Army was as the command sergeant major for Combined Joint Task Force 7 in Iraq.

His military education included the Basic Noncommissioned Officer's Course, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer's Course, First Sergeant's Course, M1/M1A1 Tank Master Gunner Course, Master Fitness Trainer Course, Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer's Course, and the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy. Preston holds a master's degree in Business Administration from Trident University International.

SMA (Ret) Preston's awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Good Conduct Medal 11th award, National Defense ribbon with bronze star, the Southwest Asia Service Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the NCOES Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon 5th award, the NATO Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal (Government of Kuwait), the Joint Meritorious Unit Award with bronze star, Army Meritorious Unit Commendation, and the Department of the Army Staff Badge.

SMA (Ret) Preston continues to support military service members and their families through his volunteer work, including serving on the Board of Directors for the United Services Organization, or USO; Homes for Our Troops, a national nonprofit organization assisting severely injured veterans and their families by raising money, contributing building materials and professional labor, and coordinating the process of building a home at no cost to veterans and their families; the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University; the Armed Forces Benefit Association; the General Electric Military Advisory Board; the Army Historical Foundation; and the Armor and Cavalry Historical Foundation. He also is a member of the Army and Air Force Exchange Retiree Council and serves as a co-chair for the Chief of Staff of the Army's Retiree Council. Preston continues to support soldiers and their families as the Director of Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier Programs at the Association of the United States Army.

Dr. Jackie Young – Honolulu, Hawaii

Dr. Jackie Young is a consultant, speaker, advocate, and volunteer for projects and issues that inspire social change and healthy communities. Currently, she serves as an appointed member of the Hawaii State Judicial Selection Commission; the Hawaii State Advisory Committee for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; and a board member of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Hawaii and the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge Hawaii Campaign Cabinet.

She obtained a bachelor of science degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology from the University of Hawaii; a master of science degree in Speech and Education from Old Dominion University in Virginia; an Advanced Certificate in School Administration from Loyola College in Maryland; and a doctorate in Women Studies and Communication from Union Institute in Ohio. She later worked at the Hawaii Department of Education, where she managed programs related to special education, gender equity, and Title IX compliance. She was also an adjunct professor at Hawaii Pacific University, where she taught courses in culture and communication.

In 1990, she was elected to the Hawaii House of Representatives from the Windward Area and then elected by her peers as Vice-Speaker, the first woman to hold that position. She became a founding member in 1992 of Hale Ola, a shelter for abused spouses in Windward Oahu, and continues to be active through her work with the Domestic Violence Action Center.

In 2010, she attended the Global Summit of Women in Beijing, China; in 2013, she was a delegate to a Global Conference on Sexual Violence Research Initiatives in Bangkok, Thailand.

From 1999 to 2013, she was an executive with the American Cancer Society Hawaii Pacific and retired in 2013 as its Chief Staff Officer.

Jackie has received awards from organizations such as the National Education Association, ACLU, and Hawaii Women Lawyers. The Korea Foundation presented her with the Light of the Orient Award. She received the President's Award from the Union Institute and the Fellow of the Pacific Award from Hawaii Pacific University. The YWCA honored her as an outstanding woman leader in Hawaii. In 2014, Punahou School's Alumni Association presented her with the Judd Award for Humanitarian Service.

Jackie was a U.S. Army wife for more than 20 years, moving frequently while raising four children.



Appendix C

Installations Visited

Site	Members	Dates
Naval Station San Diego and Twentynine Palms, San Diego, CA	Dr. Jackie Young and MG (Ret) Gale Pollock	March 30–April 3, 2015
Fort Carson, Fort Carson, CO	FLTCM (Ret) Jacqueline DiRosa and SMA (Ret) Preston	April 8–April 11, 2015
Hurlburt Field, Hurlburt Field, FL and Eglin Air Force Base, Eglin Air Force Base, FL	LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park and Ms. Teresa Christenson	April 14–April 17, 2015
Naval Station Mayport, Jacksonville, FL	Rev. Dr. Cynthia Lindenmeyer and CAPT (Ret) Beverly Kelley	April 21–April 24, 2015
Dover Air Force Base, Dover, DE	CMSgt (Ret) Bernise Belcer and Ms. Monica Medina	April 27–April 30, 2015
Fort Campbell, Fort Campbell, KY	LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson and VADM (Ret) Carol Pottenger	May 5–May 8, 2015
Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville, NC	Dr. Kristy Anderson and CMSgt (Ret) Bernise Belcer	May 10–May 16, 2015
Camp Pendleton, San Diego County, CA	LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park and Ms. Sharlene Wells Hawkes	May 13–May 16, 2015
Communications Area Master Station Atlantic, Chesapeake, VA and Training Center Yorktown, Yorktown, VA	MG (Ret) John Macdonald and Ms. Donna McAleer	May 17–May 21, 2015



Appendix D

Focus Group Protocols

DACOWITS 2015: Focus Group Protocol Shell

Session Information

Location:

Date:

Time:

Facilitator:

Recorder:

of Participants present for entire session:

of Participants excused/reasons:

Focus Group Kickoff: Key Points to Cover

1. Welcome attendees

- Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion today.
- I am ____ (insert name) and I am a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), and this is ____ (introduce partner), also a member of DACOWITS.
- We have ____ (insert name) here with us from the DACOWITS staff.
- Our scribe, ____ (insert name), is with [Contractor], a research firm hired to record these sessions, and s/he is a part of the DACOWITS research team.

2. Introduce DACOWITS and its purpose

- DACOWITS stands for the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services. The Committee has been around a long time—over 60 years.
- DACOWITS' charter is broad—to advise the Secretary of Defense on matters and policies relating to service of women in the Armed Forces.
- We are a civilian Committee, although some of us have prior military service.
- We are appointed by the Secretary of Defense. We are all volunteers—we serve without pay.
- Every year, DACOWITS selects specific topics on which to prepare a report for the Secretary of Defense.
- This year, the Committee is interested in hearing from you on several topics including [insert topic 1] and [if relevant, insert topic 2]. (FOR MEN GROUPS: We are also meeting with groups of women). We would like to spend some time discussing these specific topics, but we will also try to set aside some time at the end to discuss any general topics related to women in the military that you'd like to talk about.

3. Describe how focus group session will work
 - A focus group is basically just a guided discussion. As the facilitator, I have a set of scripted questions that I'd like to cover today, but we would like to encourage open conversation. Our scribe serves as a recorder. S/he will generate a transcript of our discussion but will not take down anyone's name.
 - The session will last approximately [45/90] minutes, and we will not take a formal break. (Restrooms are located [insert restroom location]). Please don't hesitate to step out at any time for whatever reason.
 - We consider you the experts on this topic; your opinions and attitudes are important to us. While we would like to hear from everyone, feel free to answer as many or as few questions as you prefer.
4. Explain ground rules
 - Please speak clearly and one at a time.
 - There are no right or wrong answers.
 - We want to hear the good and the bad.
 - We respect and value differences of opinion.
 - Please avoid sidebar conversations.
 - I want to make sure we cover all our questions today. If I feel we've covered a topic, I'll move us along.
 - Our scribe [_____] will also make sure we are sticking to the schedule and will remind me if we need to move on to the next question.
5. Emphasize that participation is voluntary and that privacy and confidentiality will be maintained
 - Your participation in this session is voluntary.
 - If you would prefer to excuse yourself from the focus group at any time, you are free to do so.
 - If there are any questions you don't want to answer for whatever reason, please feel free to pass.
 - We treat the information you share as confidential. That means we will protect your confidentiality to the extent allowable by law. We will not reveal the names of study participants and no information will be reported that can identify you or your family. In fact, all members of the DACOWITS research team (members and staff) have signed confidentiality agreements pledging to safeguard the confidentiality of the information we gather in these sessions.
 - Your name will not be linked to your answers or to any comments you make during the discussion.

- There are some behaviors that we are required to report. If we learn that you are being hurt or plan on hurting yourself or others, or others are being hurt or plan on hurting themselves or others, the law requires that we share this information with someone who can help and the appropriate authority.
- If you would like to speak with your installation's Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, s/he is available to speak with you during or after our focus group session. You are also able to contact the DoD Safe Helpline by visiting safehelpline.org or calling 1-877-995-5247.
- Also, because this is a group meeting, it is important that each of you agree to respect and protect each other's privacy. We expect you to keep any information you hear today in the strictest of confidence and not discuss it with anyone outside of this group. We also expect you not to share the identity of other participants with anyone outside of this group.
- We will begin by passing out a couple of short forms.
 - The first is a participant rights form for you to read. If you do not agree to the terms in the form, we will not be able to include you in the group today. If you stay for the group discussion, this will indicate your consent.
 - The second is a short mini-survey, which we ask you to complete anonymously. Please do not include your name. This mini-survey allows us to compile data on the number and kinds of participants we spoke with during our site visits. Because the mini-survey is anonymous, we will not be able to link any responses you make during the discussion today with your responses to the mini-survey.
- After all of the focus groups at this and other sites we're visiting this year have been completed, our staff compiles the results into a report that we use in writing our annual report to the Secretary of Defense. (Show copy of 2014 report.) Copies of our annual reports are available on the web at dacowits.defense.gov. The focus group report compiles responses by broad categories only, such as female junior officers or male senior NCOs.

Warm-Up/Introductions

1. Before we get started with our discussion about gender integration, let us tell you a bit about ourselves (short introduction from DACOWITS members; e.g., My name is [name] and I'm from [location]. I am a [retired service member/current occupation]).

Now, let's go around the room and please tell us (note: ask all these at once):

- How many years you've served in the military
- Your job in the military
- How long you've been in your current unit

[Insert Module 1]

[For 90 minute groups, insert Module 2]

General Questions

1. We're also interested in hearing about other issues that may affect women in the military that we haven't yet discussed. Is there anything else you'd like to talk about with us? We may use your ideas as future topics of DACOWITS research.
 - What do you feel is the biggest challenge to women in the military today?
 - If you could take one recommendation back to the Secretary of Defense, what would it be?

[MODERATOR: REINFORCE CONFIDENTIALITY—We will keep your information confidential, please do so as well by not sharing what you heard with anyone else.]

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking the time to share your knowledge with us. Your thoughts are valuable to our efforts to inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense on these matters.

Once again, thank you very much.

Module A: Gender Integration

Next I want to hear some of your thoughts about recent efforts to integrate women into previously closed positions and units. As you know, over the past few years many units and positions have been newly opened to women. Let's all take a minute to read the handout definition of gender integration to ourselves to make sure we are on the same page. [GIVE PARTICIPANTS 1–2 MINUTES TO REVIEW].

1. We realize you may or may not have personal knowledge of how this is going. Who here is working in a unit where women are being integrated into certain positions for the first time? (show of hands)
 - Please tell us a bit more about this experience.
2. What is being done, if anything, to prepare units for gender integration?
 - How satisfied are you with these efforts to place women into previously closed units and positions?
3. What could the military do to better to ensure women are successfully integrated into these newly opened units and positions?
 - What improvements could be made on the unit level? By unit leadership? At higher echelons like the Service level or DoD level?
4. How well do you think the integration process is going overall?
 - What are some of the challenges with integrating women into these units and positions?
5. I'd like to ask you to think for a moment about military culture. Please take a moment to read the definition of culture in the handout, as we will be coming back to this concept throughout the discussion. What about military culture do you think makes it easier for women to integrate into newly opened units and positions?
6. What about military culture makes it more challenging?
7. As you may know, when they turn 18, all men are required to register for the Selective Service. Let's all take a minute to read the handout definition of the Selective Service to ourselves.¹ [GIVE PARTICIPANTS 1–2 MINUTES TO REVIEW]

¹ In 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected a proposal to expand registration to women, based largely on DoD's policy that excluded women from serving in combat.

8. This registration process creates a list that would be used if a draft was needed to respond to a national emergency. Now that the combat exclusion rule has been lifted, some people are wondering whether young women should now have to register just like young men do. What are your thoughts on this?
- What do you think would be the advantages and disadvantages of requiring young women to register?
 - How do you think requiring young women to register with the Selective Service would impact women's interest in joining the military? How do you think it would impact the all-volunteer force?

Module B: Career Progression of Women in the Military

The Committee is interested in understanding the career progression of servicewomen, specifically NCOs and officers. Let's all take a minute to read the handout definition of career progression to ourselves to make sure we are on the same page. [GIVE PARTICIPANTS 1–2 MINUTES TO REVIEW]

1. Statistics show that there are fewer women than men at the highest levels of DoD leadership. Do you feel that women have the same opportunities as men to reach the highest levels at the DoD?
 - What do you think is contributing to this?
 - Have you seen this change in recent years?
2. Do you think the career goals of servicemen and servicewomen differ?
 - How so?
3. What differences do you perceive, if any, between career progression for servicewomen and career progression for women in the civilian sector?
 - Why might there be differences? Are the differences influenced by personal attributes, the culture of the workplace, or something else?

Now let's turn to the topic of professional development.

4. What are the programs you have seen in the military to develop leaders?
 - Which of these, if any, are specifically for women?
 - How, if at all, is the military adapting these programs to accommodate the opening of positions that were previously closed to women?
5. In what ways, if at all, does your Service prepare women to be competitive in the selection process for leadership roles?
6. What could the military do to increase women's ability to reach its highest levels?

Let's take a minute to read the definition of gender discrimination to ourselves. [GIVE PARTICIPANTS 1–2] MINUTES TO REVIEW]

7. Have you or has anyone you know experienced discrimination based on gender?

Module C: Impact of Social Media on Military Service Members

The Committee is interested in the use of social media, its function, and its effects on military culture and military Service members. First, let's start with a definition of what we mean by social media to make sure we are all on the same page. As it says on the handout, social media consists of web pages where users, like you, generate the content for dissemination. Examples of social media include websites for social bookmarking, social news (Reddit), social networking (Facebook, Twitter), social photo and video sharing (Tumblr, Vine, YouTube), messaging (Snapchat) and wikis (Wikipedia).

1. From your experience, how do Service members use social media?
 - Is it for personal use or do they discuss military-related issues through social media as well?
2. DACOWITS is interested in learning about the military culture surrounding the personal use of social media. How does the military support the personal use of social media? How does it discourage it?
3. What is the culture in your unit/Service around social media?
4. How have the attitudes and culture around social media changed since you first joined the military?
5. What are the benefits to using social media for your unit/Service? (IF NEEDED: Benefits to mission, to unit climate, other benefits?)
6. What are the disadvantages to using social media for your unit/Service (IF NEEDED: Communication challenges, security concerns, privacy concerns?)
7. What policies are you aware of regarding the personal use of social media in the military?
 - Do you agree with these policies?
8. What kind of training is provided to Service members regarding the personal use of social media?
9. What do you think are acceptable and unacceptable uses of social media?
 - What generational differences are you seeing in perceptions of acceptable and unacceptable use of social media?

10. What role, if any, does social media play in bullying/harassment?
 - What could the Services do to address bullying/harassment on social media?
11. If a Service member is found to post condescending public remarks about other Service members, are there any repercussions?
 - How are they held accountable?
 - Should there be repercussions?
12. What role, if any, does social media play in sexual harassment? [IF NEEDED: For example, if someone sent you an inappropriate private Facebook message]
 - What could the Services do to address sexual harassment on social media?
13. I want to bring this discussion on social media back to our earlier topic of discussion—gender integration. What are your thoughts on how social media can be used to facilitate the process of integrating women into previously closed units and positions?

Module D: Facilitators and Barriers to Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Now we are going to switch gears and talk about a different topic, the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Before we get into the questions, it is important to make sure we are all on the same page in terms of the difference between sexual harassment and sexual assault. Let's take a minute to review the handout definitions on sexual harassment and sexual assault to ourselves. [GIVE PARTICIPANTS 1–2 MINUTES TO REVIEW].

The Committee is very interested in learning what makes it easier (or more comfortable) for people to report sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military. Examples of things that can make it easier include recent Service policies, specific offices or designated individuals in your command, or anonymous venues to report sexual harassment or sexual assault. We are also interested in what makes it harder for people to report sexual harassment or sexual assault. In this section, we are asking about the topic of reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault in a general sense. As we proceed through the discussion, you are welcome to share any personal experiences you may have with this topic if you feel comfortable doing so, but we don't want you to feel like you have to share your personal experiences if you do not wish to do so.

One other important point to mention—as the discussion unfolds, we'll be switching back and forth between talking about sexual harassment and sexual assault. Please be sure to clarify whether you are talking about sexual harassment or sexual assault.

1. First, let's talk about military culture. Please take a minute to review the definition of culture on the handout [GIVE PARTICIPANTS 1–2 MINUTES TO REVIEW]. In what ways does military culture support the reporting of sexual harassment or sexual assault?
2. In what ways does military culture discourage the reporting of sexual harassment or sexual assault?
 - What are some things that compel someone to report?
 - What are some things that inhibit someone from reporting?
3. How common would you say it is that people report sexual harassment or sexual assault? [IF NEEDED: Do most incidents get reported, some, few?]
4. Thinking of reporting, what difference is there, if any, between a bystander reporting and a victim/survivor reporting? [IF NEEDED: For example, are bystanders more likely to report than survivors or are survivors more likely to report than bystanders?]
5. What differences do you see, if any, between reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault? [IF NEEDED: Is one more likely to be reported than the other?]

6. How much of a role does a person's chain of command play in encouraging or discouraging reporting of sexual harassment or sexual assault? Tell me about the role it plays.
7. How much of a role do a person's peers play in encouraging or discouraging reporting of sexual harassment or sexual assault? Tell me more about the role of peers.
8. To what extent does the rank of the offender influence someone's decision to report sexual harassment or sexual assault? Please explain.
9. What is the influence, either positive or negative, of social media on the likelihood of reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault? [IF NEEDED: REFER PARTICIPANTS TO SOCIAL MEDIA DEFINITION ON HANDOUT AND GIVE 1–2 MINUTES TO REVIEW]
10. There is some concern that going through the process of reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault makes victims/survivors feel like they are being victimized again. What have you observed in this regard?

Definitions Handout²

Culture is a way of life of a group of people--the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation.

Career progression is the process of advancing or growing within a chosen career path. It is achieved when employees are able to engage in a combination of work assignments, job rotation, training, education, and self-development programs. This could include timely selection for military schooling, including joint professional military education; choice career assignments; and timely promotions.

Gender discrimination involves treating a person unfavorably because of that person's gender.

Gender integration is the process of eliminating all gender-based barriers to service and fully integrating women into occupational fields to the maximum extent possible—particularly efforts following the call to rescind the direct combat exclusion rule for women by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2013.

Selective Service. After America's draft ended in 1973, the Selective Service System was created in case a mobilization of military forces became necessary during a crisis (e.g., World War III). Since young men between 18 and 25 years old are required by law to register with the Selective Service, the System maintains information on U.S. citizens who are potentially subject to a draft.

Sexual assault is a crime. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Consent should not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Additionally, consent is not given when a person uses force, threat of force, coercion or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious. Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual sodomy (oral or anal sex), indecent assault (e.g., unwanted and inappropriate sexual contact or fondling), or attempts to commit these acts. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender, spousal relationship, or age of victim.

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, career, or submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Social media consists of web pages where users, like you, generate the content for dissemination. Examples of social media include websites for social bookmarking, social news (Reddit), social networking (Facebook, Twitter), social photo and video sharing (Tumblr, Vine, YouTube), messaging (Snapchat) and wikis (Wikipedia).

²A separate handout was developed for each focus group that listed only those terms applicable to the modules included in that group.



Appendix E

Mini-Survey

1. What is your branch of Service?
 - ☐ Air Force
 - ☐ Army
 - ☐ Coast Guard
 - ☐ Marine Corps
 - ☐ Navy
2. Are you a member of a Reserve or National Guard unit?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
3. How long, in total, have you served in the military? Please round to the nearest year.
_____ Years
4. How old are you?
 - ☐ 18–20
 - ☐ 21–24
 - ☐ 25–29
 - ☐ 30–34
 - ☐ 35–39
 - ☐ 40 or older
5. What is your gender?
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Male
6. What is your pay grade?
 - ☐ E1–E3
 - ☐ E4–E6
 - ☐ E7–E9
 - ☐ W01–W05
 - ☐ O1–O3
 - ☐ O4 or higher
7. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?
 - ☐ No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
 - ☐ Yes, Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
8. What is your race? Mark all that apply.
 - ☐ White
 - ☐ Black or African American
 - ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
 - ☐ Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
 - ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro)
 - ☐ Other race
9. What is your relationship status?
 - ☐ Married
 - ☐ In a registered domestic partnership or civil union
 - ☐ Divorced or legally separated
 - ☐ Widowed
 - ☐ Single, but with a partner/significant other (not including domestic partnership/civil union)
 - ☐ Single, with no significant other
10. Do you have dependent children living in the home?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
11. Is your unit gender integrated (open to men and women) or currently in the process of integration?
 - ☐ My unit has been integrated for two or more years
 - ☐ My unit has integrated women within the past two years
 - ☐ My unit is currently undergoing the process of integrating women
 - ☐ My unit is not gender-integrated (i.e., is open to men only)
12. Do you have a personal account on at least one social media outlet (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.) that you access at least once per week?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No



Appendix F

Mini-Survey Results

	Women		Total (Men and Women)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender				
Male			349	50%
Female			345	50%
Total			694	100%
Service Branch				
Coast Guard	80	23%	156	22%
Navy	78	23%	153	22%
Marine Corps	75	22%	139	20%
Army	73	21%	148	21%
Air Force	39	11%	98	14%
Total	345	100%	694	100%
National Guard or Reserves				
Yes	2	1%	5	1%
No	342	99%	688	99%
Total	344	100%	693	100%
Missing	1		1	
Age				
18–20	19	6%	23	3%
21–24	70	20%	120	17%
25–29	79	23%	160	23%
30–34	66	19%	140	20%
35–39	58	17%	123	18%
40 or older	52	15%	127	18%
Total	344	100%	693	100%
Missing	1		1	
Pay Grade				
E1–E3	27	8%	37	5%
E4–E6	129	37%	257	37%
E7–E9	49	14%	103	15%
WO1–WO5	10	3%	30	4%
O1–O3	77	22%	164	24%
O4 or higher	53	15%	103	15%
Total	345	100%	694	100%

	Women		Total (Men and Women)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Length of Military Service				
Less than 3 years	57	17%	84	12%
3–5 years	63	19%	128	19%
6–9 years	54	16%	107	16%
10–14 years	78	23%	141	21%
15–19 years	62	18%	144	21%
20 years or more	26	8%	79	12%
Total	340	100%	683	100%
Missing	5		11	
Race				
White	212	61%	483	70%
Black	63	18%	95	14%
Asian	14	4%	21	3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	5	1%	5	1%
Other	17	5%	34	5%
Multiple races	34	10%	56	8%
Total	345	100%	694	100%
Hispanic				
Yes	61	18%	98	14%
No	282	82%	593	86%
Total	343	100%	691	100%
Missing	2		3	
Marital Status				
Married	188	56%	428	63%
Divorced or legally separated	47	14%	76	11%
Widowed	1	<1%	2	<1%
Single with a partner/significant other (not including domestic partnerships/ civil unions)	47	14%	75	11%
Single with no significant other	52	16%	97	14%
Total	335	100%	678	100%
Missing	10		16	
Dependent Children Living in the Home				
Yes	149	44%	343	51%
No	187	56%	336	49%
Total	336	100%	679	100%
Missing	9		15	

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



Appendix G

Focus Group Findings

This appendix outlines the findings from the 2015 Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) focus groups. An introduction and overview of methods are provided, consisting of an overview of the focus groups, the characteristics of the focus group participants, and the analysis approach. Sections A through D include the findings on gender integration, career progression of servicewomen, facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault, and the impact of social media on Military Service members respectively.

Introduction

In 2015, DACOWITS sought to better understand several topics related to women in the Armed Forces through a variety of data gathering methods (e.g., focus groups, briefings). The Committee conducted a series of focus groups on several of these topics, including the following:

- **Gender Integration.** The Committee will continue to review how DoD is progressing with the full integration of women into previously closed units and positions. It will examine exclusions, talent management programs, initiatives for developing female senior leaders within each Service, and steps DoD is taking to ensure reductions in force do not increase underrepresentation in the military at all ranks.
- **Career Progression.** The Committee will examine why career progression for women is trailing that of men, how sexual assault reporting is affecting career progression, how the Services are tracking career progression of those who reported sexual assault, and how the Services can ensure career progression is not harmed by reporting.
- **Impact of Social Media on Military Women.** To study this issue brought up during the 2013 focus groups, the Committee will examine both the positive and negative impacts of social media on military women, particularly with regard to sexual harassment.
- **Facilitators and Barriers to Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault.** The Committee plans to study the various factors that can influence a victim or bystander's decision about whether to report sexual harassment or sexual assault.

Methods

The Committee gathered data on these topics using focus group protocols and a short demographic survey of focus group participants. The focus group analysis process involved several systematic steps. During each focus group, staff from Insight Policy Research, Inc., and ICF International recorded verbatim discussions between participants and Committee facilitators; the research team cleaned and redacted the transcripts. Next, the team identified themes and subthemes by reviewing all transcripts for a given focus group topic and noting common responses that arose. Once the themes were identified, the data were entered into qualitative analysis software (NVivo and Atlas.ti) and the transcripts were coded by themes. This allowed the research team to explore whether certain responses were more common among subgroups (e.g., gender, pay grade, Military Service). Unless otherwise specified, themes from the focus groups were common across pay grades, Military Services, and genders.

As a data collection method, focus groups have several limitations. For example, the results are qualitative in nature, and since the sample of participants was not representative of all Military Services, the results cannot be generalized for any particular group. In addition, because of time constraints, and to maintain the flow of conversation, not every question in the protocol was asked in each group; therefore, the amount of data available for each question varied. Focus groups are designed to gather in-depth and varied opinions; this contrasts with survey research (e.g., the DACOWITS mini-survey), which gathers information on concurrence or proportions of respondents who hold one of several well-defined experiences, beliefs, opinions, or attitudes. Focus group data are not easily quantified. Given the nature of conversation, it is unlikely that each participant will respond to every question asked and/or will respond in a predefined or standard manner. To give a rough indication of the frequency with which a particular theme was mentioned, we use several key terms throughout the report (e.g., “many,” “several,” “some,” “a few,” “a couple”) to indicate descending levels of frequency. In addition, when comparing multiple responses to a given question, we use terms such as “nearly all of the participants who respond to this question . . .” or “the most commonly mentioned theme . . .” to give a rough sense of the proportion of participants who expressed a given opinion, rather than use fixed terms that imply every participant provided a response. However, it is important to keep in mind that the purpose of focus groups is to obtain rich detail on a topic rather than to achieve precise measurement of the frequency and type of responses.

This appendix summarizes DACOWITS’ focus group findings on these topics from 2015 and is organized into the following sections:

- Assignments:
 - Gender Integration
 - Career Progression
- Wellness:
 - The Impact of Social Media on Military Service Members
 - Facilitators and Barriers to Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
- General Comments

Gender Integration

The Assignments Working Group has an ongoing interest in the Military Services’ current efforts in gender integration. Expanding upon its exploration of the topic in 2011 through 2014, DACOWITS conducted 25 focus groups on the topic of gender integration. Issues addressed in these groups consisted of the following: steps being taken to prepare units for gender integration, Service members’ perceptions of the gender integration preparation process and their satisfaction with it, the role of military culture in gender integration, and how gender integration may influence registration for the Selective Service. Because the Coast Guard is already completely gender integrated, questions on this topic were asked only of members of the other four Services. This section provides a summary of the 2015 DACOWITS focus group discussions on the topic of gender integration and is organized into the following sections:

- Service Members' Experiences With Gender Integration
- Gender Integration Preparation Activities by the Military Services
- Service Members' Perceptions of Gender Integration
- The Impact of Military Culture on Gender Integration
- Challenges and Recommendations for Gender Integration
- Women and the Selective Service

Although it was not part of the protocol for the focus groups discussing gender integration, the issue of career progression was frequently raised in these focus groups. The comments largely mirrored the results from the focus groups conducted on the topic of career progression, which are reported in the Career Progression section of this appendix. A summary of these comments is included at the end of this section. Many of the findings from the 2015 focus groups on gender integration echo findings from previous years' examinations of this topic; please refer to prior years' reports for more information.

Service Members' Experiences With Gender Integration

DACOWITS began the discussion on gender integration by asking if participants had personal experience with the topic through belonging to a unit that had recently undergone or was currently undergoing gender integration; table G.1 outlines focus group participants' experience with gender integration. To aid in the discussion, participants were provided the following definition of gender integration: "Gender integration is the process of eliminating all gender-based barriers to service, and fully integrating women into occupational fields to the maximum extent possible—particularly efforts following the call to rescind the direct combat exclusion rule for women by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2013."³

Table G.1. Experience With Gender Integration Among Participants in Gender Integration

	Women		Total (Men and Women)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Is Your Unit Gender Integrated or Currently in the Process of Integration?				
Integrated for 2 or more years	120	92%	235	90%
Integrated within the past 2 years	4	3%	6	2%
Currently undergoing integration	5	4%	10	4%
Not integrated	1	1%	9	3%
Total	130	100%	260	100%
Missing	4		7	

³Dempsey, M. E., & Panetta, L. E. (personal communication [Memorandum on elimination of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule], January 24, 2013). Retrieved from <http://www.defense.gov/news/WISRJointMemo.pdf>

Less than 10 percent of participants cited experience in a unit undergoing integration. Although the small proportion of participants with experience relevant to the topic limited responses, participants were able to respond to some of the topics covered during this discussion. In particular, some female participants were able to draw from their experiences being the only woman or one of only a few women in a male-dominated unit and/or a male-dominated career field. While their experiences might have differed somewhat from those of Service members in a newly integrated unit, participants in a unit undergoing integration were still able to provide relevant input.

“I am the only girl in my division and . . . it really is hard, because most of them . . . have no idea on how to . . . work with me and how to handle that and what to do. It is really difficult, and sometimes frustrating. Sometimes they will do something and then be like, ‘Oh, I ‘m sorry, you know, I just came from an all-male [unit].’”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“We just started the process, we are still kind of waiting. . . . It’s not like they change how we do our work, but just the integration; a lot of people have different thoughts how it’s going to go and they’re not sure. It’s a big change going from virtually all male [units] to integrated. Being on both, I have found pluses and minuses to both sides. Integrated [units] seems to be cleaner, but there’s potential to lose some [Service members] because of stupid relationships. . . .”

— Male Officer

“I’ve always been in [units] that are primarily male. There have been leaders that have never worked with females. . . . The majority of those fields were combat. That was my first initial experience with males never having worked with females. I didn’t get a lot of resistance, but I appreciated them treating me the same at the end of the day. But was it stressful? Yes, it was very stressful.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Participants were not asked specifically about their awareness of gender integration in the Military Services outside of their personal experiences. However, the discussions made it clear that among participants who were not part of career fields or units undergoing gender integration, there was a general lack of knowledge about the endeavor, including when and if it was occurring and how it was being carried out. This lack of awareness of the Military Services’ gender integration efforts likely affected other discussions on the topic.

“Having been in career fields integrated all along, prior to seeing email trail to tell me to come here, I hadn’t thought much about the integration. I didn’t realize it was still an issue.”

— Male Officer

Gender Integration Preparation Activities by the Military Services

Regardless of personal experience with gender integration, participants were asked what, if anything, was being done to prepare units for gender integration. Responses varied greatly; participants cited activities such as determining appropriate gender-neutral standards, modifying physical spaces, preparing men prior to integrating women into previously closed units, and increasing monitoring for sexual harassment and sexual assault; some participants said no action was being taken.

Determining Appropriate Gender-Neutral Standards

A few participants observed that the Military Services were conducting testing to ensure the standards currently in place for entry into closed units and positions were appropriate and gender neutral. Others said the Military Services were allowing a selected group of women to participate in the training for male-only positions to gauge if women could successfully complete the training.

“They’re looking at how to standardize testing to get them in . . . determining the best standards for physical abilities . . . what they think the best option should be for what the women will need to physically and mentally go through. They are getting a few select women now to go through it.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Until women are integrated in the [gender integration-related] experiment, we are not putting women in the infantry because we are not sure how it will work.”

— Male Officer

Modifying Physical Spaces

Several participants expressed the need for modifications to physical spaces such as berthing on ships, housing during deployments, and separate restrooms. Some participants indicated the modifications were in progress, while others reported they were anticipated but had not yet begun.

“ . . . They set up [housing space] for male and female . . . [and] had to go through a big process to make it acceptable for females and make sure there is segregation in [housing spaces].”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“The military is very diverse—men and women have separate restrooms most places, [and] everywhere should be. Even if there is one female, it should be an everywhere type of thing [to accommodate men and women].”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Preparing Men Prior to Integrating

Discussions and training among previously male-only units were described by some participants with experience in units undergoing gender integration, ranging from formal training to informal discussions. These discussions generally focused on how the men were expected to behave around servicewomen.

“When we got two female [Service members], everyone got pulled into formation, excluding them, and we got told some of the do’s and don’ts of interacting with them. . . . [We were told to not] shy away from talking to them, that they are [Service members] and trying to do their job, and that they did not necessarily volunteer to come to this unit. We needed to make them feel comfortable.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“ . . . Some of the words we say, some the things we talk about, we need to try to censor ourselves and . . . not saying that we are dirty, but watch what we say around everyone. It’s not like they change how we do our work, but just the integration—a lot of people have different thoughts how it’s going to go and they’re not sure. It’s a big change going from virtually all male [units] to integrated.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Increasing Monitoring for Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

A small number of participants mentioned increased vigilance for sexual harassment and sexual assault occurrences in newly integrated units, based on the expectation such occurrences would increase.

“I recently received the first class of female [Service members]. The only problem we had with integration was with our [unit] supervision. As we tried to integrate them and keep the gender bias to a minimum . . . [we] monitored the process to ensure there were no [sexual harassment and sexual assault program] violations.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Taking No Action

Other participants involved in gender integration or familiar with the process observed that no special steps were being taken to prepare units for integration. Several male participants believed no special preparation was needed, while many of the female participants said training was needed, though it was not occurring.

“Um, no real prep. I mean, our [senior enlisted leader] told us six months beforehand that we’re going to get females. Seems like they are getting more aggressive with integration. We haven’t seen the female [Service members] yet, that we were told we would see. [It was] just a heads up, I guess.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“There was no preparation for it. We treat them as [Service members] who are no different than male [Service members].”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“One of my challenges was being deployed twice in combat forces. That didn’t go over too well. . . . I had no idea what I was going into. . . . How could they have prepared me? Give me a briefing; tell me what it’s like.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Service Members’ Perceptions of Gender Integration

Participants were asked how they felt gender integration was proceeding overall and if they were satisfied with the process. Nearly all the men who responded to this question indicated they were satisfied with the gender integration process.

“We have had two new female officers, but enlisted is a whole new thing. But, ah, it’s more tame than expected.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

In contrast, the women who responded were evenly split between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Women’s dissatisfaction stemmed both from the manner in which the testing/development of gender-neutral standards was being carried out and the lack of education that units received prior to integrating women into previously male-only units.

“It’s the same as women trying to go to the [male-only training]. When women fail, it is news, but when men fail, and lots do, it’s nothing. The news makes it a huge deal when women fail. It’s portrayed as ‘We have to let women in this field, so what do we do? We lower the standard.’”

— Female Officer

“I was sent down [to a new unit] and I was told that I was the first . . . woman in the infantry. . . . I was scared. I had no idea what to expect. When I first walked in . . . everyone was very cautious; they wanted to see how I would react. But nobody made a big deal about it and it was actually a very comfortable transition.”

— Female Officer

The Impact of Military Culture on Gender Integration

Participants were provided with the following definition of culture for this discussion and asked what about the culture of the Military Services made it easier or more challenging for women to integrate into newly opened units and positions: “Culture is a way of life of a group of people—the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation.”

Benefits of Military Culture

Participants reported fewer benefits than challenges of military culture on efforts to integrate women into previously closed units and positions.

A Norm of Acceptance, Especially Among Younger Service Members

The most commonly mentioned benefit of military culture in relation to easing the gender integration transition was the accepting nature of the Military Services, particularly among the younger generation. Participants indicated younger Service members were more accepting of women and tended to adapt more easily than older Service members at viewing everyone first as a Service member and secondly as a man or woman.

“Have I heard females and males say that we aren’t equal? . . . Yes. Do I think it’s a lot of our young [Service members] coming in today? I’d say no. . . . I think our younger [Service members] are more adaptive to it.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“As a community, the military is generally accepting of who comes into your unit since it is a voluntary service. You are accepted, because you chose to be there and are a part of the unit. . . . We know how to accept new people because we are of a transient nature.”

— Male Officer

“If you had asked me if I thought it would have been difficult to integrate women 10 years ago, I would have said definitely. I think it was a lot harder 10 years ago. Nowadays, I don’t think so much. I think the general consensus with the people I work [with] is that when someone comes to work with you, man or woman, you treat them the same. It does not matter if they are a man or a woman, you treat them the same.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“It’s the mindset of those above them. . . . It was at least three months [into the deployment] and then the one guy talked to me. But they were told not to talk to me. . . . Their leaders need to be aware females are being integrated. People’s mindsets have to change on it. Today that’s the way the military works.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Military Discipline

Less frequently, participants suggested the discipline of the Military Services as beneficial for gender integration.

“One thing that I would say makes it easier. When you’re in the [Service], you’re used to doing things you don’t want to do. You do what you’re told. So with integration, suck it up and move on.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“It is easier with the actual military culture mindset, if the discipline is there. It could be . . . a smoother transition. It would need strong disciplinary values and beliefs in order to get that mindset.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Challenges of Military Culture

Women were more likely than men to mention challenges military culture poses to the successful integration of women.

Women Are Viewed Stereotypically

Women, in particular, frequently indicated they are viewed stereotypically. For example, they cited the jobs to which women were assigned and the expectations men had about women’s military service. The most commonly cited challenge was the general mindset that women should not be in traditionally male positions and units. This mindset was ascribed particularly to older men.

“There’s still a lot of men who have been in the military a very long time. They’re still in the mindset that women are the paper pushers. They can’t be [in traditionally male career fields], and they can’t do these jobs because they are women.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“They have the idea that women don’t belong [in that unit]. They have the mentality that you come in and make the [unit] less of a [unit]. Jobs like that it has to do a lot with the group. . . . The group now is like ‘This is a male career field and you don’t belong here.’”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Women’s Perceived Lack of Respect From Men

Another frequently mentioned challenge was women’s perceived need to work harder than men to earn the same respect that men received. This view was reported exclusively by women.

“Coming in brand new, I have to work harder than a male coming in. [For men coming in, the other men think,] ‘You’re a dude, I already like you.’ I’m already a female in a male career field, so now I have to work harder than the guy to gain the respect.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“It’s been a challenge learning how to gain their trust. If I tell them to do something, they push [it] aside. I’ve been told that people wouldn’t have said that if [I wasn’t] a woman.”

— Female Officer

“So my problem is I will come in and work five times harder, and a guy will come in and do one great thing and everybody loves him! And I’m like ‘What have I done? I have done five times what he’s done, and I’m being overlooked.’ . . . My [career field] is male-dominated, and [in] every command I have always been the only female, and I had to work 10 times harder than the men to get good evals.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Stigmatization Surrounding Pregnancy

A few participants stated that women were often viewed negatively for becoming pregnant, and many women were stigmatized by the mere potential that they could become pregnant, which could hinder efforts to integrate women into previously closed units and positions. This view was expressed solely by women.

“You can’t tell the chain of command that you are planning on having kids.”

— Female Officer

“It’s really sad. . . . I made a comment . . . ‘There’s a lot of pregnant women’ and my [male] NCO (noncommissioned officer) said ‘I guess that’s what they tell them to do. Come in, get pregnant, and collect their paycheck.’ I was dumbfounded.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Challenges and Recommendations for Gender Integration

Participants were asked about the challenges with integrating women into previously closed units and positions, aside from the challenges mentioned in relation to military culture, and what the Military Services could do better to ensure women are successfully integrated into these units and positions.

Challenges With Gender Integration

A number of challenges were mentioned; while some were cited most commonly by male participants, others were echoed frequently by female participants as well.

Structural Barriers

Though some participants reported that physical modifications were being made to housing, restrooms, etc., they also felt inadequate facilities posed structural barriers to gender integration. Most of those participants reported the need for additional accommodations has created a delay in the integration process.

“Just getting the berthings and processes to get the ship outfitted for the females. We have to change the internal portions of the ship to accommodate the females. . . . That’s what’s taking so much time, due to operational commitment to other ships and in the shipyard, and that’s something people can’t do anything about.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“We have trouble sending our females out because there [are] not enough [housing spaces] for other ships we go into. So our males get more time on sea tours. . . . It hurts their career[s] because the only time they can do their job is when they’re out to sea. . . . It’s a really bad thing at my command that the juniors aren’t getting the training they need because there aren’t enough female racks. It’s a major problem.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Perceived Limitations of Women

Several male participants felt the biggest barriers to integration of women were women's lack of physical, biological, and emotional capabilities to perform the jobs that are being integrated. Similarly, a few men believed women would interfere with the unit cohesion of previously male-only units. Physical limitations were the most commonly observed, followed by social factors. Only a few participants mentioned biological and emotional limitations of women.

"In my unit there are some things female [Service members] physically can't do, [like handle] a 110-pound ammo can. The females can't do that. . . . In combat, it can't be like that . . . there's no picking up the slack."

— Junior Enlisted Man

"The kind of area and conditions are such that I honestly don't believe a female can do what I've seen a man be able to do. Their rounds are 110–120 pounds each. I've felt bad and helped them carry them. I'm a medic, and it's not my job. The stuff they talk about . . . it would just be awkward if a woman were there. The camaraderie, that helps the guys come together and be one force."

— Junior Enlisted Man

Culture of Male-Only Units

Barriers related to the masculine culture of non-integrated units were commonly identified by both men and women as a challenge to integration.

"The infantry has always been its own animal. . . . They would have to have a rehaul of infantry culture."

— Male Officer

"You talk different when you're around just women or just men. In a male career field it does not matter—they will talk how they want if you're there or not. They talk differently."

— Junior Enlisted Woman

"The infantry mindset is barbaric and aggressive. That is based on the stuff I heard when I was in infantry. Can the females deal with it? If not, they may be shunned or not accepted . . . being around a group of guys in a combat situation, or out in the field, just the stuff that they talk about and how aggressive it is."

— Junior Enlisted Man

Men's Perceived Need to Protect Women

A few participants stated that men have a need to protect women, a mentality that had been ingrained in them as they were growing up and that would interfere with their ability to respond appropriately in combat situations. This was mentioned most commonly among senior enlisted participants.

“For the men there—for me, at least, there is the tendency to try to protect women. The guy on my right is getting shot, but I’m thinking about the woman on my left. Let the guy fend for himself; don’t let a woman get hurt. That’s how I was raised, it’s ingrained in me.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“It’s a cultural thing. . . . It’s a man’s nature to protect a woman. Women can protect themselves, but when you look at it, the man is supposed to do this and women to do that. That is a realistic scenario he was taking about . . . under heavy fire when I’m looking out for the women. She can protect and defend herself, but I’m still looking out for her.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Recommendations for Successful Gender Integration

When asked what the Military Services could do to better ensure women are successfully integrated, there were three themes that emerged across focus groups as well as a series of suggestions made by only one or two participants. All are described in the next section.

Hold Men and Women to the Same Physical Standards

Several male and female participants asserted standards should not be lowered for women. Participants commonly indicated lowering the standards would compromise men’s respect for women who successfully complete the selection and training process for newly integrated units and positions.

“Keep them the same. Part of the reason the guys harbor resentment is because women are treated differently—giving women second chances with diving, etc. Women are not treated the same and will not be if we are going to lower standards just to make sure there are more women.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think it could either be a step forward or a step back. Don’t just let women in and make a quota; if the females that go to these schools are held to the same standards and succeed, then it’s good.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“In special ops, you establish your street cred by getting through the accession. If you’re able to do it, you’re good to go. I think that’s part of the reason it is important to ensure we have the gender-neutral standards so you’re not making it so the men can say ‘You only got in because your test was easier than mine.’”

— Male Officer

Enculturate and Train Men and Women Prior to Integration

Several participants suggested changes to military culture would be necessary before gender integration could be successful. Similarly, many women indicated training was needed prior to integration for both men and women. Participants indicated that, prior to integration, men needed exposure to servicewomen as well as training on how to interact with them.

“I would say exposure. They actually had this integration go as the unit was being put in an operation. None of them had ever worked with female [Service members]. The [senior enlisted leader] had the idea to have me do a question and answer with the platoon sergeants to allay some of their fears. What most of them didn’t realize is that women in the [Service] want to be in the [Service]. The mission comes first; they want to work hard. After two weeks, they were talking about how the women weren’t at all what they expected. Most of their experiences had been with spouses and dependents. They couldn’t picture what a female [Service member] could be. So once they saw us, they had a change [of opinion].”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Several women and a few men indicated there was a need for training for women going into newly integrated units as well. Women needed training in what to expect and how to handle the reactions they were likely to receive from men.

“It’s not only that they’re prepared to meet the demands of the career field, but also be prepared to deal with all the attention. Whether it’s negative or . . . I’ve had to stop comments before . . . I tell them, ‘They’re not dinner meat, they’re your co-worker.’”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Ensure Leadership Support in Units Undergoing Integration

A few participants highlighted the importance of leadership setting the right precedent from the beginning.

“I think one of the biggest things that can be done is not to treat them like a woman or a show pony. Whenever somebody asks me what it’s like being a female in Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), I say that when I’m in my uniform, I’m not a woman, they aren’t men, we’re all EOD techs. If leadership doesn’t differentiate in the beginning, I think it will set a better tone for the rest of their career. They won’t want to be treated [differently].”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“Gender integration is absolutely going to affect the culture. If leadership isn’t bought into gender integration, there will be issues.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Other suggestions for facilitating the process of integrating women included the following:

- Integrate more than one woman into a unit at a time
- Integrate leadership positions first
- Provide more opportunities for same-sex female mentorship
- Use integrated housing
- Use integrated training, beginning with initial entry training
- Use a continuous feedback loop of leadership dictating how to implement the integration and obtaining regular feedback and lessons learned from the ground-level units

Women and the Selective Service

Focus group participants were asked a series of questions related to Selective Service registration. To aid in the discussion, DACOWITS provided participants the following overview of the Selective Service: “After America’s draft ended in 1973, the Selective Service System was created in case a mobilization of military forces became necessary during a crisis (e.g., World War III). Since young men between 18 and 25 years old are required by law to register with the Selective Service, the System maintains information on U.S. citizens who are potentially subject to a draft.” Despite being provided this information, several participants—particularly women—were unsure about Selective Service registration and often confused registering for the Selective Service with being drafted; this difficulty in distinguishing between Selective Service registration and being drafted should be kept in mind when considering the results presented in this section.

Views on Requiring Selective Service Registration for Women

Participants were first asked if women should be required to register for the Selective Service, as men are, now that the direct ground combat exclusion rule for women has been lifted.

Require Women to Register

Most of the participants who responded to this question believed women should have to register for the Selective Service. Nearly all those expressing this opinion indicated that requiring women to register would ensure equality between the sexes.

“We’re hammering equal rights for everything. You want to be equal; this is what it costs to be equal.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think for most guys it’s more about fairness. If we have to do it, then so should they.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I believe yes. Ever since we’ve been going towards more equal rights of both genders, this is something that has always stopped us. Yeah, we still have major problems, but solve one problem at a time. If women want to be treated completely equally, they should have to sign that draft card—same as us.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Eliminate the Selective Service Altogether

A sizable minority of the participants who responded to this question believed Selective Service registration should be eliminated for both men and women. Several stated that if it were not eliminated, women should have to register as men do.

“Why not just get rid of it? You have the Social Security number of everyone in the country. . . . You still have the ability to pull that range of ages. It makes us all do additional work and keep another database.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“Why don’t we just get rid of it? We all volunteered. Why do we need it? Either get rid of it or make it equal for everyone.”

— Female Officer

Do Not Require Women to Register

A smaller number of the participants were opposed to forcing women to register; reasons included concerns about drafting mothers and concerns about women becoming pregnant to avoid being drafted, women’s potential disinterest in the Service, and society not being ready for women to be drafted.

“Another disadvantage . . . how many women would get pregnant as a scapegoat? How many children will be born? How many women will get pregnant? . . . The statistics show that a lot of women want to join for whatever reason, but there are a lot more women that would never join the military.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I think that it should be only for men because right now in society . . . men make more than women and women are the majority of people who stay home and take care of the kids. So I don’t think they should have to sign up.”

— Female Officer

“If it was a national vote, I don’t think it would pass. We want to protect our mothers and daughters.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Views on the Impact of Mandatory Registration

Participants were asked how requiring women to register for the Selective Service might affect women’s interest in joining the Military Services.

No Impact

The majority of the participants who responded to this question believed requiring women to register for the Selective Service would not have an impact on women’s interest in the Service.

“No, I don’t think it would help gain female interest in the military.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I registered for Selective Service, but I didn’t join until nine years later. I don’t think it would have any impact because if they have an interest in joining then they will. I only registered because it was required by law.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Increase Women's Consideration to Join the Military Services

A sizable minority of the participants believed requiring women to register for the Selective Service would encourage more women to consider joining the Military Services.

"It would make them think about it. Some women just don't consider the military. They may have to consider what will happen and what they will do if they are drafted. It may require them to do some research. It will create some thought process at least."

— Female Officer

"I think it would affect knowing about the military. I had never heard of the [Service] before I joined."

— Junior Enlisted Man

Specific Advantages of Requiring Women to Register

Some participants noted that having women register would ensure the appearance of equality between men and women.

"We get blamed for the law [requiring only men to register for the Selective Service]. . . . I didn't draft the law. . . . This law makes it look like we get to pick and choose."

— Female Officer

A few male participants also stated that requiring women to register for the Selective Service would broaden the pool, should the draft be reinstated.

"It's a number game—the more people you can go through to see if qualified, the better."

— Junior Enlisted Man

Specific Disadvantages of Requiring Women to Register

A few of the participants believed it would harm the Military Services to force women to register for the Selective Service. Some participants anticipated women would become pregnant to avoid being drafted, which would eliminate the equality gained by requiring women to register.

"I get wanting it to be equal, but women have the chance to just become pregnant to avoid it that men don't have."

— Junior Enlisted Woman

A few participants felt requiring women to register would lower the quality of the Military Services, should the draft be reinstated, because they believed men were generally better suited for military service compared with women.

“I don’t want to have a certain woman on the lines with me and have my back when she just isn’t built for that. Some women are just not built for that. . . . I am not trying to say all women are the same, because they aren’t. I don’t think a certain class of women should be drafted into the [Service] and asked to protect somebody else when they are not built for it. They couldn’t pull the trigger.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Summary

While few participants had personal experience in a unit undergoing integration, several participants were able to add to the discussion based on experiences in units or career fields with few women. Among participants who were not part of units or career fields undergoing gender integration, there was a lack of knowledge about gender integration. When asked what the Military Services were doing to prepare for gender integration, participants observed that the Services were taking steps to ensure the standards in place are appropriate and gender neutral; making modifications to physical spaces such as berthing on ships, housing during deployments, and separate restrooms; holding discussions or training with men in male-only units prior to integrating women into the units; and increasing vigilance for sexual harassment and sexual assault occurrences in newly integrated units. Other participants felt the Military Services were doing nothing to prepare units for gender integration.

Participants were asked how they feel gender integration is proceeding overall and if they are satisfied with it. Nearly all the men who remarked on their satisfaction with how gender integration was proceeding indicated they were satisfied. In contrast, the women who responded were evenly split between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Women’s dissatisfaction stemmed from the process for testing/development of gender-neutral standards and the lack of education for men and women prior to integrating women into previously male-only units.

When asked about the advantages and disadvantages of military culture in making it easier or more challenging for women to integrate into newly opened units and positions, participants noted fewer benefits than challenges associated with military culture. Women were particularly likely to denote factors of military culture that hindered gender integration. Benefits mentioned included the accepting nature of the Military Services, particularly among younger Service members, and the discipline of the Military Services. Challenges of military culture included men holding stereotypical views of women, which commonly manifested in women not being assigned difficult job tasks and the mindset among older men that women should not be in traditionally male positions and units; women’s perceived need to work harder than men to earn the same respect that men received; and stigmatization surrounding pregnancy.

Participants were asked about challenges with integrating women into previously closed units and positions and what the Military Services could do better to ensure women are successfully integrated into these units and positions. Challenges mentioned included structural barriers such as a need for modifications to housing and restrooms to accommodate women; men’s perceived barriers to women’s physical, biological, and emotional capabilities to perform the jobs that are being integrated, including interference with unit cohesion of male-only units; the masculine culture of non-integrated units; and the mentality that men must protect women,

including how this may interfere with men's ability to perform appropriately in combat situations. Recommendations for improving the success of gender integration included a need to ensure the Military Services do not lower the job standards of currently or previously closed units and positions to allow women to complete the selection and training process; changes to military culture and training for both men and women prior to integrating women in previously closed units; and ensuring leadership in integrating units set the right precedent from the beginning.

Focus group participants were asked a series of questions related to Selective Service registration. Despite being provided an overview of the Selective Service, several participants—particularly women—were unsure about Selective Service registration and often confused registering for the Selective Service with being drafted. Most participants believed women should have to register for the Selective Service because this would create equality between the sexes. Other participants believed Selective Service registration should be eliminated for everyone. Several of these stated that if it were not eliminated, women should have to register as men do. A smaller number of the participants were opposed to forcing women to register, for various reasons. When asked how requiring women to register for the Selective Service might impact women's interest in joining the Military Services, most indicated it would not have an impact. Some participants, on the other hand, believed requiring women to register would encourage more women to consider joining the Military Services. Specific advantages participants noted for requiring women to register for the Selective Service included gender equality and an expanded pool should the draft be reinstated. Specific disadvantages participants mentioned included the possibility that women would become pregnant to avoid being drafted, which would mitigate the equality gained by requiring women to register, and a belief that it would lower the quality of the Military Services should the draft be reinstated, because men are generally better suited for military service compared with women.

Career Progression of Servicewomen

In 2015, the Assignments Working Group continued its examination of the career progression of servicewomen. Similar to 2014, the focus groups on this topic included only officers and senior enlisted participants. Thirty of the focus groups in 2015 addressed the topic of career progression. For 2015, the Committee based its study on this topic around the following definition for career progression: "Career progression is the process of advancing or growing within a chosen career path. It is achieved when employees are able to engage in a combination of work assignments, job rotation, training, education, and self-development programs. This could include timely selection for military schooling, including joint professional military education; choice career assignments; and timely promotions." This section provides a summary of the 2015 DACOWITS focus group discussions on the topic of career progression and is organized into the following sections:

- Perceived Gender Differences in Career Goals
- Perceived Gender Differences in Access to Professional Development Opportunities
- Perceived Gender Differences in Senior Leadership Opportunities

- Perceived Gender Differences in Career Progression Between Servicewomen and Civilian Sector Women
- Suggestions for Improving Career Progression of Servicewomen
- Gender Discrimination

Although it was not part of the protocol for the focus groups discussing career progression, the issue of gender integration was frequently raised in these focus groups. The comments largely mirrored the results from the focus groups conducted on the topic of gender integration, which are reported in the Gender Integration section of this appendix. A summary of these comments is included at the end of this section. Many of the findings from the 2015 focus groups on gender integration echo findings from previous years' examinations of this topic; please refer to prior years' reports for more information.

Perceived Gender Differences in Career Goals

DACOWITS asked participants if they believed men and women in the Services had the same or different career goals.

Same Career Goals

Several participants suggested servicemen and servicewomen had the same career goals.

"I wouldn't think the goals would differ from men and women any more than they would differ from me and [any other women] in this room. It isn't any different than a group of men."

— Female Officer

Changing Career Goals Over Time

Others indicated that men and women entered the Service with similar goals, but that those goals changed over time. Most commonly, women altered their aspirations once they married and began having children. A few participants also mentioned aspirations changing when women who are facing challenges in their career fields see other women in those fields progressing.

"The thing about goals with me is that goals change. A female meets someone, gets married, and has kids. Nine times out of ten it's the female that gets out of the military."

— Senior Enlisted Man

"Initially, the goal and the drive might have been there, but that changed because of obstacles they faced or seeing and witnessing the things that didn't seem fair, compared with males."

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Different Career Goals

A few participants believed that men and women had differing career goals from the outset. More specifically, participants believed women who joined the military were often focused on obtaining a college education, while men were more focused on gaining military-related skills.

“It is about priorities. I think college is a great thing and an amazing opportunity, but, for me, I just got [a less stressful job duty] after about eight years. College was on the backburner because I was more concerned about [gaining job-related skills]. . . . A much larger proportion of [enlisted] females are going to college as a stepping-stone for the civilian world. . . .”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I guarantee you, if you do a poll . . . females would blast men out of the water [in terms of who is taking the most college courses]. Every female I have has taken a college class . . . that’s 10 females. There are maybe, maybe, six guys who are taking a class or who have taken a college class—and that number is out of 25–26 guys. Females have that ambition. Take the officer programs right now, a lot of the females are driving for [one of the commissioning programs]. Guys aren’t doing that.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Perceived Gender Differences in Access to Professional Development Opportunities

Participants were asked about the opportunity for professional development programs in the Military Services and if any of these programs were specifically for women. Participants were also asked if there were any programs being adapted to accommodate the opening of positions that were previously closed to women. As in 2014, both men and women frequently had difficulty pinpointing what professional development opportunities were available within their respective Military Services beyond the required leadership courses; this difficulty in citing available professional opportunities should be kept in mind while reviewing this section.

Equal Opportunities for Professional Development

Most participants said that men and women had the same opportunities for professional development, though men expressed this view more frequently than women did. This finding varied slightly by Service, as some Services had schools that were closed to women at the time of these focus groups (e.g., Army Ranger School, Marine Corps Infantry Officer Course), while others did not.

“They are geared towards [Service members]. There is not a gender-specific program. If you are a [Service member], then you act like a [Service member] and you go to school to be a [Service member], not a male or female [Service member].”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“There are leadership courses for everyone. . . . There are opportunities for everyone.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Programs Specifically for Women

When asked if the Military Services had leadership development programs specifically for women, responses varied by Service. A few participants identified no programs specifically for women. Men were more likely than women to express this view.

“There is no particular program that is just for females.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Aside from professional military education that is mandated, again mandated gender-neutral, I haven’t seen women only-type professional advancement courses.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Other participants described leadership development programs that were specifically for women. Several specific programs were mentioned; some were Service specific, while others existed in more than one Military Service.

“There are women leadership symposiums and forums. I don’t pay attention, but I know they are out there. It is encouraged and well organized. In the [Service], women’s leadership symposiums are well known.”

— Male Officer

“We have [a mentorship and empowerment program for women]. It can help develop junior female officers, but there’s the perception that females are getting special treatment. Previous people have had experience with Sisters in Arms, and people complained about it. We ended up doing it and tried to keep it very professional. But the mentality and perception is that it’s ridiculous and why are we doing it.”

— Female Officer

Perceived Gender Differences in Senior Leadership Opportunities

Committee members asked participants why there were fewer women than men at the highest levels of DoD leadership and if they felt women had the same opportunities as men to reach these senior leadership positions.

Equality in Senior DoD Positions

Several participants believed there were fewer women than men in top DoD leadership positions because more women than men chose to leave the Service prior to the point of consideration for senior-level leadership positions. Most participants cited family-related reasons for women’s decisions to separate. This finding was more common among male than female participants.

“Females tend to self-select out of those higher level opportunities. They make a personal decision—either the husband’s career is going to take a backseat, or I’m not going to move, or I’m going to leave [the Service] at a certain mark because that additional higher billet is going to impact my relationship. Or, they don’t even get to this decision because they want to be a stay-at-home spouse with their children and not only see them twice during the week.”

— Female Officer

“We have young [Service members], and many more females get out rather than staying in the career for the long haul . . . By choice. I know four who were O6, and they wanted to get out. By choice. For their families or to follow their husbands. Do I think it's fair? I think everyone has that opportunity. Is it balanced? I think we lose some of the very best. . . . I worry about why they're walking, but at the same time, family values are a lot more important to some people.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I saw a couple of Lieutenants who got out just because of their kids and they didn't want to be a mom in the military. They didn't want to move around. They did it for education, and then they wanted to move on. Not because of advancement, but they just got out because of their kids.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Equality in Leadership Opportunities

Participants were asked if women had the same opportunities as men to reach the highest DoD leadership levels, regardless of whether or not they actually attained them. Most of the participants who responded to this question believed men and women had the same opportunities, though this finding was more prevalent among men compared with women.

“Everyone has same opportunity to advance and become what they want to become in the [Service]. The fact that females may not be advancing, it may be their drive; it is the same for men. They may not want to be [a general officer]. . . . The opportunities are the same for everyone; it just depends on how much heart and will they have.”

— Male Officer

“I just need to fill the mission. I'm going to burn them all out equally. We give them every opportunity to fail or succeed.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Inequality in Leadership Opportunities

In contrast, several participants believed men had more opportunities compared with women, while none said that women had more opportunities compared with men. This was reported most frequently by women, though several did note that women's opportunities have improved in recent years. Participants particularly cited a lack of mentorship opportunities for women as an inequality.

“I don't think that women have had the same opportunities. I do think it has improved though. . . . It is improving, but where I am it is still much harder for me personally.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“We have the same opportunities, but not the same grooming opportunities. There are more men in the military. We have the same opportunities because the law says we have to, but I don’t think we get the same grooming opportunities as we come up through the ranks from a mentoring perspective. There aren’t many women above us, and there aren’t many males willing to help us.”

— Female Officer

Specific Factors That Hindered Servicewomen

Participants mentioned three factors that, while potential barriers for both men and women, were more likely to hinder the career progression of servicewomen than servicemen.

Being Dual Military

Some participants noted that while servicewomen might have the same opportunities as servicemen, dual military status and having families were more likely to affect women’s careers than men’s. This was more commonly expressed by women than by men. Two participants disagreed, however, indicating that these issues affected men and women equally.

“I’ve aspired to be a [senior enlisted rank] for as long as I can remember. I went into the career field—I was in the first pipeline class. I wanted to see it. I am married, military to military. He is on his ninth deployment. I’ve seen my career hurt because of that. We have four kids at home. I’ve missed out on opportunities left and right because of that.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“And often you’re married to another Service member, so you make career choices based on being married to another Service member. Those are challenges women face. People who get to the highest level have the perfect career.”

— Female Officer

Pregnancy

A few participants remarked on how becoming pregnant could hinder a woman’s career, particularly if the pregnancy occurs during specific points in her career. This finding was mentioned primarily by women officers.

“I have to plan to the day having a child within my specialty. If I get pregnant on a [particular leadership assignment], it is a career ender. . . . My last tour was [in that particular assignment]. Every day of that [assignment] I was on birth control, and I was making sure that nothing happened because I would have been relieved of command. . . . It is not fair; the men don’t have to physically worry about that kind of thing. I have to fit [having a child] in. I am 36 and finally could fit it in.”

— Female Officer

Absence of Same-Sex Mentorship

A lack of female mentors was cited as a barrier to career progression among servicewomen, though a few female participants did report having had access to a same-sex mentor. This view was expressed by both men and women, but it was most commonly mentioned by women.

“Same-sex mentorship is crucial. You should get it from both [sexes] but it’s crucial to know that they’ve made it and what it took for them to do it. I’ve been called on several times to talk to other female [Service members]. You have a different approach, different perspective. Whether it’s personal situations or career progression—you want that connection.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“When you think about how you are getting your name out there and associating with others and networking. It is a lot easier for the male because it is a lot easier for males to associate and connect with each other. The networking is easier. There are more men that are similar to myself. It is easier to make a bond and associate myself. It is then easier to show my work. For females, it is harder to make those networks and connections when the military is so male dominated. So, to associate yourself and get guidance, there are less females to look to. . . . Males are more able to get guidance and align more with men, and there are more men in the military.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Perceived Gender Differences in Career Progression Between Servicewomen and Civilian Sector Women

DACOWITS asked participants what differences if any they perceived in the career progression for servicewomen versus women in the civilian sector and the potential cause of those differences. Several participants indicated they had no experience in the civilian sector upon which to base such comparisons. However, some participants were able to make comparisons, based either on personal experience in the civilian sector prior to joining the Military Services or on conversations with civilian friends and family members.

Perception That the Military Services Were Better Than the Civilian Sector for Women

Most participants who commented on the differences felt the Military Services were better compared with the civilian world for women. Reasons cited included the equality of pay and career progression opportunities in the Military Services, as well as better maternity leave policies and better awareness of sexual harassment as an impediment to equal opportunities for women in the Military Services.

“One positive thing is that our pay is not different, which is what I tell women thinking about the military. It’s a big issue. That’s one thing I feel very good about. I know women who are professional attorneys who have to worry about that.”

— Female Officer

“It is a lot harder to openly discriminate against women in the military because we get a lot more attention. In a civilian world, there are ways around that kind of stuff. We’re protected when we get off maternity leave and are paid for maternity leave. . . . If something happens to us, we have people in Washington, DC, we can complain to. In the civilian world, someone at [a civilian corporation] will have less protection. Employment at will is the biggest difference in the civilian world, and they can fire you for being a female. Women have to prove something to file a suit. I feel we’re protected a little bit more.”

— Female Officer

Perception That the Military Services and the Civilian Sector Were Similar for Women

A few participants believed that women faced similar struggles in both the Military Services and the civilian sector and that one was not necessarily better than the other. A few felt that women faced different struggles in the Military Services versus the civilian sector, but that career progression was still similar.

“I think it’s about the same. I don’t think there is a difference. I used to think it would be better [in the civilian sector], but talking with my sister, it sounds the same as what I experience.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I spent a lot of time with corporate women, and they face similar struggles. I have a work-life balance to juggle. . . . As far as career progression, it is relatively the same. They have different hurdles but the same pace progression-wise. We were about the same level corporate-wise as well as active duty military, and some GS (general schedule) employees.”

— Female Officer

“I got out after 10 years, so I got to see what it is like [in the civilian sector], and there is not much of a difference. Females are striving hard for raises and personal achievements and goals. They are just as challenged out there as they are here. It is the same in the [Service]—females fight to prove themselves, working for that raise or promotion or career achievement. In either case, it is just about trying to achieve greatness. There really is not a stark difference.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Perception That the Civilian Sector Was Better Than the Military Services for Women

A few participants perceived the civilian sector was better for women.

“Yeah, I think that the military is designed to up and out. You need to progress in the military. That’s capped much sooner. You need to promote or you’ll be tenured out. In civilian, you don’t need to promote out. At some point, that’s a personal choice where you are comfortable. . . . In the military, we need folks to keep promoting up. That is how manpower is designed.”

— Male Officer

“They seem to be more protected there [in the civilian sector] and can achieve their goals a little bit faster.”

— Female Officer

Suggestions for Improving Career Progression for Servicewomen

When asked what the Military Services could do to increase women's ability to reach the highest levels of leadership, the discussion focused predominantly on ways to keep women from separating from the Service. This was in keeping with the discussion in the previous section of this report on differences in career progression between servicemen and servicewomen. Several participants felt nothing could or should be done because often nothing would convince women to choose career progression over starting a family and spending time with their children.

"When we were growing up . . . the ladies who are now the [general officers] when we were [junior officers], none of them had it all. There was a captain of a ship and she wasn't married, or married but no kids, or got divorced. I don't look down at any Lieutenant that got out and wants to have babies."

— Female Officer

"I understand equality and all that, and I judge individuals on merit, but there's stuff that we can't change. We want it to be a smorgasbord of races and genders, but it can't be like that. Females and males aren't the same. When I come into work—that's what I want to do for the rest of my work. My wife isn't like that. She wants to stay at home with the family and the kids. I think that until the culture changes, it can't change here."

— Senior Enlisted Man

For those participants who did recommend improvements to increase women's career progression, the most common suggestions were to increase female mentorship and to extend maternity leave and the length of the non-deployable postpartum period.

"Thinking of the number of men, the chances of finding a mentor who is like-minded who went down the same career path [are small]. I'm not saying you can't have a male mentor, but if you are looking to build strong leaders in women, it may help to have more women in leadership roles, but it is just a consequence of numbers. It would help."

— Senior Enlisted Man

"I say put maternity leave at six months and don't deploy us for a year. I'm very sensitive to this."

— Senior Enlisted Woman

"Increasing maternity leave. I'm not a woman so I don't know, but [that might] keep them in."

— Senior Enlisted Man

Gender Discrimination

Participants were asked if they or anyone they knew had experienced discrimination based on gender. Participants were provided with the following definition of gender discrimination

for this discussion: “Gender discrimination involves treating a person unfavorably because of that person’s gender.”

Experiences With Gender Discrimination

Personal experiences with gender discrimination were commonly described by women; several men witnessed others experience gender discrimination as well. “Reverse” discrimination (i.e., discrimination against men) was reported by a small number of participants in an effort to point out that it is not only a female concern. A few participants noted that gender discrimination was more likely to come from older men than younger ones.

“Some of the older ones treated females different, but the younger ones treated you the same. . . . Older officers treat you with kid gloves.”

— Female Officer

“I have [seen gender discrimination]. Yes, it’s the ‘I don’t want that female’ or ‘No, I will not take her.’ So the female [who] earned [that] spot does not get promoted or put in [the] position, because there are others that do not want to work with females. That’s gender discrimination in my book.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

A few participants felt that women in particular were too hard on other women.

“My supervisor is a female. As [a junior enlisted Service member], I told her I was pregnant. She said the [Service] didn’t issue children. I feel as our gender we are hard on each other. That makes it easier for male counterparts to have the advantage.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Types of Gender Discrimination

The gender discrimination participants described took several forms. Most participants mentioned subtle forms of discrimination, but a few reported more blatant discrimination experiences.

Subtle Forms of Gender Discrimination

One common form of discrimination mentioned was women’s perceived need to constantly prove themselves.

“There is so much I have to fight for on a daily basis and men don’t have to. I’ve proven myself constantly, and it just gets tiring. We get sick of having to fight the fight. I just want to just do my job and be able to not have to put up with all the extra crap and prove myself extra.”

— Female Officer

“I’m the only senior female NCO (noncommissioned officer). . . . It is very hard working at the leadership tier and being taken seriously. I’ve had the same struggles as these ladies. I was told this is not a woman’s [Service]. I have seen improvements, though. . . . The younger generation [views] me as equal [to my male counterparts in leadership]. They take me seriously.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Others mentioned being viewed as a woman rather than a Service member.

“What I’ve experienced, among some of the senior male population, I think I got looked at more as a daughter than as a female [officer] providing a brief. It was a joke that they’d throw me on the stage because ‘[Senior leadership] won’t yell at you because you’re a girl.’”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“When we go on hikes, males always assume the females won’t make it. Some don’t, but some do. But males always make that assumption that they won’t. It is not based on the person; it is based on their gender. That is a form of discrimination, calling it before it happens.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“The problem is that they don’t look at us as [Service members]; they look at us as women. They’ll cater to us as a woman. It’s kind of a fine line. . . . It’s those subtle things where I hear them loud and clear.”

— Female Officer

Some participants noticed that women were more likely to be given job tasks unrelated to their career fields under the guise that women were better organizers, typists, etc. Male participants said this was because women were better at those jobs. Women, however, believed men used such arguments as an excuse and became frustrated by constantly being asked to take on the stereotypically female job tasks.

“I don’t know how it is everywhere else, but female [Service members] are also often used because, let’s face it, women are better organized than male [Service members], and they get pulled to office jobs and they get pulled out of their career progression. They’re not bad [jobs], but it pulls them out of their career progression.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Females have a broader span of taking in information. I can take one female [Service member], to save time and to save everyone else a lot of legwork, I can take this one female [Service member] and everything’s done nice and neat. If I take [a male Service member], I have to check on him every 15 minutes. I don’t want to say that everyone has a specific job they should do, but there are people who are better at certain things.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“For me most of the time it had to do with the front office. Like they call me and see if I want to [take a paper-pushing kind of job].”

— Female Officer

A few female participants experienced not having the chance to assume challenging positions because men were trying to protect them. This lack of opportunity has hindered women’s career progression.

“I’ve been at six bases now, and I’m always the only female in my [unit]. . . . I’ve been treated like a sister. They want to care for you. I’ve never been told anything negative—it’s just more of a ‘take-care-of-her’ [attitude]. I was a mom and had little kids. When deployments came up, it would always be the males that would get talked to first. I don’t take offense, but you do have to be more assertive as a female.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“ . . . Something I have seen throughout my time in the [Service], especially in the more physically demanding [career fields], if you are a female in a [career field] with physical demands, you are not tasked to do the same thing that a male is tasked to do. When men are tasked with these more physical tasks, they get a better idea of what they need to do, and how to lead and manage it. The female doesn’t as much.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Blatant Forms of Gender Discrimination

A few participants described more blatant discrimination.

“There will be [enlisted Service members beneath my rank] who come up to me and say ‘I don’t work with females’ and I say ‘You don’t sign my paychecks.’”

— Female Officer

“When I requested certain training, I was told I couldn’t go because I was female and would never get that position. When would I get the opportunity to see the other assignments that are out there? The reality is that a male will be more likely to get that position.”

— Female Officer

Recent Reduction in Gender Discrimination

Some participants indicated gender discrimination has subsided in recent years.

“[I haven’t experienced discrimination] recently. . . . I joined the [Service] in ’95. From about ’95–’97, you started seeing integration . . . To where I am now, I can’t say I personally witnessed discrimination in the last five years. Early on in my career, I can say I have.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I’ve seen huge changes from physical fitness standards and in terms of women being respected for work. I’ve seen improvements in sexual harassment and the way that men and women treat each other. It’s not perfect, but I don’t think it will ever be. In the last year to two years, I’ve had males speak to me about how they can come across as not gender biased, including males in leadership positions. This is appreciated, but I think we still have a ways to go.”

— Female Officer

Summary

When asked if they believed men and women in the Service had the same or different career goals, several suggested that servicemen and servicewomen had the same career goals, while others indicated men and women entered the Service with similar goals but that those goals changed over time for women because of having a family or witnessing other women in the career field struggle to progress in their careers. In contrast, a few participants reported that men and women entered the Service with different career goals; women focused more on civilian education, while men concentrated on gaining military-related skills.

When asked about the opportunity to participate in professional development programs in the Military Services and if any of these programs were specifically for women, participants frequently had difficulty pinpointing what professional development opportunities were available within their respective Services beyond the required leadership courses. Similar to career goals, most participants observed that men and women had the same opportunities for professional development. Regarding programs specifically for women, a few participants stated there was none, while others described leadership development programs aimed at women, including leadership forums and mentorship programs.

Gender differences in access to senior leadership opportunities were perceived similarly. When participants were asked why there were fewer women than men at the highest levels of DoD leadership, several participants indicated it was because more women than men chose to leave the Service prior to the point of consideration for senior-level leadership positions, citing family-related reasons for women's decisions to separate. Most participants believed women had the same opportunities as men to reach the highest levels at DoD, regardless of whether or not they actually attained them. In contrast, several participants stated that men had more opportunities than women did, while none reported that women had more opportunities than men. Several of these participants noted that women's opportunities had improved in recent years. Being dual military, pregnancy, and an absence of same-sex mentorship were mentioned as factors that were potential barriers for both men and women but were more likely to hinder the career progression of servicewomen than servicemen.

DACOWITS asked participants what differences if any they perceived in the career progression for servicewomen versus women in the civilian sector and why those differences may occur. Most participants who commented on the differences felt the Military Services were better for women compared with the civilian world. Reasons for this included the equality of pay and career progression opportunities in the Military Services, better awareness of sexual harassment as an equal opportunities issue, and better maternity leave policies in the Military Services. A few participants believed career progression for women in the Military Services and the civilian sector were similar, while others perceived the civilian sector as better for women.

When asked what the Military Services could do to increase women's ability to reach the highest levels of leadership, the discussion focused predominantly on ways to keep women from separating from the Service. Several participants felt nothing could or should be done because usually, nothing would convince women to choose career progression over starting

a family and spending time with their children. For those participants who did recommend improvements, the most common suggestions were to increase female mentorship and extend maternity leave and the length of the non-deployable post-partum period.

DACOWITS asked participants if they or anyone they knew had experienced discrimination based on gender. Personal experiences with gender discrimination were commonly cited by women; several men witnessed others experience gender discrimination. Reverse discrimination (i.e., discrimination against men) was reported by a small number of participants to point out that it was not only a female concern. A few participants noted gender discrimination was more likely to come from older men than younger ones. The gender discrimination participants described took several forms. Most participants mentioned subtle forms of discrimination, but a few shared experiences of more obvious discrimination. Subtle forms of gender discrimination included women's perceived need to constantly prove themselves; servicewomen being viewed as women rather than Service members; women being given job tasks unrelated to their career fields under the guise that women were better organizers, typists, etc.; and women not receiving the chance to assume challenging positions because men were trying to protect them. Some participants indicated gender discrimination has subsided in recent years.

Facilitators and Barriers to Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

The Wellness Working Group has maintained its interest in studying sexual harassment and sexual assault in the Military Services as it has in the past several years. In 2015, the Committee focused specifically on facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault and asked participants about the impact of military culture on reporting; differences between bystander reporting and sexual harassment victim/sexual assault survivor reporting; differences between reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault; and the effect of peers, the chain of command, and social media on reporting. DACOWITS conducted 41 focus groups on facilitators and barriers to reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault.

The Committee used the following definition of sexual harassment for this study: "A form of sexual discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, career, or submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."

The Committee used the following definition of sexual assault for this study: "Sexual assault is a crime. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Consent should not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Additionally, consent is not given when a person uses force, threat of force, coercion or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious. Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual

sodomy (oral or anal sex), indecent assault (e.g., unwanted and inappropriate sexual contact or fondling), or attempts to commit these acts. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender, spousal relationship, or age of victim.”

Participants were encouraged to differentiate between sexual harassment and sexual assault, but often, the conversations on these topics were integrated.

This section provides a summary of the 2015 DACOWITS focus group discussions on the topic of reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault and is organized into the following sections:

- The Impact of Military Culture on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
- Comparisons Between Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
- Comparisons Between Bystander Reporting and Sexual Harassment Victim/Sexual Assault Survivor Reporting
- The Impact of Peers on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
- The Impact of Chain of Command on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
- The Impact of Offender’s Rank on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
- The Impact of Social Media on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

A summary is included at the end of this section.

The Impact of Military Culture on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Participants were asked to describe the ways military culture supports the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault, as defined in an earlier chapter. Discussions focused on perceived changes in military culture, the sexual harassment and sexual assault training Service members receive, and military values and camaraderie.

Changes in Military Culture and Policies to Support Reporting

Respondents discussed how military culture and policy have changed over the years and fostered a climate that better supports reporting.

“It’s not pushed to the side anymore. It’s hard to discourage it. Now, they take you straight to the [sexual harassment and sexual assault program] advocate. Even when I was overseas, it was the same way. Everyone made sure it didn’t matter what rank you were; you were going to be heard. It didn’t matter if they were officers or senior enlisted.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“There’s a lot of training now. Years ago, there’s like a stigma with it. They don’t want to make the unit look bad or the military look bad. But now the culture has changed.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“There are policies in place now. Ten to 10 years ago, there was a lack of education and a lack of support and resources available to the victims. . . . Now there are policies and directives and guidance out there that make it easier to deal with situations.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think the [Service] does support reporting now. I think it’s putting those resources in the units in the last five to 10 years. Previously, reporting was thought of as being weak.”

— Male Officer

Participants also described how the Military Services have developed a formalized process to handle allegations. The representatives and victim advocates who assist victims of sexual harassment and survivors of sexual assault were viewed as a useful resource that facilitated reporting.

“The reps [sexual harassment and sexual assault program representatives] do come around and have an open door policy. They are very hospitable when it comes to their office. They’re highly accessible. It makes it easier to go talk to them. You see them working together, and they’re always there when you need them.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“Sexual harassment is a large portion of the [Equal Opportunity (EO) program], which was created to specifically address the reporting issue. I can tell you that, at least from what I have seen in the 10 years I have served, it has become much easier to report. It is easier to anonymously [report] and to see something being done about it. . . . If someone comes to me and says I have been sexually harassed, I have no authority to tell them no they weren’t. My job is to forward that up to the chain of command, and an investigation will start from that point. Everything is taken seriously.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Perceptions of Increased Reporting

Men and women described how increased training, awareness, and avenues for reporting have led to increases in the number of sexual harassment and sexual assault cases being reported.

“I’m a [victim advocate], and the numbers have skyrocketed. It is unbelievable how many open cases there are right now. I think there is a 3-percent DoD false reporting rate,⁴ but when it is reported correctly and procedures are correct, then there isn’t a knee-jerk reaction and it is handled correctly. You let the professionals do their job and make that determination. Nine out of 10 times, there is some misconduct that did take place.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“As far as reporting goes, because it’s been crammed down our throats every five seconds, they report both [sexual harassment and sexual assault] more. . . . [T]hey are more willing to speak up and say ‘no.’”

— Female Officer

⁴ In 2 percent of reported sexual assault cases, allegations were determined unfounded. (Love, J., Galbreath, N., Williams, K. (2015, June). Sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military. Briefing presented at the meeting of the DACOWITS Federal Advisory Committee.)

Although reporting has increased, some participants emphasized that the Military Services still had room for improvement.

“I think the numbers show that it’s [reporting is] going up, but I think there’s a lot going on underneath because of fear or whatever the motive is to not report. I think it’s getting better than it was, but it’s not where it should be.”

— Male Officer

“We’ve come a long way with education and awareness. We still need a little help with the execution of it all. We know we are supposed to live in a climate that doesn’t tolerate it. In my experience, people still don’t speak up and say, ‘I don’t appreciate you making that comment.’”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Training

While training on sexual harassment and sexual assault varied across Services, many men and women said the focus on sexual harassment and sexual assault training has started to change military culture and attitudes. While the training was regarded as necessary and useful by most, participants criticized the content, delivery, and frequency of the training. DACOWITS also studied and reported on sexual harassment and sexual assault training in 2013 and 2014.

Benefits of Training

Participants detailed how individuals were trained to identify, prevent, and report inappropriate behavior. The training also helped generate knowledge about the resources available to support victims/survivors and showed that the Military Services view sexual harassment and sexual assault as a serious issue.

“We highly encourage it. Every month we are having a new training to reiterate who you contact and who the support structure is. . . . We have training all the time.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“The training piece provides the awareness of the resources out there. [It shows] the willingness of the organization, as a whole, to folks who go through these issues, and [creates] confidence that someone will be there.”

— Male Officer

“There’s really no way, with all the training we get, to not know who or how to report that. It’s been driven into us over the past five years that the lowest [junior enlisted Service member] knows what to do.”

— Male Officer

“[Our Service has a] different spin on sexual harassment, sexual assault, and bullying [training]. I’ve been in a very long time, and [I’ve] seen a progression of how the [Service] has tried to curtail sexual harassment and sexual assault. When I came in, there was no such thing as sexual assault because it was taboo.”

— Female Officer

Some men and women noted that training has been excessive; however, these individuals also recognized the importance of training in conveying the message that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated.

“The [reporting] process is out there; the training reiterates it. It is almost too much. I don’t mean to sound insensitive, but we get a lot of training.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I think all in the military are more aware of sexual harassment due to policy changes, and also, commanders are more willing to continuously educate us. Sometimes it’s too much. In one ear and out the other.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I understand it’s a reaction to a real problem, but at my level it’s not a problem and it’s just an obstacle. We have to have our [sexual harassment and sexual assault] training, and it just gets blasted out and sometimes it’s a distraction.”

— Male Officer

Suggested Improvements to Training

Some participants perceived PowerPoint lectures and computer-based trainings to be less effective and engaging than interactive skits and lectures were in cultivating awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault.

“The skits are our go-to training. They try to bring some humor to it. Our senior leadership are typically the ones that do the skits. People get a better understanding of the different types of [sexual] harassment and [sexual] assault that way.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“It [training] is more than just a once per year thing. It gets touched on a lot. My last unit . . . just [had] a mandated training we blow through. I didn’t actually learn anything. Here, you get together in the auditorium and it is very involved. People are very receptive. It is great. We are making major headway.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“The training should not be computer based. Someone should be presenting it.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think the way they go about it isn’t as good. It should be more conversational and interactive rather than watching a video or a PowerPoint.”

— Male Officer

A small number of women thought trainings were too focused on sexual assault and did not explore sexual harassment in much depth.

“Trainings are focused on sexual assault. . . . We have probably all seen people get harassed, but no one is saying anything until it is assault. There is less emphasis on [sexual] harassment. Training on [sexual] harassment and [sexual] assault should be equal.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“We inhibit reporting [sexual harassment] because we use examples in training that are black and white and pure, there is no question left. . . . Everything they use is so cut and [dried].”

— Female Officer

“I think sexual harassment is very difficult to report. [The senior officer of one Service] did a great job with the sexual assault campaign in the [Service]. Probably more so than in the civilian sector, everybody knows what resources there are. Sexual harassment training is ridiculous—green, yellow, or red [traffic light colors used to group behaviors]. I’m not offended, but someone else could be. If I put my hand on your shoulder, is it green or yellow? It’s ridiculous. There’s a widespread misconception about what sexual harassment is. Is me saying, ‘Hey, you look good tonight’ sexual harassment? The training and education part is not the same.”

— Female Officer

A few individuals also observed that training on sexual harassment and sexual assault against men was lacking.

“I find that the [sexual harassment and sexual assault] training that we’ve been conducting is so focused on a female victim, but more men are victims. That’s not demonstrated in the training materials, and I think that would benefit the training to shift focus.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think we have increased it for females to report . . . [but] when you look at barriers for men in [sexual harassment and sexual assault] classes and in bystander interventions, it is always just tacked on that men get sexually harassed and assaulted too. It’s a side note. I think it is a function of men having a lot of pride.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

One group of women discussed how training could force sexual assault survivors to relive trauma and potentially identify them as survivors to the larger group.

“I get putting awareness out, but they are not thinking about the ones who’ve been through that [sexual assault]. . . . We forget about the victims, especially in the small groups. In the training, you can pinpoint people, looking at their body language and what they say. Now you made it more uncomfortable. . . . I’ve been raped before. I was in a small session group, and I’m shifting in my seat and looking at those next to me. I walked out; so did the person next to me. Now everybody knows we’ve been through something. That’s what I don’t like.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Military Values That Have Encouraged Reporting

In the context of military culture, several participants discussed how the values, morals, and camaraderie of the Military Services could help curtail sexual harassment and sexual assault as well as create an environment that supports reporting. These values encourage individuals to look out for one another and ensure they receive the support they need.

“I tell my [Service members] that we are family. We have two names. . . . You have your family name, and then you have the [Service]. I think that supports them trying to take care of each other, and it gives the sense that if a female gets sexually assaulted, then she will not be embarrassed to talk to me or someone about it.”

— Senior Enlisted Female

“I think the [Service] values always doing what’s right even when no one’s looking. When it comes to sexual assault and sexual harassment, it very quickly starts to ingrain in people coming in that that’s not the way to do business. I think that culture helps facilitate that this isn’t acceptable.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“We have [Service] values. . . . You’re honor bound. You’re indoctrinated to that. You’re coming into a set of values and a belief system that sometimes your individual beliefs are given up for the culture in the military. The [Service] values tools, guidelines, and rules that would encourage reporting.”

— Male Officer

Although it was not a topic raised by the Committee, a few individuals noted that the Military Services provided a means for reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as an emphasis on reporting, that was not found in the civilian sector.

“I think the [Service] has established a program that is unlike any other program, or like any other business organization. So, I feel that we are right on track . . . because if you go to work for any other company, like let’s say [a corporation], they aren’t going to have a system to report sexual harassment or [sexual] assault in the same manner that we do in the Department of Defense.”

— Junior Enlisted Male

“That’s the Service culture, to never leave a [Service member] behind. The Service portion, that’s important. The Commandant’s orders can very quickly change the command climate. You couldn’t do that at [a corporation].”

— Male Officer

“I experienced it [sexual harassment] more in the civilian workplace. There [wasn’t] . . . as much awareness. I think the military does better. . . . I thought I had to ignore it and push it aside, not say anything. Here there is so much more push.”

— Female Officer

Cultural Barriers to Reporting

While participants generally agreed that reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault has increased, some noted that certain aspects of military culture could dissuade individuals from reporting. Participants described a number of scenarios where sexual harassment victims and sexual assault survivors decided not to report the incidents. Barriers to reporting included anticipated consequences (i.e., stigmatization and career concerns), male reluctance to report, and uncertainty about the outcomes. Circumstances unique to small units and remote locations also were mentioned as a barrier to reporting.

Anticipated Consequences of Reporting

Respondents cited concerns that reporting inappropriate behavior still stigmatized reporters and could mark them as troublemakers. These findings are consistent with the Committee’s findings from prior years.

“A lot of people felt like you don’t want to be the one creating waves. There is a fear people would ostracize you for doing what is right. For a lot of people, it has shifted in new units; it has become more friendly and open.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“You don’t want that stigma attached to you. There is still a bit of a stigma.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“People don’t want to be labeled, which is a barrier to reporting. We need to change that culture so that labeling does not exist. If someone chooses to report, they should not be labeled a troublemaker, but that takes time to change minds. . . .”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Sexual assault is a problem. Sexual harassment is a problem. And if your name is associated with sexual assault or sexual harassment, your name is associated with a problem.”

— Female Officer

“We need to remove the stigma of reporting a [peer]. We have the one team, one fight mentality, and we need to get rid of ‘Hey, you’re getting rid of someone who is helping us fight wars.’”

— Male Officer

A small number of women said women might be less inclined to report out of concern that doing so could negatively impact their careers.

“I have heard plenty of, surprisingly, young female officers just say that it was just not career enhancing to report. They had to get their [promotion] or their hours. . . and by the time it went to my office, they had put it off for a year or two or six months, and they just felt . . . command had proven to them that it was not career enhancing to report. We have come a long way, but we have a long ways to go.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think there is still a lack of confidence in the system on the part of the victim/reporter. . . . More often than not, they don’t want it reported. They are afraid of what will happen career-wise.”

— Female Officer

Reluctance to Report Among Men

Men in several groups noted that men were less likely than women to report sexual harassment or sexual assault. Reluctance to report might include embarrassment or concerns that their peers would view them as weak.

“I think in the military, the culture, the guys are supposed to be seen as tough, so if you report, you could be seen as weak.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I’ve seen a situation of male-on-male, and he didn’t report it because he was embarrassed. It took it to the point where it was a serious incident.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Male soldiers don’t like to bring it [sexual harassment and sexual assault] up because, being males, we’re taught to suck it up and be strong. Don’t let emotions cloud your judgement; we’re taught to hide our emotions. Females are taught to be in touch with their feelings more than males are. I feel that females have more fortitude to come forward.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I guarantee you that a man would not tell that they were raped by another man. If a man was raped by a female, they would probably run around and brag about it.”

— Male Officer

Unknown Outcomes of Reporting

Respondents in several groups noted that individuals might be dissuaded from reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault when the outcomes of reports were largely unknown.

“People are often hesitant to report it because it will not be taken care of. You never hear what happens to the [offender]. Why put myself out there? Everyone will know. Even if you are confidential, if you work in a small unit or depend on your friends, people will know about it. Often the [offender] just gets a slap on the hand. It’s like . . . if you had issues you just let it go because it is easier. You just want to be done. Nothing happens to them anyway.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“[T]hey are putting out all the information . . . that if this has happened to you then here are the people you can talk to, but there is still the hush-hush factor. It will still just be swept under the rug. Something will happen, everyone knows it happened, but we never know what happened as a result. We never know the outcome and why this person is still here and interacting with other [Service members]. . . .”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“People hear stories and it discourages them. We hear stories of revictimization. We hear stories of someone getting charged when they really didn’t do it. You know what stories we don’t really hear? We don’t hear stories about someone getting charged and they really did it and they are now getting punished for it. We don’t hear those stories—just the ones that portray the negative.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I think that because the punishment is so delayed . . . it doesn’t stick with the guys.”

— Male Officer

Small Units and Remote Locations

Participants described how sexual harassment and sexual assault might be reported less frequently in some locations, particularly remote areas, compared with others.

“Every command I’ve been to in recent years, with all the training, it is pretty well known you can walk to a commander’s office and shut the door and talk to them about it. . . . For smaller units that have 10 people in the middle of [a rural state], it may be harder for them to feel that comfort.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“If you are at a unit where [you are] two hours away, where the clinic and [sexual harassment and sexual assault representative] is, it is a lot more difficult to contemplate telling people about it.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Some participants explained how being at sea could make reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault difficult.

“On the boats where people live together for weeks at a time, [sexual harassment] is a bit more accepted. In an office setting like this, you won’t see it too much.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I feel like it is boat life that discourages people from reporting because you all know who it is.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Some participants described how reporting might be less common in small units or units that were newly integrated.

“When it is a small unit it sucks, but you are scared not just for yourself but [that] the working environment will be [expletive]. Once things happen and all [expletive] breaks loose, you don’t know how it can change. It is so much better now. I don’t think that would happen today.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I think the closeness of a unit can discourage it [reporting]. We work in close quarters, and if someone did something bad—that’s the team you work with all the time. It’s going to have a negative impact on the team.”

— Male Officer

“With harassment, I think there’s a fine line, especially in the combat arms culture. There’s a way guys act. My females were thrust into an armor community that, frankly, was not female friendly. They might have some discomfort with the scenario, but they want to fit in. I think that can inhibit reporting. It’s such a fine line with the combat arms.”

— Male Officer

Fear of False Claims Affected Male-Female Interactions

Some participants noted that interactions between men and women have changed since the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault has become a higher priority. They discussed how men were concerned about making a mistake that could impact their careers, and how sometimes they limited their interactions with women out of concern something they might say or do could be considered inappropriate. These findings are consistent with DACOWITS’ findings from prior years.

“If there’s a female around, then everyone’s just silent because they’re afraid to say something . . . so women get ostracized even though we’ve given them power.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I think it is too easy for reporting of both [sexual harassment and sexual assault]. It is a witch hunt right now. Does it happen? Yes. Is it wrong? Yes. But as males, we have to walk on eggshells when we talk to females. It is scary to possibly be charged with sexual harassment. I got in trouble because a female [Service member] said I was flirting with her. I wasn’t. I wouldn’t. There was, fortunately, a witness that said I wasn’t either.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“If you are the only female, the other guys say things, and they don’t realize they say things. You are seen as difficult if you say something about it, but if you don’t say something, then it doesn’t get fixed. They don’t like that they have to be sensitive. When I walked through the door, they can’t stop themselves because they were used to it when it was all guys.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“We do [sexual harassment and sexual assault program] training on a monthly basis. It’s kind of like walking on eggshells because [men are] afraid of saying something wrong. They’re worried about something they’ll say because it could be construed as a violation.”

— Female Officer

While false reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault is rare in the Military Services, some men and a few women reported that individuals have abused the reporting process for their own personal gain. Some of these individuals felt the focus on curtailing inappropriate behavior has led to men being presumed guilty.

“If a guy does sexually assault or harass a female, then burn them, take them down, punish them. It is awful. But we are now in a place where we assume guilt and where everything is highlighted negatively in the news and in the [Service] community.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“All the false allegations weaken the ones that actually happen.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“You don’t blame the victim, but you also have to watch out for the accused. I have seen, two or three times, where people lost their job. They were [subjected to a non-judicial punishment procedure] and put out because of the knee-jerk reactions. So the accused has rights, and you have to go through the due process, and it’s going to be painful no matter what, and it takes some time to get those people on and off of the ship.”

— Male Officer

“If you have a command that’s so afraid of sexual harassment and [sexual] assault, and that reports everything that comes up, then people can take advantage of it. If you have a false accusation, it can still be a black mark on you. It could just be someone that was irritated or pissed off at you. There’s no recourse against the person that made the false accusation.”

— Female Officer

Personal Facilitators and Barriers to Reporting

Although military culture and policy were recognized as influential in one’s decision to report sexual harassment and sexual assault, participants noted the Military Services could only do so much to change individuals’ behavior. Individuals’ experiences and upbringing were described as a major factor in one’s ability to recognize sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as their willingness to report inappropriate behavior.

“I think it depends on the person, too. If they don’t want to say anything, then they’re just not going to say anything. If they don’t want to tell, then they’re not going to tell.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I think it’s about your upbringing. If your parents don’t teach you, you think something’s okay that’s not.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Their upbringing has everything to do with it. . . . there’s a diversity of background. How people react to challenging situations might not be how we might want them to react.”

— Male Officer

“I don’t think it’s different from the civilian world. I think most impediments to reporting come from your personal experiences.”

— Female Officer

Comparisons Between Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Participants were asked to describe differences between reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault, including how common it was to report one over the other. Topics of discussion included how reporting has increased overall and challenges identifying sexual harassment.

Frequency of Reporting

Groups were asked to compare the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Most participants indicated sexual assault has a greater likelihood of being reported than sexual harassment. Some also thought sexual harassment was more likely to be addressed outside of the official reporting system.

“Sexual assault is more likely than sexual harassment to be reported. I work in close proximity [to females]; sometimes jokes can lead to harassment. It is unintentional, but the progression—some things go too far and it becomes harassment. It can lead to assault, and then it gets reported when it goes too far.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Harassment you can handle face-to-face or even through email. They haven’t touched you, and it isn’t necessarily creating a more hostile environment. Sexual assault though, whether the victim is male or female, then that would affect you and possibly your unit.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I think a lot of times with sexual harassment and [sexual] assault, it’s usually somebody you know. You don’t want to ruin your friend’s career, but at the same time, you want it to stop. I think in the initial stages, you might not report someone who harasses you, whereas assault is immediate.”

— Male Officer

“I would say sexual harassment is probably not reported. I think it’s acted on by the [Service members] and that they make it stop. It’s a difficult line when two [Service members] are friends, they’re joking around, and one day it’s fine and the next it’s not.”

— Male Officer

“In terms of sexual assault, I think it’s a different story, but sexual harassment is all about what you take offense to.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Identifying Sexual Harassment Versus Sexual Assault

Participants sometimes found it difficult to identify sexual harassment and suspected this might contribute to underreporting of harassment. Sexual assault, on the other hand, was clearly defined and recognizable to participants.

“I imagine assault would be the easiest to recognize and report just because it’s assault. Harassment is harder to recognize.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“Sexual assault, at least in my mind, is a hard line—yes or no situation. Where I would say harassment is one of those boys’ club mentalities of certain comments you learn to deal with and certain ones are past the line. . . . The line with assault, you [know they] passed that line, but harassment . . . you tend to rationalize away.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I think sexual assault would be more often reported because a lot of times I think instances of sexual harassment are not so blatant that it’s not an open and shut case . . . whereas sexual assault, this is a crime.”

— Male Officer

“I could inadvertently sexually harass someone and not intend to. I still look at that as your responsibility to say it makes you uncomfortable. Sometimes I don’t know how my personality [comes across] if you are an E4 and I’m an O4 affecting you. . . . Sexual assault is more clearly defined, and there is no way you can assault someone and not know you are doing it. There are so many different shades of gray in sexual harassment and how people interpret it as opposed to sexual assault.”

— Male Officer

Many individuals noted that the definition of sexual harassment was ambiguous and could mean different things to different people.

“We’ve all been around a situation some time or another when someone has said something that may be perceived as harassment, but people take it as a joke or not something serious.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Sexual harassment is such a touchy thing because anything could be sexual harassment.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“Sometimes harassment for one person isn’t the same for someone else.”

— Male Officer

Comparisons Between Bystander Reporting and Sexual Harassment Victim/Sexual Assault Survivor Reporting

Focus groups were asked about the differences between a bystander and a victim/survivor reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. Participants were also asked if a bystander would be more likely than a survivor to report. Opinions were varied as to which group reported more, and discussions largely focused on efforts to increase bystander reporting.

Bystander and Victim/Survivor Reporting

There was no clear trend among the focus groups suggesting either bystanders or victims/survivors reported more frequently compared with the other. Participants described instances that may compel or dissuade one group from reporting compared with the other.

Bystanders Would Be Less Likely to Report

Some participants described how victims/survivors were more likely than bystanders to report and that many bystanders would not think they should intervene.

“I think bystanders are less likely to report either for the fact that—I don’t know his take on it. If someone slapped him on the butt, was that just him and his friend horsing around?”

— Male Officer

“I’d say it [bystander reporting] rarely, if ever, happens. People say, ‘Hey, this is none of my business. Let them have their Chief or [Division Officer] handle it.’”

— Male Officer

“Victims report more. Bystanders are just that—let me stay out of it.”

— Female Officer

“A bystander may not report it because they’ll think it’s none of their business.”

— Female Officer

Bystanders Would Be More Likely to Report

Some participants thought bystanders would be more likely to report because there would be fewer consequences if they report compared with a victim/survivor.

“It’s easier to report as a bystander because it doesn’t directly affect your life.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“You have nothing to lose as a bystander.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think bystanders are more likely to report because, it might sound wrong, but there’s no dog in the fight. A victim has to go to court, but a bystander might not.”

— Male Officer

Other participants mentioned that the Military Services train bystanders to intervene in situations that arise.

“We fight for other people. That’s our job, so I feel like we report for others more than ourselves.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“If someone sees you’re having a very tough time, then someone may be more likely to report it.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I think the word is out there now that you don’t want to be the person that saw something and didn’t say something.”

— Male Officer

Many participants thought that bystander reporting had increased as a result of training on bystander intervention.

“I think there is a big push right now to get more involvement from the bystanders. . . . [I]t’s influencing more people to come out and speak up when you do see something. Up until recently, I think the survivor would be more likely to report it—everyone just wants to stay away. But this push to get us more involved and cohesive as a family, as a unit, as a [Service]. . . . I think you should see a rise in bystander reporting.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“We’re more likely to step in if we see something now because of all the training. We’ve been told to say [something], and we will.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“With the training we have, I think hopefully we would have more bystanders step up.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think bystanders are more likely to report now since we’re pushing this wingman concept. If you see something inappropriate, you need to step in and stop it. I think [intervention is] more likely for sexual assault. I could see intervention in sexual harassment; I could see outsiders intervening, but not sure about reporting.”

— Male Officer

A few men described how penalizing the failure to report sexual harassment or sexual assault had increased reporting.

“I think now, Commanders and OICs (Officers in Charge) are scared. As soon as a report of sexual assault or sexual harassment comes through, they make sure to assist with any investigation. They don’t want it to affect their career if they were trying to keep it quiet or something. They are just as scared nowadays as we are.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“It’s part of our report card now too, and no one is going to want that to blow up in their hand. Kind of like a hot potato, I don’t think anyone in leadership wants that to be caught in their hand.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“A commander today would be terrified not to report it.”

— Male Officer

“[N]ow it’s going on people’s evaluations. If they don’t report it, then they’re gone.”

— Male Officer

A few individuals thought training on bystander intervention was likely to decrease incidents of sexual harassment or sexual assault but not necessarily increase reporting of those incidents.

“I think [training] is preventing the issues from coming up. The emphasis on the bystander is helping prevent others from being stupid. It is working well to prevent things. I don’t see people reporting things, but I do see it from stopping things from occurring in the first place.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

The Impact of Peers on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Participants were asked about the role one’s peers could play in encouraging or discouraging the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Discussions focused on how reporting had been influenced by peer pressure, concerns about keeping incidents private from one’s peers, and the unrestricted and restricted reporting processes.

Peer Influence

Participants described how peer pressure could be a useful force in encouraging someone to report sexual harassment or sexual assault.

“I think peer pressure is important. If you’re in a group and they say that harassment is bad, then you’re going to report because you have that peer pressure. The same with assault . . . you’re going to report it if other people think you should.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Peers play more of a role than command. You work with peers every single day. They know you on a personal level. . . . Your peers are friends outside of work, and you see them inside and outside of uniform. Your gut tells you something is wrong. They are more likely to tell you something is wrong as a peer. If someone told me without my uniform on, I’m still obligated to report it.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“For junior [Service members], a lot of times it is their first time away from home. Mom and dad are usually far away. So peers are everything to these [Service members]. . . . So, if your peers say you need to report, then they will report. . . .”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Peers can give you that support—that if you don’t want to do something, your peer can encourage you.”

— Male Officer

On the other hand, some participants described how peers who are accepting of inappropriate behavior could discourage reporting.

“If a large portion of your peers tend to accept behaviors or jokes or things then that person experiencing it is less likely to speak up. [The person will think] others are okay with it. . . .”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“Some people don’t want to be looked down on by turning in one of their [peers], so it’s a shame thing as well.”

— Male Officer

Privacy Concerns

During the focus groups, participants shared a perception that sexual harassment victims and sexual assault survivors often weighed the risks of reporting, one of which was the loss of privacy.

Privacy and Peers

Participants noted that it could be difficult to keep cases of sexual harassment or sexual assault private. Concern that one’s peers might learn about the case was often identified as a barrier to reporting.

“As soon as you get the unrestricted [report], then it spreads like wildfire.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I would say the more potential [there is that] people are going to find out about it, the less likely people are to report it. . . .”

— Male Officer

“Let’s be realistic; when you are on a ship for five months, there is no confidentiality. That is ship life.”

— Female Officer

“You may feel comfortable going to a [sexual harassment and sexual assault program representative] in your unit, but by human nature, it may not be a private report.”

— Female Officer

Privacy Implications of Restricted and Unrestricted Reporting⁵

Participants emphasized the importance of having the option of restricted reports to facilitate the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

“A person can report and no one in the unit will know. You can keep it quiet or you can reach out to peers. Before [restricted reporting was available], when you report[ed] it to your command, everyone knew. [It] was a barrier.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“If you don’t want your peers to know, then that is the beauty of the restricted report. They will never know . . . if it is assault.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“There is more of a push, as a result of the trainings, that there will be no reprisal [for reporting]. You report it, you can make it a restricted report, and things are handled very diligently and tactfully.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

However, men and women highlighted flaws in the restricted reporting process that could lead to a report becoming unrestricted. Concerns about a potential breach in confidentiality could reduce reporting.

“[Something] that really bothers me is trying to be a VA (victim advocate) now. . . . If something happened to my friend and they didn’t know who to [ask] to make a restricted report and they talked to me to get help, now it is automatically unrestricted because she needed my help in a time of need.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

⁵According to DoD’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, unrestricted reports allow the survivor to participate in the military criminal justice process. Restricted reports are kept confidential, and one’s immediate chain of command and law enforcement are not notified. When the survivor reports the crime to someone in the chain of command, a restricted report is no longer an option.

“Even if you report it restricted, where nobody is supposed to know, if you make even the most minor mistake in the restricted reporting, it becomes unrestricted and everybody knows about it.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I saw a lot of [Service members] who wanted to tell their best friend because they didn’t know who to go to. The best friend would be quick to say we need to go to get you help. They were quick to take the person to a VA (victim advocate), which is the correct way to go about it. But there was a huge disconnect, because the best friend or whoever they told about it . . . really didn’t understand that because they know and there is a bystander reporting, it is no longer a restricted report. It is no longer an option. We need to find a way to educate victims that they should be the ones to report if they care about it being restricted. We tell, we teach, but we are not giving that part of the class the emphasis it needs.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“If that peer was able to get you to a VA (victim advocate) but still have confidentiality that might help [increase reporting]. We don’t have that option now.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

The Impact of Chain of Command on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Focus groups were asked to discuss the role of one’s chain of command in encouraging or discouraging reporting. Participants discussed how reporting was influenced by command climate and trust, removal of immediate chain of command from the reporting process, and presence of female leadership.

The Impact of Command Climate

Many men and women emphasized the importance of their command in cultivating an environment that encourages the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Participants observed that efforts by one’s chain of command to address sexual harassment and sexual assault were highly visible and could inspire confidence in those considering reporting.

“The [sexual harassment and sexual assault program] and EO (equal opportunity) programs only have the ability to be successful if the command environment allows it. If the hierarchy and upper echelons don’t support it—they set the command environment for those programs to succeed or fail. Senior leadership is the determining factor.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“It depends on the command cadres. If you knew that a command handled it in a professional manner, then they will be more willing to report it. . . . I’m less likely to report if something is less likely to happen.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“It depends on your individual command’s commitment to reporting. They will determine if it’s handled in the appropriate way. If you have a command that swipes it under the rug and doesn’t do anything about it, then that’s the climate that’s set.”

— Female Officer

“People are concerned about their command. Units might harass them to drop their claim. Some people are ostracized, and they’re not supported at all. I think that causes other people not to report. . . . I didn’t report my assault until I got to another unit because I didn’t think my command would support me.”

— Female Officer

“There’s a culture for each unit. If there’s no emphasis on [sexual harassment and sexual assault programs] on the part of the leader then sometimes things can slip. . . . When you are trying to cultivate a climate in your unit, [Service members] see everything and know everything before you do. How you handle those things is huge in establishing a climate. If they don’t see consequences, then they don’t think it matters.”

— Male Officer

Many participants emphasized the importance of trust in one’s command. Without trust, individuals are less likely to report because they lack confidence that anything will be done.

“If you can’t trust the chain of command, you won’t go to them.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“[A]s a young female, if I report something and put myself in the limelight but . . . feel like my command is going to look down on me for that, then I am not going to put myself in that position. . . . If I am in an environment where I feel like command is going to have my back and support me and give me the counseling and whatever else I need, then I am going to report it.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“If someone will report based on chain of command, it comes down to trust. Will I be taken seriously? Will it go south? That is a huge chunk of it. Having a third party come in would fix it.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I think most people who don’t report are concerned about a lack of confidentiality. They don’t trust their command. It’s definitely not because people don’t know the reporting process.”

— Female Officer

“If people don’t trust their chain of command to handle it or think they’re going to get ostracized—it’s huge.”

— Male Officer

A few men and women described how sexual harassment and sexual assault by leaders could erode trust in the chain of command and discourage individuals from reporting.

“Sometimes you do not trust them if the command is the one that sexually harasses. That happens a lot.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“If [a leader] says something that’s not right and he’s not [in] my chain of command, I’m more likely to report. If my chain of command is the problem, I’m less likely to report.”

— Male Officer

“You lose trust in your chain of command if it’s someone in your chain of command who’s doing it.”

— Female Officer

The Impact of Removing Immediate Chain of Command From the Reporting Process

Some men and women described how removing one’s immediate chain of command from the restricted reporting process has helped encourage reporting. They noted that the restricted reporting process has helped those who lacked trust in their leadership, were concerned about bias or inaction, or were embarrassed to report to their superiors.

“Now, it is an unbiased party that comes in and does the investigation. That gives confidence to victims. [The] good old boy network has been removed.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Having everything in black and white and removing the command element . . . from the reporting process . . . is great. I can tell the CO (commanding officer) that something happened, but he can cuss me up and down all day and I will not tell him a word [as a victim’s advocate] about the who, what, where, when, why, or any other detail of it. I think the biggest issues that we had with the program originally is that a bunch of people in command had no idea how to handle something . . . no one had a background or training in how to handle the situation. Now, this happened, this is what they will do, this is what you will do, etc. It is outlined and in black and white.

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I agree with taking the commander out of the chain. Like with college, the dean of the school wouldn’t need to be in on that. I believe in a college the police should be involved.”

— Female Officer

The Impact of Reporting to Female Leadership

A small number of women observed that women might be more willing to report sexual harassment or sexual assault if someone in their chain of command was also a woman. Female leaders were viewed as being more likely to address inappropriate behavior.

“In the [Service], we have female [leaders]. And maybe that’s not who you would go to directly, but sometimes knowing you have somebody higher up . . . who will have influence, who will make you feel safe and is also a female, will make females come forward more.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I wish we had a female NCO (noncommissioned officer). The rest are privates or specialists. We don’t have a female NCO to step in and say something for us.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

The Impact of Offender’s Rank on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Focus groups were asked how the rank of the offender might influence someone’s decision to report sexual harassment or sexual assault. Participants discussed how reporting was influenced by discrepancies in rank, the risks of reporting a superior, and concerns about credibility.

Many men and women reported that the rank of the offender could decrease the likelihood of someone reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault.

“I think it can depend on rank, too. If you got a private who’s got an E6 harassing her, then it can prevent her from reporting it.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“If the commanding officer sexually harasses a [junior Service member], I would like to think I’d step in, but I don’t know if I really would. I don’t know if I could stand up to the commanding officer. I don’t know what I’d do.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Now if the higher rank person is the person assaulting or harassing, that is only going to make it more difficult. Rank plays a huge part in the decision.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I definitely think it’s scary to report someone in your direct chain of command.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“It takes a strong person to report a commanding officer. . . . [There is] fear of retribution. Will I be believed? You can equate that in the civilian world with [reporting] a CEO (chief executive officer).”

— Male Officer

Reporting peers was regarded as being considerably easier.

“Someone would be more likely to report a [junior enlisted Service member] than a [senior enlisted Service member]. They might think, ‘I’m just a [junior enlisted Service member]; who’s going to believe me?’”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“Peer-to-peer is a little easier [to report] . . . [you] would handle it right there. If there is a big rank gap, I don’t know what I’d do.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“The higher the rank, the scarier. . . . There’s, you know, more resistance. If an E3 harasses an E2, it will get taken care of right away—not the case for an E9.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Challenges of Reporting a Superior

Participants noted that some individuals might be dissuaded from reporting out of fear the accused could make life difficult or take action against them.

“It could also be detrimental to the work place. . . . [H]e has all these people that work under him, and he will talk and you will be an outcast. You will be treated differently, and that will just affect the work space.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Many still have fear of retribution and it coming back on you.”

— Junior Enlisted Wo2man

“If the offender is in the chain of command, they could threaten them or their career—put the fear into them that something’s going to happen if they report it.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“[There is] fear of reprisal, especially for those trying to include themselves in the good ole boy club.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“A lot of times the victim may not report out of fear that the [offender] may come after them, or something may not happen after it’s reported.”

— Male Officer

Perceived Credibility of a Junior Victim/Survivor

Participants indicated that there was a perception that higher ranking individuals were more credible than lower ranking ones, which might decrease reporting by junior Service members.

“With the rank thing, somebody could think, ‘Oh, well maybe they aren’t going to believe me because I am an E1 and he’s an E7, and he’s done all this great stuff for the military, and I’ve really done nothing. So, why would anybody believe me?’ They could have that mentality.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“If you are the number one guy or girl and [your] command thinks you walk on water, and now I am going to report you—then it may not be worth my time to report because they [think you] walk on water.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I think it’s even more difficult if it’s an officer—someone with a lot of credibility . . . those are the people who feel irreplaceable to everybody else. I think it’s intimidating. . . [to] get them to believe [he is replaceable]. Like any social dynamic, if he is competent and really good and a great leader and everybody likes him, [then they won’t believe it].”

— Female Officer

The Impact of Social Media on Reporting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Focus groups were asked about the positive and negative influence of social media on reporting. Opinions about the influence of social media varied among Service members; however, groups reported how social media could be used to deter or encourage reporting, as well as to criticize or support those that file reports. Social media could also be used in positive or negative ways after a report is filed.

Social Media Could Deter Reporting

Participants were more likely to say social media could discourage rather than encourage reporting. Service members spoke about how social media could be used to blackmail or slander individuals who are contemplating reporting.

“I have [Service members] that have met someone online and then been blackmailed. Seriously, like if you don’t pay me money, then I will post our conversations or your private pictures online or on Twitter. I had a male [Service member] that was so embarrassed to tell his female command that he was getting blackmailed regarding sexual exchanges he had with a female. It does more bad than good.”

— Senior Enlisted Female

Social media could also be used as a form of retribution to revictimize someone who has already reported an act of sexual harassment or sexual assault, therefore deterring others from following suit. This theme was more commonly reported among women.

“I was sexually harassed in tech school. I made the report. He was Facebook friends with me, and [after I reported him] he posted this [expletive] and said my name and said ‘[Investigative service] is investigating me.’ That was my circumstance.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“The big thing in the media now is revenge [postings of intimate nature]. That is something I never had to worry about when I was younger. Social media will end you.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“A challenge could be that if a female reports something and people find out, people might attack her Facebook page. Especially if she has pictures of her dressed provocatively, they might say that she asked for it.”

— Female Officer

Social media could affect whether a report is restricted or unrestricted, sometimes without the awareness of the victim/survivor. Service members described how social media has made it hard to keep incidents and reporting private.

“In that sense social media can be used more in a negative way, depending on the situation. If more than one person is there [at the scene of an incident], the info gets posted on social media whether the victim wanted it there or not. Then they feel like ‘Should I hide? Do I want to report? I’m not comfortable.’ Social media puts things out there that you don’t always want to read.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“As far as unrestricted and restricted, if you find something inappropriate happening and they want it not investigated, you have to be sure they know that before you blast it out on Facebook or Twitter. Once you talk outside of the [sexual harassment and sexual assault program] group, you need to know you’re taking unrestricted options away.”

— Female Officer

Social Media Could Encourage Reporting

Service members were less likely to say that social media could have a positive impact in encouraging reporting of sexual harassment or sexual assault; however, they did describe some positive aspects. For example, social media could offer an opportunity for victims/survivors to share their experiences and encourage others to stand up for themselves; it could also encourage victims/survivors who are feeling vulnerable or alone to speak up.

“I think that it can be positive because there are all sorts of videos that my friends post that can say stuff. The last video I saw was of a girl who was saying how sick she was of dealing with harassment. I think these are good messages.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“It can be turned into a positive. Sometimes things get so misconstrued. The person it affects may say ‘I want to speak out as well.’”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Social Media Would Not Affect Reporting

Some Service members believed that social media had no impact on reporting.

“The last thing on my mind if I was a victim would be what the [expletive] someone is saying on Facebook. It would be if my confidence is shaken by peers, not because of social media, but more about face-to-face interactions. It is not going to be about what they are putting on Facebook.”

— Male Officer

Use of Social Media After Reporting

After a report of sexual harassment or sexual assault has been filed, participants expressed how social media could be used in positive or negative ways.

Social media could be used to paint the victim/survivor in a negative light.

“Let’s say a girl was sexually assaulted—or a guy—and their Facebook profile⁶ was all racy photos or party photos; then people are going to say, ‘You seem like the kind of person . . .’ that’s how it [social media] can backfire on a person.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Social media could be used to show support for the victim/survivor.

“Say Joe’s my friend and he said something, and within minutes there were 30 responses. ‘Been there’ and ‘Go here for support.’ It was a good thing.”

— Male Officer

Social media could be used to show how offenders are held accountable, which can encourage other victims/survivors to report.

“Well just like [someone] was saying, [in the Service newspaper] and stuff people see repercussions regardless of rank. As soon as the CO, XO (executive officer) is fired, these junior sailors are on Facebook seeing “Bam! The CO got fired.” So in that way, social media is helping to get the word out there, and [Service members] see there are repercussions for committing the atrocities.”

— Male Officer

Summary

Participants were asked to describe the ways that military culture supports the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Respondents discussed how military culture and policy have changed over the years and fostered a climate that better supports reporting. Participants also described how the Military Services had developed a formalized process to handle allegations. The representatives and victim advocates who assist sexual harassment victims and sexual assault survivors were viewed as a useful resource that facilitated reporting. Men and women described how increased training, awareness, and avenues for reporting have led to increases in the number of sexual harassment and sexual assault cases being reported. Although reporting has increased, some participants emphasized that there still is room for improvement in how the Military Services handle this issue.

While training on sexual harassment and sexual assault varied across Services, many men and women discussed how the focus on sexual harassment and sexual assault training has started to change military culture and attitudes. While the training was regarded as necessary and useful by most, participants criticized the content, delivery, and frequency of the training. Some men and women noted that training has been excessive; however, these individuals also recognized

⁶Identifying information that users provide about themselves on a social networking site; this information might include a username, contact information, personal interests, a photo, bio, or other data

the importance of training in conveying the message that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated. Some participants perceived PowerPoint lectures or computer-based trainings to be less effective than interactive skits were in cultivating awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault. A small number of women thought trainings were too focused on sexual assault and did not explore sexual harassment in much depth. A few individuals also observed a lack of training on sexual harassment and sexual assault against men.

In the context of military culture, several participants discussed how the values, morals, and camaraderie of the Military Services could help curtail sexual harassment and sexual assault and create an environment that supports reporting. These values encourage individuals to look out for one another and ensure they receive the support they need. Although the Committee did not raise the issue during the focus group discussion, a few individuals noted that the Military Services have provided a means for reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well an emphasis on reporting, that is not found in the civilian sector. While participants generally agreed reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault had increased, some noted that certain aspects of military culture could dissuade individuals from reporting, such as anticipated consequences (i.e., stigmatization and career concerns), male reluctance to report, and uncertainty about the outcomes. Circumstances unique to small units and remote locations also were mentioned as a barrier to reporting. Respondents cited concerns that reporting inappropriate behavior could stigmatize an individual and identify reporters as troublemakers. A small number of women said women might be less inclined to report out of concern that doing so could negatively impact their careers. Men in several groups noted that men are less likely to report sexual harassment or sexual assault than women are, perhaps because of embarrassment or concerns that their peers would view them as weak. Some participants explained how being at sea could make reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault difficult. Some participants described how reporting might be less common in small units or newly integrated units. Some participants noted that interactions between men and women have changed since reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault has become a higher priority. They discussed how men were concerned about making a mistake that could affect their careers and how they sometimes limited their interactions with women out of concern that something they might say or do could be considered inappropriate. Some of these individuals thought the focus on curtailing inappropriate behavior has led to men being presumed guilty. Although military culture and policy were recognized as influential in one's decision to report sexual harassment and sexual assault, participants felt the Military Services could only do so much to change individuals' behavior. Individuals' experiences and upbringing were described as a major factor in one's ability to recognize sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as their willingness to report inappropriate behavior.

Most participants indicated that sexual assault has a greater likelihood of being reported than sexual harassment. Some also thought that sexual harassment was more likely to be addressed outside of the official reporting system. Participants sometimes found it difficult to identify sexual harassment and suspected this might contribute to underreporting of harassment. Sexual assault, on the other hand, was clearly defined and recognizable to participants. Many individuals noted the definition of sexual harassment is ambiguous and can mean different things to different people.

Participants were also asked if a bystander was more likely to report compared with a victim/survivor. Opinions were varied as to which group reports more often, and discussions largely focused on efforts to increase bystander reporting. There was no clear trend among the focus groups suggesting that bystanders or victims/survivors reported more frequently compared with the other. Some participants described how victims/survivors were more likely than bystanders to report, but others thought bystanders would be more likely to report because there are fewer consequences if they report compared with a victim/survivor. Many participants thought that bystander reporting has increased as a result of training on bystander intervention. A few men described how penalizing the failure to report sexual harassment or sexual assault has increased reporting. A few individuals thought training on bystander intervention was likely to decrease incidents of sexual harassment or sexual assault but not necessarily increase reporting of those incidents.

Participants were asked about the role one's peers play in encouraging or discouraging the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Participants described how peer pressure could be a useful force in encouraging someone to report sexual harassment or sexual assault. On the other hand, some participants described how peers who are accepting of inappropriate behavior could discourage reporting. There was a perception that sexual harassment victims and sexual assault survivors often weighed the risks of reporting, one of which was the loss of privacy. Participants noted that it could be difficult to keep cases of sexual harassment or sexual assault private. Concern that one's peers might learn about one's case was often identified as a barrier to reporting. Participants emphasized the importance of having the option of restricted reports to facilitate the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. However, men and women highlighted flaws in the restricted reporting process that could lead to a report becoming unrestricted. Concerns about a potential confidentiality breach could reduce reporting.

Many men and women emphasized the importance of their command in cultivating an environment that encourages the reporting of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Participants observed that efforts by one's chain of command to address sexual harassment and sexual assault were highly visible and could inspire confidence in those considering reporting. Many participants said it was important to be able to trust one's command. Without trust, individuals might be less likely to report because they might lack confidence that anything would be done. A few men and women described how sexual harassment and sexual assault by leaders could erode trust in the chain of command and discourage individuals from reporting. Some men and women described how removing one's immediate chain of command from the restricted reporting process has helped encourage reporting. They noted that the restricted reporting process has helped those who lacked trust in their leadership, were concerned about bias or inaction, or were embarrassed to report to their superiors. A small number of women observed that women might be more willing to report sexual harassment or sexual assault if someone in their chain of command was also a woman. Female leaders were viewed as being more likely to address inappropriate behavior.

Many men and women reported that the rank of the offender could decrease the likelihood of someone reporting sexual harassment or sexual assault. Reporting peers was regarded as being considerably easier. Participants noted that some individuals might be dissuaded

from reporting out of fear the accused would make life difficult or take action against them. Participants indicated there was a perception that higher ranking individuals were more credible than lower ranking ones. Fear that no one would believe a junior Service member might decrease reporting.

Opinions about the influence of social media varied among Service members. Participants were more likely to say social media would be more likely to discourage rather than encourage the likelihood of reporting. Service members spoke about how social media could be used to blackmail or slander individuals who are contemplating reporting. Social media could also be used as a form of retribution to revictimize someone who has already reported an act of sexual harassment or sexual assault, therefore deterring others from following suit; this theme was more commonly reported among women. Social media could affect whether a report is restricted or unrestricted, sometimes without the awareness of the victim/survivor. Service members described how social media has made it hard to keep incidents and reporting private. Service members were less likely to say that social media could have a positive impact in encouraging reporting of sexual harassment or sexual assault; however, they did describe some positive aspects. For example, social media could be used by victims/survivors to share their experiences and encourage others to stand up for themselves and could encourage victims/survivors who are feeling vulnerable or alone to speak up. Some Service members believed that social media had no impact on reporting. Participants described how social media could be used in positive or negative ways after a report of sexual harassment or sexual assault has been filed, such as to paint the victim/survivor in a negative light, to show support for the victim/survivor, or to show how offenders were held accountable, which could encourage other victims/survivors to report.

The Impact of Social Media on Military Service Members

The Wellness Working Group studied a new topic in 2015, the impact of social media on military Service members: issues addressed included how social media are used, military culture surrounding social media, changes in attitudes over time toward social media, advantages and disadvantages to using social media, policies and training around their use, and the impact of social media on bullying, harassment, and gender-integration efforts. DACOWITS conducted 30 focus groups on the topic of social media in 2015. It is worth noting that many participants talked about social media use among “younger” Service members, but they did not define this age group. Participants were provided with the following definition of social media for this discussion: “Social media consists of web pages where users, like you, generate the content for dissemination. Examples of social media include websites for social bookmarking, social news (Reddit), social networking (Facebook, Twitter), social photo and video sharing (Tumblr, Vine, YouTube), messaging (Snapchat) and wikis (Wikipedia).” This section provides a summary of the 2015 focus group discussions on the topic of social media and is organized into the following sections:

- Current Landscape Around Social Media
- The Double-Edged Sword: Advantages and Disadvantages to Using Social Media
- Understanding of Social Media Policies and Guidelines
- Assessment of Social Media Training
- The Impact of Social Media on Bullying and Sexual Harassment
- The Impact of Social Media on Gender Integration

A summary is included at the end of this section.

Current Landscape Around Social Media

Participants were asked to discuss the ways Service members use social media. Though not something specifically asked about, they also described social media's increasing popularity over time, particularly among younger Service members. Participants also shared perceptions about the relationship between military culture and social media.

Service Member Use of Social Media

Across groups, participants confirmed that Service members used social media for both personal and professional reasons. They discussed using a range of social media sites and platforms, including the following:

- Facebook⁷ (the most commonly mentioned)
- Twitter⁸
- Snapchat⁹
- Instagram¹⁰
- Tinder and other dating sites
- YouTube¹¹
- Reddit¹²
- Special-interest military pages, sites, and blogs¹³

As shown in Table G.2, 90 percent of all participants who were in the social media focus groups had a personal account on at least one social media outlet that they accessed at least once a week.

⁷A social networking site that allows users to create profiles, exchange messages, build networks of friends and fans, and share content

⁸A social networking site that allows users to create "microblogs" by sending short messages of 140 or fewer characters (known as "tweets") that are immediately distributed to their network of followers

⁹A text-, photo-, and video-messaging application for mobile devices that allows users to send messages that will disappear 1–10 seconds after receipt

¹⁰A social networking site that allows users to take pictures and videos with their mobile devices, edit the pictures with filters, and share them with friends and followers on a variety of other social networking sites

¹¹ An online video community that allows users to upload video content, share that content, and view the content uploaded by others

¹² An entertainment, social networking, and news site where registered users can submit content such as texts, posts, or direct links and vote on each submission to determine its rank on the site

¹³A blog is a self-published diary or commentary that allows the user to make entries as often as desired about any subject. Blogs vary in length and can include photos, links to other websites, or other types of media.

Table G.2. Social Media Use Among Participants in Social Media Focus Groups

	Women		Total (Men and Women)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Do you have a personal account on at least one social media outlet that you access at least once a week?				
Yes	137	94%	268	90%
No	9	6%	31	10%
Total	146	100%	299	100%
Missing	4		8	

Increased Use of Social Media

Service members were also asked to comment on how the attitudes and culture around social media changed since they first joined the Military Services. Virtually all participants agreed social media usage had become common in recent years, and many noted the rapid increase in use since they had joined the Service.

“I remember when the Commandant first got Facebook and now it is not a big deal. There has been a lot of change and acceptance toward it.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“In terms of the culture, it’s grown. It’s becoming more acceptable [and] usual for Twitter to be part of your day. Get on Facebook, send a message to your [unit].”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“[Social media] didn’t exist when I first started, so it has changed considerably.”

— Male Officer

Generational Differences in Social Media Use

Most participants felt younger people used social media more frequently than older people did. They commented on the challenges associated with managing the newest Service members, who grew up in an era where social media were common and had different opinions on what was appropriate to share online.

“There has been a change in demographics. We [in this focus group] are all in our late 20s, but for younger people, their ideas of what they can release information-wise is different.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Kids these days don’t know the limits of saying too much. Who the [expletive] wants to know half the things people are sharing? The young [Service members] don’t understand the concept of too much information.”

— Male Officer

“I think that because social media is so prevalent in society . . . the younger folks have grown up with it; they don’t think twice about it. It’s normal, and they don’t think about . . . the seriousness of what they’re putting out there.”

— Male Officer

Older Service members also used social media, but several focus group participants talked about the limits of their usage.

“For [my subordinates], being on their phone and connected to Internet is like second nature, but I feel like that’s a waste of my time. I try to tell them, the human connection is way better than the 1,000 friends¹⁴ you have on Facebook.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“My engagement with social media is very passive at best. . . . What we use at our age and our position will be different than the [initial entry training] clientele.”

— Male Officer

“You get kids who are [ages] 17, 18, and you’re comparing that to people who have been in the military for years. I think it’s just an adjustment period. I know people who are older use social media on the outside. They just know how and when to use it.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Changing Standards of Professional Communication

Some senior Service members commented on the changing standards of professional communication among their more junior staff. They felt that social media and electronic communications, while favored by some younger Service members, were less effective than other types of interaction.

“How you interact with [other Service members] is so important, but now it is all about social media. They are so awkward when you try to communicate with them face-to-face. They have lost all sense of how to interact with people if a phone or computer is not between them.”

— Female Officer

“I’ll have a [subordinate] send me an email and he or she is sitting less than 50 feet away. Did you really just send me an email?”

— Female Officer

“You can see some people talking more on social media than they do face-to-face. They think on their phone or laptop or Twitter that they feel more comfortable. I’ve never understood it, I never will.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

¹⁴A person who is a part of another user’s network on a social networking site

Transforming How Service Members Learn and Obtain Information

Some senior focus group participants felt social media has changed the way younger Service members learn.

“It’s making them take the easy way out. Instead of looking up the information or networking, they go to the website because they expect everything to be given to them on a silver platter.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“Before social media and the Internet, if a boss asked you a question, you’d lock yourself in a closet with the manuals until you discovered [the answer] because you wanted to have this knowledge. Now, I’m ok with the fact that my [subordinate] doesn’t care about the inner workings. He will find the answer quickly online with a highlighted manual. I will not get an education out of him—I’ll just get an answer. That changes our teaching a bit . . . it is a different mindset.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“So, we have a [Military Occupational Specialty-specific] page. And they will post¹⁵ ‘Where do you find this information?’ instead of looking it up in the publication, instead of learning more than just ‘Go to page five.’”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

A few junior Service members confirmed they used social media and technology to support their learning.

“There is a generational gap with social media. We all go through that phase of thinking old guys don’t know. When you can look everything up on Google, you can know if everything is right. You take the word of the Internet over people in leadership positions; that is one of the challenges.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

A Platform for Complaints

Service members noticed that social media outlets were increasingly being used to “vent” about their jobs or things that are not going well. Participants perceived this to be especially common among younger Service members.

“Social media gives you a blanket of security to sit behind a wall and gripe and complain about your duties. They think, ‘Let me put it on Facebook.’ It is a way to vent without going through a supervised event.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

¹⁵Content, in any format, placed on a website

“I saw a situation where a member was having a hard week and went on Facebook and made comments about the senior staff . . .”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I don’t think you should vent publicly; you should probably talk to someone. But. . . you need that kind of release in some way. For people who can’t talk to anyone I guess I can see them turning to the Internet.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I see people using it as a venting tool. It’s getting harder to separate yourself as a person, and people are posting things that can put the Service in a bad light . . .”

— Male Officer

Military Culture and Social Media

Many focus group participants talked about challenges faced by the Military Services as a culture, organization, and employer to keep up with social media advances.

“The military is playing catch-up to the changing culture.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Even if leaders get frustrated with technology, it’s not going anywhere. You’re going to have to embrace it. We just have to become smarter about how we monitor these programs.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“Our culture, right now, is changing. We are becoming more [involved with] social media . . .”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I feel like we are stumbling as an organization. We don’t want to be left behind and we want to jump on [social media] but we don’t know how.”

— Male Officer

The Double-Edged Sword: Advantages And Disadvantages to Using Social Media

DACOWITS asked Service members to share perceived advantages and disadvantages of using social media in the Military Services. Several participants described social media as a double-edged sword with unique pros and cons.

“Anything that is invented could be used for bad and good. You can put something out there to gain camaraderie, to gain friends . . . but it can also be used horribly.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“It gets information out quickly, but . . . that’s twofold, good and bad.”

— Female Officer

“Social media is a good person’s megaphone and a coward’s shield. Half of people say we are doing good things . . . other folks do the opposite . . .”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I think social media is double-sided. . . . [It] highlights both the bad and the good. Unfortunately, some people ruin it for everyone.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Advantages to Using Social Media for Service Members

Focus group participants discussed several perceived advantages to social media in the Military Services.

Supporting Communication With Service Members

Many participants felt that social media assisted with communication; because a large number of Service members were connected to social media, it was another tool that could be used to disseminate information and make contact.

“Our [senior leader] actually made a Twitter account and it was mandatory for us to all follow¹⁶ him. . . . At first we thought it was ridiculous, but, actually, it has helped communication. It’s a lot better way for him to communicate with command. When he posts something, everyone is on their phone anyways, so now they just get a little update and we get the news right there.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“[Social media are] a good way to get the right information, and I think it’s a more effective tool than some of the other avenues. We’re not at work all the time, so the emails they send to our work address we don’t get. But if we ‘like’¹⁷ the right page, we can get the information.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“That’s the fastest way to get information now. Old-school ways don’t really work anymore.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Reaching People Quickly

One way participants used social media for communication was to reach Service members quickly, particularly when other means of communication were ineffective.

“I have used Facebook to communicate with other guys in my unit when other means were not as fast or not working.”

— Male Officer

¹⁶The act of signing up to receive updates or messages from another user

¹⁷A feature in social networking services, Internet forums, and blogs that allows users to express that they enjoy or support certain content

“On my last deployment, I said, “I need somebody to contact me,” and someone reached out to me. . . . I had to reach out to social media because I wasn’t able to get help from lines in the U.S. It helped me complete a mission.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“We used it a lot . . . to get in touch with people who were deployed or out on missions. ‘Hey, you’re coming back on Wednesday, can you do this mission on Saturday?’ or ‘When are you coming back? Does your wife need help?’ I don’t know how else to get in touch with people who are deployed.”

— Female Officer

“[Facebook] is the quicker way to get in contact than email . . . If someone is stateside and they have a Facebook, the first thing they are going to check is their Facebook.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Sharing of Logistical Information

Additionally, many focus group participants mentioned that social media supported the sharing of routine logistical information like weather alerts or delayed openings.

“You can get messages about weather, construction. When the gate [to the installation] was closed, you might not have gotten that [information without social media].”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I was in the Child Development Office and had to update people on child development center delays. I was able to inform them about that [using social media].”

— Female Officer

“It can be helpful. Like this winter when the base was delayed for weather.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Allowing for Official Military Pages

Participants said that the Military Services often used official social media pages to communicate and boost morale among Service members, as well as to share updates with families and friends; for example, during deployments.

“My [unit] has a Facebook page. They try to post anything positive that we do. It is used sparingly, but well. I think it boosts morale.”

— Male Officer

“My unit has a Facebook page. I think most people do. If a unit is deployed, then I can see what they are up to.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“We were gone nine months on deployment, and every week our [leader] had a note updating our friends and families. He posted pictures and updates on our advancements and awards . . . so that was good. It can be motivating.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Promoting Military Efforts to the Public

Another perceived benefit of official military pages and general military presence on social media was that they could be used to share positive information about the Military Services with the broader public in a transparent manner.

“You can show . . . the world what we are doing and that their tax dollars are working. You can use it for recruiting purposes. . . . We can be transparent and show the public what we do.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“It is a good thing for us. . . . Now there is social media, people can see us out there. We still get ‘What do you guys do?’, but it is good for us to be compared to other branches, they see what we are doing, we are a part of the Armed Forces.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“[Our installation] is good about posting and educating and staying up with current events like pictures of graduations. It shows transparency. Think that’s really what it [social media] was meant for.”

— Female Officer

Facilitating Supportive Online Communities

Participants felt social media could help Service members to connect with online communities, which could be a source of information and support for women and other minority groups, particularly for those who may not be able to connect face-to-face.

“There is a [social media] group I was added to called ‘Women in the [Service]’ and they put what women have achieved; they give inspiration about what you can achieve; it is a cute page.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I’m part of a group on Facebook . . . which is a support network for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) within the [Service]. They talk about safe places to live when transferring and conferences coming up.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

One focus group participant discussed a group that had been formed to help Service members dealing with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression.

“We had a rash of suicides. We formed a Facebook group and are up to 900 members. It’s really brought together a multigenerational group to prevent these suicides. When people get out of the [Service] after deployment, that’s where we see a lot of the suicides. That’s when we use social media to our advantage because we saw failures at multiple levels to deal with guys with PTSD and other issues. Just in the month this has been running, I’ve seen all kinds of help for guys. It can be a huge tool for good.”

— Male Officer

Other online communities focus on support and information related to specific job positions.

“I’m a [career field] and there are [others in my career field] in one Facebook group.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“There’s a page to connect social workers across the [Service].”

— Female Officer

Helping Service Members Stay in Touch

With frequent deployments and transfers, it can be challenging for Service members to communicate with their families and former colleagues. Most focus group participants felt using social media was a helpful way to keep in touch with others.

Most focus group participants felt social media were helpful to maintain contact with family members and friends.

“I use [social media] . . . to keep in touch with family and friends that I grew up with. Just personal family stuff, posting pictures of kids and stuff I do outside of work.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I know when I was stationed in [an overseas location] for two years, me and my wife used Facebook video messaging. . . . That was our marriage for two years, Facebook video messaging.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I used mine in [an overseas location]. My friends and family got to know what I was doing and got to know I was okay. They could see pictures of me and my friends.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Focus group participants also discussed using social media to correspond with their friends and colleagues in the Military Services.

“I’m being transferred quite a bit, so I use social media to keep up with other Service members. I don’t want to call all the time; your time off is precious. . . . Social media, whether Twitter or Facebook or Instagram, it is a nice way to check up on friends and congratulate them when they hit milestones and see where they are going.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“We move so often that it’s hard to keep connections [with colleagues]. Social media makes it easier.”

— Male Officer

“Before social media, I would be in a unit and would transfer, and that was it. Now with social media, I can keep those people in contact.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

A few focus group participants said they not only kept in touch with former military colleagues but also used those contacts for professional networking and mentoring.

“I have served on different units . . . and being able to reach out to my buddies that are all over is great. My buddy got me a job at [corporation] he helped me out incredibly, and it was as simple as just reaching out online. You can lose touch with some of these people you serve with, you know, going to [different military installations worldwide] so I think it is positive, sometimes, the use of social media.”

— Male Officer

“It’s one way to keep in touch [with other Service members]. Two days ago I got in touch with [someone I served with] three years ago. He had turned down [a position] and we talked on Facebook about it. It’s a good way to stay in contact and keep your networking up. He made the decision, but I helped him. I try to keep one or two people from each unit in contact with Facebook.”

— Male Officer

“I use it for most mentors that have left the [Service]. . . . It helps you stay connected.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Disadvantages to Using Social Media for Service Members

In addition to the benefits Service members described, they mentioned several disadvantages to using social media.

Potentially Compromising Security

Security concerns were the most commonly cited disadvantage for using social media. Participants commented on the potentially high stakes involved; some information, if posted online, could compromise the safety of Service members or the completion of a mission.

“The last time I was deployed in Afghanistan, there was a [Service member] that had aerial photos of his life at a [base]. This guy—he should be tried for treason—he posted all the stuff. . . . That [base] got attacked. I don’t know if it was related, but there were [Service members] who died in that.”

— Male Officer

“Some [Service members] made a music video of a Britney Spears song and posted a video. But, some of the clips had barriers and flight lines. A week after the video was posted, there was an attack on the camp. . . . That’s how people found out, or so it is assumed. The events can’t be connected, but it is guessed that they are more than related.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“People want to use their cell phone and check in and say ‘Look at me! I am ok!’ but they are giving away our position. You have DoD members in danger because of it.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Service members commented on the threat of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), in particular, monitoring social media.

“We have ISIS looking at our social media pages; there is a rumor they are targeting families. . . . I started taking a lot of that stuff away. I have buddies totally off social media for that reason. Terrorists use social media against us.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“We can’t put too much on there because of ISIS. You can’t post anything that will garner the attention of a lone wolf . . . if you post anything military related, then it could share information that we don’t want to be made public or that could help our enemies.”

— Female Officer

“I had a person. There was so much information about her out there that a terrorist could have used that information against her in a hostage situation. ISIS has Twitter, ISIS is on Facebook.”

— Male Officer

Service members also noted the potential hazards of geotagging.¹⁸

“I had a friend that was deployed get in trouble for posting pictures. . . . The geotags shared the dates and times of where he was.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I have a buddy that [announces when he arrives somewhere], and it will show the geolocation. So, not only did he say where he is, but now it has a geolocation tag identifying the exact location. . . . I comment every time, ‘Take it off’ or ‘COMSEC’ (communications security).”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Negatively Portraying Military Services to the Public

Many focus group participants worried about the speed with which negative social media content from Service members could be disseminated to the public and the public’s reaction to that content.

¹⁸Linking geographical information to photos and other content

“It’s terrible; it’s a public outlet that is no longer just between the sender and the receiver; it’s with everyone. People feel the need to share everything, and it is one post away from being national news.”

— Male Officer

“It makes it public, it is not just you and another person, now [it’s] everyone you’re friends with. . . . It spreads like a virus; everyone sees it instantly.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“They tend to forget that it is public and that people can get into trouble for stupid stuff. . . . They forget that they are not just venting, they are venting to the world, and it will come back to you.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“People are posting negative things about the military and civilians see that. What makes them believe in you if we go to war? Why should they trust you to save their life? It makes them not trust the military at all.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

While transparency may be considered a positive aspect of social media, a few senior Service members expressed concern that thanks to social media, it was harder to conceal negative behavior than it was when they were younger.

“I think we did worse things prior to social media. . . . Now that it’s seen so quickly by millions of people, you have to handle it differently. When it’s out in view of the public, it’s not as tolerable.”

— Male Officer

Promoting Fraternization

Service members must adhere to rules against fraternization. Focus group participants, particularly higher ranking individuals, were concerned that social media might erode these boundaries.

“I think [social media] undermines our chain of command. I always get [some lower ranking Service member] who wants to be my friend [on social media] . . . and that’s a horrible idea.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“The biggest disadvantage is that type of environment seems to trump fraternization. When I have a [Service member] who is friends with a [lower ranking Service member] on Facebook, then people start to think they’re friends.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“It adds another layer, too, because then there is fraternization. The whole thing of when you have your first [subordinate] try to friend you on Facebook. You are thinking to yourself . . . should I friend him or her?”

— Female Officer

Interfering With Formal Channels of Communication

Several focus group participants commented on the importance of using formal channels of communication for sensitive situations and how social media could obstruct those tested processes. A few focus group participants also mentioned ways official job-related information, such as promotions, could be disseminated prematurely through social media.

A few male focus group participants who had served in combat discussed ways that information about wounded or killed Service members spread through social media. Sometimes, this information was incorrect since it had not always been verified through official channels.

“When I was blown up in combat, that’s what happened to me. My name was on Facebook as a [Service member who] was killed.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“The only time I’ve been livid with Facebook is when [Service members] were killed and the word got out too soon.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“The wife of a Service member found out her husband died in a helicopter crash from social media before someone was able to properly notify her.”

— Male Officer)

“Someone put out a post on Facebook that a [Service member] was killed, and it was the wrong [Service member].”

— Male Officer

Lowering Morale

Some focus group participants felt that social media harmed morale and cohesiveness among Service members. This was more commonly mentioned among higher ranking groups.

“I have a serious estrogen problem in the office. These young girls are always fighting over something and saying things about each other [on social media].”

— Female Officer

“I see it in my office—it is destroying relationships, which then affects the unit . . .”

— Female Officer

“When I went through [training] in 2004, it was not prevalent. . . . A [Service member] would not have been by himself, he would have been with other [Service members]. . . . Now in combat zones, I can go off patrol and go internal and use Facebook. We don’t connect as [Service members] like they used to. . . . I think that is a real negative thing.”

— Male Officer

Distracting From Work

Some focus group participants felt social media prevented Service members from being productive in the workplace.

“I wish we saw a chart of productivity and how it fell when . . . Facebook [began].”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“At my old command, you could have cell phones, and everyone was always on them. At my new command, you can’t have cell phones at all, and it is so great. We get so much more work done.”

— Female Officer

“I think that’s a distraction. . . . When you’re on [social media] at work, you could be doing a lot of other things besides checking your Facebook. . . . We have a lot to do. I think it would be good if we refocused.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Permitting Sites That Portray Service Members Negatively

Across Services, there were a number of websites and social media pages mentioned that contain potentially derogatory or negative content. Some of these sites and pages are discussed further in this section, as they pertain to sexual harassment.

“How many times has [a military website made by former and active duty Service members] been banned on Facebook? The stuff that is on there is just so bad; it is not building morale. It is tearing people down.”

— Male Officer

“The thing that I see that affects morale is the [satirical social media page targeting a particular Service]. This is a Facebook page where servicemen post pictures. There was one here at [installation] where the [Service member] was sleeping on duty and holding a [weapon].”

— Female Officer

“There’s a Facebook site, [Installation] Confessions. I told a [high-level Service member], ‘Read what’s going on, on your base.’ Just to hear how people are behaving . . . they say things like, ‘Hey, my husband deployed, think I’m going to go sleep with my neighbor.’”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Biasing First Impressions of Incoming Personnel

Several focus group participants noted that social media could disadvantage new Service members joining a team or unit. For example, others could find the new person's profile on social media and form opinions about him/her before he/she arrives, which could create a challenging work environment.

"I am getting ready to check into a command, and I guarantee somebody is already digging into my Facebook, my Instagram, and are contacting my friends to get information. . . . They look at you and your Facebook and they use it against you, someday somehow."

— Junior Enlisted Woman

"People are looking at their [incoming Service members] before they arrive and passing judgment on them. One member in particular has tattoos and has the pictures on Facebook, but when she met the person face-to-face, she covered them up so you couldn't see them. And his comment to her was 'Oh, I thought you were more of a party girl.'"

— Senior Enlisted Woman

"I consider it an issue. The joke about Facebook stalking. When someone gets orders, everyone looks them up on Facebook, and if they're pretty they make a judgment about what type of female that person is going to be before they report. I know more than once, I walked into my office, and they had this girl's Facebook up . . . so Facebook is a way to judge your [Service members] before they arrive."

— Female Officer

Understanding of Social Media Policies and Guidelines

Focus group participants had varying opinions about military social media policies. Some felt very confident that policies existed, while others felt there were still many ambiguities to address. Participants also shared their opinions about unacceptable uses of social media. Many participants acknowledged some degree of confusion or inconsistency related to social media policies. Participants shared their views on how social media could allow leaders to monitor subordinates in new ways and had mixed opinions on whether the Military Services should control social media use and how policies and guidelines were being enforced.

Belief That Social Media Use Was Largely Covered by Broader Policies Governing Conduct

Senior Service members noted that social media usage is governed at least partially through broader policies pertaining to general conduct areas like communications. Several participants specifically referenced the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

"There doesn't need to be separate rules for social media because the UCMJ rules are already there. . . . It's almost more of a kiss of death to do it on social media and someone can turn you in for it."

— Female Officer

“There’s OPSEC (operations security) guidelines and [branch-specific instruction]. There’s a critical information list about items you’re just not allowed to put out there.”

— Female Officer

“We have our equal opportunity classes, our [sexual harassment and assault program] classes. We brief them on websites and stuff that has been put out there. We tell them what they can and cannot put on websites.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“You can be prosecuted under the UCMJ if you post some stuff on Facebook.”

— Female Officer

Some participants’ comments, however, suggested these policies could be difficult to apply to social media; they recognized the challenges leaders faced in deciding when online behavior violated policy or UCMJ, and if it did, how to address it.

“Yes, the way that you can handle these situations, it depends on the seriousness of the offenses. If there’s nothing under the UCMJ, you can still take administrative action to hold the person accountable for what they put on social media. If it violates UCMJ, you can start looking, depending on the seriousness, [to file a] violation of lawful order; you may go Article 15 [non-judicial punishment], or you may go court martial . . .”

— Male Officer

Common Beliefs About Unacceptable Uses of Social Media

Most participants confirmed that certain behaviors were unacceptable given the standard expectations of conduct for Service members.

Wearing Military Uniform in Unofficial Capacity

Focus group participants agreed that Service members should not express certain opinions or demonstrate certain behaviors while in uniform, including in photos or videos on social media.

“You got men and women that wear a uniform every single day, but they want to degrade it by showing half-naked bodies . . . or wearing their uniform while breaking the rules. It completely discredits the military and it is completely ridiculous.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I think unacceptable is like when people are wearing their uniform unbuttoned or posing . . . hat backwards [on social media]. . . . Some people care about the uniform, and these people are ruining it for everyone.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“When people were stomping on the American flag [on social media]. To represent that while you also represent this uniform, you can’t.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“The last big crackdown was during the ice bucket challenge.¹⁹ They cracked down because people were doing it [in uniform]. They couldn’t do it in uniform.”

— Male Officer

Being Disrespectful of the President of the United States or Chain of Command

It also goes against rules of conduct to speak out against the Commander-in-Chief and higher ranking Service members. Focus group participants discussed ways that Service members might violate this rule on social media.

“There are so many in active duty that will bash the President and people in Washington. I won’t [‘like’ the post] even if I agree because it’s stuff we’re not supposed to voice.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“They shouldn’t be able to say negative things about the President [on social media] because he’s the Commander-in-Chief.”

— Female Officer

“They don’t get that if they sit on their computer and bash a political figure, it looks bad since they are serving our country. They don’t get that they should not be bashing their Commander-in-Chief. Not allowed to do that, ever! . . . You need to respect yourself, your friends, your uniform, and your country. If you can’t do that, then you shouldn’t be here and you shouldn’t be on social media.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Expressing Political Opinions

Finally, focus group participants mentioned that Service members should not express political views when identified as military personnel, including when they are on social media.

“You are not allowed to say ‘I am a [Service member] and this is my political view.’”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“[Service members] can be too political [on social media]. . . . When it comes up, you have to do something about it.”

— Male Officer

“People know that you’re in [the military]. If I disagree with an opinion on a public page, they can find out I’m military. For my personal opinion, off duty hours, I can get in trouble at work.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“You can’t campaign for a political candidate or protest [on social media].”

— Junior Enlisted Man

¹⁹An activity involving publicly allowing a bucket of ice water to be dumped on one’s head to promote awareness of the disease amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and to encourage donations to research. This was a popular topic on social media during summer 2014.

Perception of Guidelines Rather Than Policies on Social Media Use

Many service members referred to guidance and recommendations, rather than strict official policies, on social media usage they have received.

“Some commands have you sign an [acknowledgement form] on proper use of social media. There are some rules, and the things they don’t put rules on are recommendations on what you should and shouldn’t post and why.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“There’s a CO’s (commanding officer’s) handbook specifically for social media. That’s [Service]-wide.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“They have guidance on what you should and shouldn’t post—not a strict policy for ‘You can’t do this and have to do that’ because it is your personal life. Other than certain things.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“There is a social media handbook that has guidance on recommended security settings.”

— Male Officer

Lack of Clarity Surrounding Policies and Guidelines

Many focus group participants indicated that existing policies and guidelines pertaining to social media were unclear, inconsistent, or poorly communicated.

“Rules on social media tend to change when the leadership changes. When I initially came to this [installation], you couldn’t have your phone out at all. Then people would have their phones out, on the Internet all the time. Now they’re starting to crack down again.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“There’s very vague guidance about what you can post on social media. There’s not a lot of guidance which makes people unsure.”

— Female Officer

“There could be more transparency as far as policies regarding us as members and what is ok and what is not ok and what the repercussions are.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I believe we do have regulations . . . but we don’t provide the education on the policy nor do we advertise that the policy exists and this is where there is an issue.”

— Male Officer

Some were unsure whether social media policies or guidance existed at all.

“There are no clear rules on how to deal with people in the military and social media.”

— Female Officer

“How are people accountable [on social media]? Where can I read what you can't do?”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I think we're walking a fine line without guidance right now.”

— Female Officer

Social Media Could Allow for Leaders to Monitor Subordinates in New Ways

Many participants across groups noted social media provided new ways to monitor Service members' behavior and ensure their compliance with relevant policies.

“Supervisors will friend you to see what you're doing.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“You can't stop them from using public sites, but I have the [Service members] in my unit somewhere on my social media. Like, on my Facebook, if they post something questionable, I let them know. I'll shoot them a text.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I chose to friend my [Service members] in Afghanistan. I took over a very badly fractured section who didn't trust anyone, and they were stressed out. . . . It was the only way I could know what was going on.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

However, monitoring requires time and resources that may not be available.

“The problem I see for OPSEC (operations security) is that I don't have any authority or control over anyone's Facebook. Say I did have the ‘God permission’—I would need two or three extra people to monitor [their pages].”

— Female Officer

“I was the investigator . . . and lots of people said ‘Hey, my account was hacked’ or ‘I have a scorned lover and I wanna file charges’ but there is very little you can do unless you can get [a Service's Criminal Investigative Service] help to get the IP address and that's, in general, money and time the military isn't willing to spend on it.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Though not a common theme, a few officers in one of the Military Services discussed using social media to monitor emotional well-being and intervene when individuals seem depressed or at risk of suicide.

“We have had several instances . . . where a [Service member] is monitoring a Facebook account, and he is able to intervene because a friend was going to commit suicide. . . . You can deep dive on guys that were below the radar.”

— Male Officer

“We had a suicide . . . but, if you had looked on their Facebook, you would have known. They were depressed and alone and lost. . . . If anyone had looked at their Facebook, they would have known and could have told them to go to counseling.”

— Female Officer

Perceptions on Whether the Military Services Should Control Social Media Use

The majority of participants agreed that being a member of the Military Services is more than a 9-to-5 job; it dictates behavior outside of conventional working hours and, therefore, limits what Service members should be able to post online.

“We have to acknowledge that as members of the military, our service obligations do curtail our freedom of speech more, and we cannot post certain things based on us wearing our uniform.”

— Male Officer

“You sign a contract—24/7. It’s volunteer. Anything you say and do, uniform on or off, electronic or in person, you can and will be held accountable for that.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Though participants generally agreed that Service members are limited in what they could say on social media, some felt the Military Services were limited in their ability to curtail personal social media use.

“You can’t do anything [to take away social media]. You can’t take away freedom of speech. It makes the military look bad unnecessarily.”

— Female Officer

“We can’t take social media away from [Service members]. That’s their personal accounts. Let’s say it comes down through the government that they make it mandatory for all branch Service members not to have accounts, then [shrugs.] But we don’t have that right now.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

While most Service members acknowledged that it would be impossible to get rid of social media, a few wished that they could. They felt that social media were too difficult to control and appropriately regulate.

“I think that, honestly, that they should make a rule about social media. If you are in the military, then you shouldn’t have social media. . . . I know it would never fly, but people have too much trouble separating and understanding what is and is not allowed.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“The whole concept of social media, you give people this lane to voice their opinions. I guarantee you everyone has had a thought that, had we said it aloud or put it on social media, we wouldn’t be here. I think they should do away with all social media.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Perceived Enforcement of Policies and Guidelines

Just as focus group members felt policies and guidelines on social media could be inconsistent, they perceived punishments to be inconsistent or expressed differing opinions about what would result in punishment.

Enforcement of Penalties for Unacceptable Use of Social Media

Some Service members gave examples of policy and guideline enforcement. The punishments varied in their level of severity.

“In my last assignment we gave someone an LOR (Letter of Reprimand) for bashing someone on social media.”

— Female Officer

“I brought a member and his wife in and gave counseling to him about how his wife was bullying people and violating OPSEC (operations security) with information he told her.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“My command just [issued non-judicial punishment to some Service members] for what they said on social media. There was a surge of really derogatory stuff, and that didn’t go unnoticed.”

— Female Officer

“One of our guys got in trouble because he decided to vent about our [Assistant], and he got tracked down, and he got disqualified from receiving the [Service member] of the Year award.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Non-Enforcement of Penalties for Unacceptable Use of Social Media

Some Service members also described situations where they felt a policy or guideline should have been enforced, but was not.

“We had . . . a situation in [overseas location] where someone posted information about where we were. I don’t think anything ever came out of the situation, but what she posted was detrimental to the unit. I can’t say that everyone will always be punished.”

— Female Officer

“How are you going to punish everyone? You may have posted something similar to another person who got in trouble, but how are you going to monitor everyone? I guarantee those that are getting in trouble are not the only ones who wrote or posted something like that.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“It is serious stuff, so I think there needs to be more done. People preach about what not to do, but . . . there are no real repercussions.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Assessment of Social Media Training

Opinions on social media training were mixed. Some focus group participants believed that Service members received sufficient training, while others felt that the training was inadequate or did not address the full spectrum of issues related to social media.

Perception That Service Members Received Adequate Training

Some Service members commented positively on the amount and quality of social media training that they received.

“The [Service] has a yearly training. They do have a portion on training about social media. It pretty much tells to not put any personal information on there, turn off your location, pretty much anything that would help people find you and tell them who you are—that’s what you shouldn’t be posting.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Our training tells us to turn off location services and how to take that off your phone. They do teach us these new things. They are done annually because they are updated. The training is definitely appropriate.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I know they put out something about how to set up your smart phones and stuff so you’re not tracked. That was really educational.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Most focus group participants agreed that the Military Services provided education related to security (including operations security (OPSEC)), in particular.

“The education is good about OPSEC.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Everyone has general OPSEC training. That’s the basic stuff everyone knows, though. That stuff is self-explanatory.”

— Male Officer

Perception That Service Members Did Not Receive Adequate Training

Although some participants felt Service members received adequate training on social media use, many others identified a need for more training or different kinds of training.

“We have cyber awareness training . . . if there is anything in there on social media, I don’t remember it. That is not a good thing.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“When we train on social media, we don’t pull out regulations like other trainings. It’s usually ‘[E9] said not to do this.’ Social media is not going away, and it’s about time we come up with [official regulations] that deal with it.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

While most agreed that Service members received OPSEC training, as discussed above, some questioned the quality of that training. Participants questioned the effectiveness of computer-based training in this area; this was consistent across Services.

“That’s a joke. You just click through . . . you just put the volume on low and do it quickly. There is nothing like official . . . or useful.”

— Female Officer

“[Our OPSEC training is] a waste of time. You can click through and if you have a computer with multiple screens, then you can do your other work at the same.”

— Male Officer

“They give you a bunch of training on COMSEC (communications security) and tell you what not to post. But, I’ll tell you right now, any military training that is [on a web portal] or on the computer, you just click through so you can get back to work.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Family Members Should Receive Training

Several focus group participants, especially senior-ranking participants, pointed out that civilian family members might also need training on appropriate use of social media as it relates to the Military Services.

“I hear from my wife ‘Hey, this person put up ‘Three more hours ‘til my husband leaves . . . Two more hours ‘til he leaves. . . . Two more hours ‘til he gets back.’ I’m like ‘Why are you putting stuff on social media?’ We train the [Service members], but they’re not taking the same training home.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“Spouses need some sort of training.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“[My last unit’s] Facebook page was a place for spouses and family members to air grievances publically . . . everyone could see it. You might have gone to look at something about the unit, but then you see a spouse has said, ‘Why did my husband have to stay late? I want to talk to the commander.’ You need to . . . speak to the [Service member] and their spouse.”

— Female Officer

The Impact of Social Media on Bullying and Sexual Harassment

Focus group participants were asked about the role social media might play in bullying and sexual harassment. Many participants said that social media was used to bully and/or harass, while others said it either did not play a role or was not something the Military Services should regulate.

Perception That Bullying and Sexual Harassment on Social Media Is a Problem

Focus group members’ discussions yielded more examples of sexual harassment than bullying, though many participants noted issues with both. Examples included both individual contact and broader derogatory pages.

Personal Attacks and Harassment

Focus group participants commented on ways that social media were used to target individuals.

“I think cyber bullying is a real thing. It can really affect morale.”

— Male Officer

“It’s much more difficult for the person being harassed because they can’t get away from it, so they are getting barraged even when they leave work.”

— Female Officer

In discussions of sexual harassment and social media, focus group participants were more likely to provide examples of women than men being sexually harassed.

“I have been sexually harassed by my [leader]. He did it to all the females. . . . It was the norm for him to make comments. When he would see your Facebook page, he would come in the next morning and talk about it. I was married and always covered up and stuff. He would come in and say, ‘I wish it was me there instead of your husband in that photo.’ It made my work environment horrible.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“I had an NCO (noncommissioned officer) send a provocative photo to a [Service member] via Snapchat. She complained . . . but Snapchat deletes things after [only a few seconds], so it was his word versus her word.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I had a junior [Service member] who was dating another junior [Service member], but they broke up. Once they broke up, he posted a naked picture of her on the Internet. Everyone got to see her naked body.”

— Female Officer

Derogatory Sites and Content

Sometimes, rather than attacking an individual, bullying or sexual harassment took place through broader forums such as websites or memes.²⁰

“People make memes of every stupid thing and they could tag²¹ someone on it and it could be offensive. They may not think it is bullying, but it is. You can ask them to take it down, but people comment on it and I don’t find it funny. That is another form of bullying.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Female participants from one Service spent time discussing derogatory content targeting women on social media.

“I don’t like to admit this, but there was an article for the [official] division Facebook page, and there was a picture of me, and there were thousands of comments. ‘Why isn’t she in the kitchen?’”

— Female Officer

“On these female-bashing sites . . . I’ve seen a sister on [a page mocking women], and she’s a pretty woman, and the comments—‘Where was she at when I was a [junior Service member]?’”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“They will make memes [with pictures of female Service members] and say like ‘rape time.’”

— Female Officer

“I took a picture of me and my two best friends from overseas and I put it online for my mom to see, and someone took it and put it on this other website. . . . People called us useless [Service members] . . . waste of human life.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Men also discussed these websites and social media pages.

“It’s a website that posts nasty jokes. . . . [They are] funny at times . . . but crude, and there’s pictures of girls with captions that allude to sex or rape.”

— Male Officer

²⁰ A concept that takes the form of an image, catchphrase, hashtag, or video that is spread via the Internet

²¹ Keywords added to a blog post, photo, or video to help users find related topics, people, or media

“ . . . [It’s] degrading of women . . . it’s just a bunch of pictures that [Service members] post that are a bit more provocative pictures of females. . . . That shouldn’t be on there. It’s not stuff I want to see.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Behind-the-Keyboard Bravery

Many focus group participants perceived that bullies or harassers benefited from the distance social media provides from their target; they were more likely to say things that they might not say in person.

“It is faceless bullying and sexual harassment. . . . It is easier to call someone something you would never say to their face . . . With Facebook, now you can hear it more because you can see the pictures and the comments, but there is still that distance or ‘protection.’ It is still faceless. It is still easier to say things.”

— Male Officer

“Bravery behind the keyboard. You can’t see the person, so you can say whatever you want to people.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“You don’t have to stand behind your words anymore. Back in my day, people knew you were a bully. You got [called out] when you were a bully. But now, you can hide behind your computer.”

— Male Officer

“It’s the visibility factor. You can say pretty much whatever you want and not feel guilty. If I am sitting here talking to her, I won’t make fun of her. . . . I’d rather do it on Facebook where she can’t punch me in the face.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Perception That Bullying and Sexual Harassment on Social Media Is Not a Problem

A number of focus group participants felt that bullying and sexual harassment on social media were not major issues. This feeling seemed to apply to social media bullying, in particular, which a few participants appeared to equate with youth and a high school mentality.

“I think that’s more high school, not for us. . . . There’s a lot of accountability, so it doesn’t happen.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I have not seen any bullying or harassment on social media. People who are doing it . . . confront that person by themselves. They won’t put it on social media where everyone can see it.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Perceived Role of the Military Services in Addressing Bullying and Harassment on Social Media

Focus group participants who believed that social media were used for bullying and harassment had different opinions about whether the Military Services should address the problem.

Responsibility of the Harassed Party to Stop Bullying and Harassment

A few focus group participants felt that victims of online bullying or harassment could avoid the issue by simply blocking the offender or otherwise ending contact with him or her; these individuals felt it was the victim's responsibility to prevent being bullied.

"If you are cyber bullied, then I would cut it off. I would not participate. I don't get how it happens because why would people let it happen? Just shut off the computer."

— Junior Enlisted Man

"If people are posting things on the [Facebook] wall²² that are offensive to you, you should defriend them and move on."

— Male Officer

A few participants also thought victims could be blamed for the problem if they posted pictures or things they should not have posted.

"You shouldn't post pictures of yourself in a bikini and then not expect the guys you work with to comment."

— Junior Enlisted Woman

"How do you sexually harass someone on social media? I think I am just trying to get an idea, because if someone puts a picture up and another posts '[expletive] you look sexy' then is it harassment because they put the inappropriate picture up in the first place?"

— Junior Enlisted Man

"To me, I see the females that get sexually harassed on social media are the ones that do things they shouldn't. A lot that I do see is people putting themselves out there to be sexually harassed. It's not right, but you shouldn't present yourself that way."

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Use of Social Media by the Military Services as Evidence

Many participants agreed that social media could be used as evidence in cases of online bullying and harassment in instances where the Military Services gets involved in addressing the situation.

²²The portion of a Facebook page that displays a user's updates and comments

“I think it has helped. . . . People are so dedicated and involved in social media [that] it is easier to prove when someone says or does something inappropriate. You can see the Tweet or Facebook post. You can see if someone checked in.²³ There is a footprint there. Social media has helped [the prosecution of] sexual harassment in terms of being able to document that it exists.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“You can get a screenshot²⁴ of them harassing you and you saying ‘Stop messaging me’ and them continuing. That is one good thing about social media, it makes providing evidence easier.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I think it is great because [social media] creates a record that we may not have had before. Now if someone is being bullied or harassed through social media, then there is documentation and evidence that can tie down to the case.”

— Male Officer

The Impact of Social Media on Gender Integration

During the focus groups, Committee members asked participants to share their opinions on how social media might be used to support gender integration. Responses were mixed, with participants identifying both positive and negative ways social media could affect this effort.

Social Media Could Promote Integration Success Stories and Raise Awareness

Several focus group participants discussed positive ways that social media could support gender integration, such as highlighting examples of women who had excelled in a male-dominated field or disseminating information about gender integration changes.

“I would say have articles about women doing amazing things. Show women doing amazing things that men can’t do.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“Having it out there and showing men and women working side-by-side and that it is ok that the world didn’t burn down. That everyone is trusted. Social media has potential to be very positive.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Show the benefits and the milestones they’re making with gender integration. Like the steppingstones they’re making. Showcase just how far we’ve come.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

²³When a user shares his or her location with friends and followers

²⁴An image of the display of a person’s computer screen or mobile device

Social Media Could Lead to Backlash Against Gender Integration

Even in groups that discussed positive uses for social media in gender integration, participants noted ways social media could be used as part of a negative backlash or to highlight women's challenges.

"It's great as long as the women are doing well, but as soon as they start to fail, it's fodder for the men to say they never should have been there."

— Female Officer

"With social media, it is going to be harder to integrate. When someone, specifically a female, fails in a unit, believe that there are 20 phones recording it."

— Male Officer

"It would be like having this conversation [about gender integration], but with millions of people and no guidelines."

— Junior Enlisted Man

"There are already sites talking crap about . . . dependents and female [Service members]. Now you're going to add at least five more sites talking about female integration."

— Senior Enlisted Man

Summary

Participants were asked to discuss the ways Service members use social media. Though it was not something raised by the Committee, they also described social media's increasing popularity over time, particularly among younger Service members. Participants shared perceptions about the relationship between military culture and social media. Across groups, participants confirmed Service members used social media for both personal and professional reasons. They discussed using a range of social media sites and platforms; Facebook was the most commonly mentioned. Ninety percent of all social media focus group participants had a personal account on at least one social media outlet they accessed at least once a week.

Service members were also asked to comment on how the attitudes and culture around social media changed since they first joined the Military Services. Most agreed that social media usage had become common in recent years, and many noted the rapid surge in use since they joined the Service. They commented on the challenges associated with managing the newest Service members, who grew up in an era where social media were common and had different opinions on what is appropriate to share online; older Service members also used social media. Some senior Service members commented on the changing standards of professional communication among their more junior staff. They felt that social media and electronic communications, while favored by some younger Service members, were less effective than other types of interaction. Some senior focus group participants felt social media had changed the way younger Service members learn. Service members indicated they increasingly used social media to "vent" about their jobs or things that are not going well; participants perceived this

was especially common among younger Service members. Many focus group participants mentioned how the Military Services as a culture, organization, and employer has found it challenging to keep up with social media advances.

DACOWITS asked Service members to share perceived advantages and disadvantages of using social media in the Military Services. Several participants described social media as a double-edged sword with unique pros and cons. Many participants felt social media assisted with communication; because a large number of Service members were connected to social media services, they were additional tools that could be used to disseminate information and make contact. Additionally, many focus group participants said social media supported the sharing of routine logistical information. Participants reported the Military Services often used official social media pages to communicate and boost morale among Service members and their families. Official military pages and general military presence on social media could be used to share positive information about the Military Services with the broader public in a transparent manner, and social media could help Service members to connect with online communities that could be a source of information and support for women and other minority groups, particularly for those who may not be able to connect in person. Most focus group participants felt social media was a helpful way to keep in touch with others like family members, friends, and fellow Service members.

In addition to the benefits Service members described, they mentioned several disadvantages to using social media. Security concerns were the most commonly cited disadvantage for using social media. Participants commented on the potentially high stakes involved; some information, if posted online, could compromise the safety of Service members or the completion of a mission. Service members commented on the threat of ISIS, in particular, monitoring social media. Service members also noted the potential hazards of geotagging. Many focus group participants worried about the speed with which negative social media content from Service members can be disseminated to the public and the public's reaction to that content. Focus group participants, particularly higher ranking individuals, were concerned that social media may erode boundaries surrounding fraternization. Several focus group participants commented on the importance of using formal channels of communication (i.e., not social media) for sensitive situations and how social media could obstruct those tested processes. A few male focus group participants who had served in combat discussed ways that incorrect information about wounded or killed Service members had spread through social media. Some focus group participants felt social media harmed morale and cohesiveness among Service members. This was more commonly mentioned among higher ranking groups. Some focus group participants felt social media prevented Service members from being productive in the workplace. Several focus group participants noted social media could disadvantage new Service members joining a team or unit.

Focus group participants had varying opinions about military social media policies. Senior Service members felt social media use was at least partially governed through broader policies pertaining to general conduct like the UCMJ. Some participants, however, suggested that these policies could be difficult to apply to social media; they recognized the challenges leaders face in deciding when online behavior violates policy, and if it does, what to do about

it. Most participants confirmed the following behaviors were unacceptable given the standard expectations of conduct for Service members:

1. Wearing a military uniform in an unofficial capacity
2. Being disrespectful of the President or chain of command
3. Expressing political opinions

Many Service members referred to guidance and recommendations they received on social media use, rather than strictly enforced official policies. Many focus group participants felt existing policies and guidelines pertaining to social media were unclear, inconsistent, or poorly communicated. Some were unsure whether social media policies or guidance existed at all. Many participants across groups noted social media provided new ways to monitor Service members' behavior and ensure their compliance with relevant policies. The majority of participants agreed being a member of the Military Services was more than a 9-to-5 job; it dictated behavior outside of conventional working hours and therefore limited what Service members should be able to post online. Though participants generally agreed that Service members were restricted in what they could say on social media, some felt the Military Services were limited in their ability to curtail personal social media use. Just as focus group members felt policies and guidelines on social media could be inconsistent, they perceived punishments to be inconsistent or expressed differing opinions about what would result in punishment.

Opinions on social media training were mixed. Some Service members commented positively on the amount and quality of social media training that they received. Most focus group participants agreed the Military Services provide education related to security (including OPSEC) in particular. Although some participants indicated Service members received adequate training on social media use, many others identified a need for more training or different kinds of training. Some questioned the quality of OPSEC training. Participants questioned the effectiveness of computer-based training in this area; this was consistent across Services. Several focus group participants, especially senior ranking participants, pointed out that civilian family members may also need training on appropriate social media use.

Focus group participants were asked about the role social media might play in bullying and sexual harassment. Many participants said that social media was used to bully and/or harass, while others said it either did not play a role or was not something the Military Services should regulate. Focus group members' discussions yielded more examples of online sexual harassment than bullying, though many participants noted issues with both. In discussions of sexual harassment and social media, focus group participants were more likely to provide examples of women than men being sexually harassed. Sometimes, rather than attacking an individual, bullying or sexual harassment took place through broader forums such as websites. Female participants from one Service spent time discussing derogatory content targeting women on social media. Many focus group participants perceived that bullies or harassers benefited from the distance social media provides from their targets; they were more likely to say things that they might not say in person. A number of focus group participants felt that bullying and sexual harassment on social media were not major issues. Participants had different opinions about whether the Military Services

should address the problem. Participants in a few focus groups felt victims of online bullying or harassment could avoid the issue by terminating contact with the offender; these individuals felt it was the victim's responsibility to prevent being bullied. A few participants also thought victims could be blamed for the problem in some cases. Many participants agreed social media could be used as evidence in cases of online bullying and harassment in instances where the Military Services gets involved in addressing the situation.

During the focus groups, Committee members asked participants to share their opinions on how social media might be used to support gender integration. Responses were mixed, with participants identifying both positive and negative ways social media could affect this effort. Participants felt social media could highlight examples of women who had excelled in a male-dominated field or be used to disseminate information about gender integration changes. They also suggested that social media might be used as part of a negative backlash or to highlight women's challenges.

General Comments

When time permitted after the standard focus group protocol was completed, participants were asked if there were issues that might affect women in the Military Services that had not been covered in the focus groups, including the biggest challenges faced by women in the Military Services and recommendations participants would make to the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). The majority of focus groups were able to address at least one of these general questions. This section provides a summary of the themes respondents most commonly reported. Because of the overlap in responses to the two questions, the findings from both questions are reported together. Several of the themes covered here were also mentioned by participants in response to the primary focus group topics discussed earlier. Those themes are included here if they were mentioned during this section of the focus groups. Several of the findings in this section mirror findings from DACOWITS focus groups in previous years.

Perception of Men's Attitudes Toward Women

The most commonly reported challenges to women in the Military Services today were specific challenges they faced with regard to men's attitudes and opinions about women in the Military Services. These challenges included perceptions and stereotypes of women by men, discriminatory and/or sexist attitudes, as well as the perceived physical barriers of women. A general lack of respect for women in the Military Services was mentioned as a challenge in 2014 as well.

Perceptions and Stereotypes

Different stereotypes were mentioned by men and women. Women indicated men often saw one servicewoman who made a mistake or does not represent the uniform well and used that to portray all servicewomen as such, or men generally categorized all servicewomen into one of a few derogatory categories.

“They assume that because you live in the barracks that you’re a [derogatory term for a promiscuous woman]. It makes everyone else look bad when one person is doing that. Males will think that because one person is like that, then everyone is like that. . . . It’s perceived that because I’m a female, that I’ll want to do that stuff.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“There are so few women, so if one messes up, then . . . bam . . . it’s all females suck. That is not the same for men.”

— Female Officer

Discriminatory and Sexist Attitudes

Both men and women spoke about discriminatory and sexist attitudes against women, though women were more likely to indicate this.

“It’s a cultural factor. The language—I hate to say boys’ club.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“I know I haven’t experienced sexual harassment or assault, but [I] have been discriminated against. I’ve had a sexist comment said against me. I had to file a complaint that I was not being treated as equally as men.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Physical Barriers

Participants mentioned physical barriers women face. Some men believed women were not able to perform at the same level as men physically, while women stated men used physical standards to make women appear less capable of performing their jobs.

“She has to prove herself. If she can, good, but if I have to pull an 80-pound sack of weight, but she can’t, then that’s a problem.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“Being singled out. Just because you can’t do 20 pull-ups and a male can. I am constantly achieving and making number 1, but they always tear me down. I am an easy target. They say things to make me look bad to my higher ups. I mean they attack you. It’s petty.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“Infantry is a young man’s game. . . . We are not designed the same. They [women] are in combat roles right now, and I am afraid the physical strain will break them. I understand what they are trying to do, but it’s not just about the institution, it’s about what is best for females too.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Pregnancy, Postpartum, and Breastfeeding Concerns

Just as in 2014, focus group participants noted various challenges pregnant servicewomen faced. These challenges included some general pregnancy concerns, not having adequate breastfeeding support or lactation facilitates, and not having adequate maternity leave after giving birth.

Pregnancy Challenges

Both men and women noted challenges associated with pregnancy in the Military Services. Male participants suggested being pregnant could keep women from performing certain job tasks, while female participants tended to suggest being pregnant was viewed as a handicap. Some women expressed safety concerns such as exposure to harmful chemicals.

“ . . . To get my waiver to the second trimester was arduous with a doctor who didn’t support my decision. . . . Then the other [issue] is that you’re not allowed to go to training when you’re pregnant. You’re not allowed to go.”

— Female Officer

“One concern I have is putting females in key billet positions and it is not for anything other than if she gets pregnant, she is no longer deployable. What do I do then? It becomes an issue of readiness because I can’t put someone else in that position—not immediately at least.”

— Male Officer

“The command needs to know that, yes, you’re pregnant, but you’re not dying.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“ . . . There is no protection from chemicals and whatnot when you are pregnant or breastfeeding. I am in a ship where there is cadmium, and it can cause premature labor or low birth weight, and I am not really sure what to do.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Changes to Postpartum Leave Policy

In addition to inadequate maternity leave being a big challenge to women in the Military Services, it was a concern participants wanted brought to the SECDEF. Both male and female participants mentioned that postpartum leave was not long enough for either mothers or fathers.

“My daughter was born prematurely, and she was in the [neonatal intensive care unit] for 66 days, and I would have been required to be back at work before she left the hospital. Luckily, my command was very supportive, but there should be some leniency between vaginal birth and C-section birth because the recovery is very different. And there is no documentation of how to deal with a premature child. We want women to stay in, we want to support them, maybe we should address those problems.”

— Female Officer

“I have been thinking about this a lot. I just had a baby and the maternity policy is the same for vaginal birth and C-section. I was returned to full duty after almost dying on the table, and I went to the chain of command and was able to handle it later. So maternity leave expectation is terrible.”

— Female Officer

“ . . . Paternity leave needs to be looked at. It is very unequal to the civilian workplace.”

— Male Officer

“Give the dads more time. We give them 10 days and that includes the weekend. And they are even looked badly upon if they take 10 days.”

— Female Officer

Lack of Breastfeeding Support

Participants reported a lack of space and time given to women to pump while lactating. This was most commonly mentioned by women.

“I can’t tell you how many times we end up with a [Service member] that says my command does not support me when I need to pump. Women who are lactating and breastfeeding are supposed to be given a place to pump.”

— Female Officer

“My wife is active duty and she pumps in a supply closet.”

— Male Officer

“We are so mission driven. A female who has children and breastfeeds takes time away from the mission. It’s hard to change that mindset, that warfighter mindset. It’s a short-term perspective.”

— Female Officer

Challenges Involving Work/Family Balance

Some participants, mostly women, mentioned balancing work and family was an issue for them, especially as it related to their decision to stay in the Military Services.

“Balancing family and your career is an issue. Who deploys with a four-month-old baby?”

— Female Officer

“I had [a servicewoman] who would have made an amazing [senior noncommissioned officer] who had kids but couldn’t compete because she couldn’t put in the time and leave the kids.”

— Female Officer

“I think what I’ve experienced in my career is the family and military . . . the balance issue.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“You’re not going to solve the retention problem unless you allow women to have a family and come back on. . . . I’m telling you ‘Sir, I need to come off birth control on this date so I can have a baby by this date and still have a master’s degree and come back.’ It’s a huge stressor; we are losing people.”

— Male Officer

Separation, Co-Location, and Deployment Concerns for Families

Separation, co-location, and deployment issues were mentioned. Participants also noted challenges they had concerning deployments for those Service members involved in dual-military relationships and those Service members with children.

“I think having something that doesn’t have both parents on the same deployment cycle. It’s sometimes hard if you’re doing continuous back-to-back deployments.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I’ve got a couple now that is dual-active, and we have to deploy them both. So, I have to ask, do you want to go when he gets back, or when he’s gone?”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I have been separated from my husband for a year and half, and the [Service] is telling me that we have to be separated for another year and half.”

— Female Officer

“I would pass back the issue as a whole about relocation and ability handle two career fields with the cost of daycare and cost of schools—a lot of families need both spouses working and can’t maintain two professional careers. . . . If we can stay in an area longer, if we made more money to support family in a dual income level, it would keep me in. If we had longer tours and better geographic stability, or we could be closer to family support networks, if we had grandparents around who could watch kids, that would help.”

— Male Officer

Single Parenting

The challenge of being a single parent in the Military Services was also a prominent sub-theme of balancing work and family.

“I think the biggest challenge is single mothers.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I’m a single dad. I lost my wife. And now if I get a deployment, it’s like, ‘What about my daughter?’”

— Senior Enlisted Man

“I recently became a single parent. I’ve had kids and have been underway. I’m more limited because I’m a single parent.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Physical Fitness Expectations and Height/Weight Standards

Focus group participants noted that height and weight standards were a big challenge to women in the Service. Similar to 2014, both male and female focus group participants made recommendations regarding physical fitness and body structure issues in the Military Services.

“We have a height, weight, BMI (body-mass index) standard based on age, and in 2010 I believe it got more strict. I think if we had a way of testing physical abilities and we could lift a pump or a person out of the water, why does it matter?”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I am referring to getting taped. There are a lot of women that are physically fit and solid, but how they carry their weight or how their body is shaped has such an influence on whether they are a successful [Service member] or not. That should not take away from our performance, but it does.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“It doesn’t matter if you work out every day or train endlessly; there are just body parts that you cannot control or lose weight from. They need to adjust the standards.”

— Junior Enlisted Female

“They only do men’s necks and waists, but they also do our butts. If you have a bubble butt, even if you have a tiny waist, you’re not meeting the standard.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

Equal Physical Standards

Participants mentioned the lack of equal physical standards as a challenge for women. This issue was raised in focus groups held in several previous years as well. Focus group participants, particularly men, wanted the SECDEF to be aware they desired gender-neutral physical standards. Several participants indicated having equal physical standards would ease the gender integration process.

“My biggest thing has got to be—as far as anything changing in the military—is one set standard. There should be one set standard as far as male-female across the board.”

— Junior Enlisted Man

“One thing that would help ease that transition is to bring those physical standards to the same levels as the males currently serving in those positions.”

— Male Officer

“It’s ridiculous. I sympathize with males too. It is not fair to the male [Service members] too. Just make a standard that fits both males and females and that is realistic. If you want the promotion, then you will work to get to it. We can’t compromise the quality of the [Service member] or the product by making multiple standards or exceptions.”

— Female Officer

“We have to remember that she didn’t join to be a female [Service member], she joined to be a [Service member]. So why are we making [physical] exceptions for females?”

— Junior Enlisted Man

Physical Challenges After Pregnancy

The difficulty of getting back into shape after having children was a widely mentioned sub-theme among women.

“You have nine months to put it [weight] on and six to get it off!”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I had kids within the last year or so. They expect you to lose the weight in six months. They don’t take into consideration that there may be complications that make it so it takes longer than six months.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I’ve been pregnant in the civilian sector and military sector. Any OB/GYN (obstetrician-gynecologist) says it takes your body about a year to get back to normal. For the PT (physical training) test, it is four to six months [after giving birth that you are required to pass the test].”

— Female Officer

“I miscarried at 16 weeks last year and had a PT test right away.”

— Female Officer

“After having kids, I struggle every single weigh in. It is easier for me to make the scale because my hips are just not going to shrink in. It is one of those things I’d rather do a physical standard of doing a PT test, run, and sit ups.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Issues

Several participants mentioned issues concerning sexual harassment and sexual assault in the Military Services. Participants' concerns mainly centered on the reporting system, the length of time required for resolving sexual harassment and sexual assault cases, and care for victims/survivors.

"Speed up the investigation process on sexual harassment and assault."

— Senior Enlisted Man

"The sexual assault process is ugly, and I knew a girl who didn't want to press charges. They wanted to discharge [the offender] for commission of [a] serious offense. These guys raped girls and we just discharged them. We put two sex offenders on the street. That is what I don't like about my job. There is no conviction."

— Female Officer

" . . . One concern is they [sexual harassment and sexual assault cases] get dragged on. We're facing a shortage of lawyers who can deal with those cases. I'm currently waiting three to four months for this case that I have. I'm not sure if it's a base thing or a [Service] thing."

— Female Officer

"I think barriers to reporting is very shortsighted. I think the focus has to be on aftercare."

— Female Officer

"Here I had one female who was sexually assaulted. She was afraid to go to and stay in the barracks, but there were no other options. Why can't we have a safe house?"

— Senior Enlisted Woman

As noted in Chapter 5, many believe training on sexual harassment and sexual assault has helped to change military culture around this area, but many participants believed that they were receiving an excessive amount of training in this area. They expressed concerns that excessive training has desensitized Service members to the training content.

"Stop the knee-jerk reactions. Every time someone throws a fit, we're going to have sexual assault training, alcohol training. Someone can't follow the rules, just get rid of them. There comes to a point where it's just too much. Stop the knee-jerk reactions. If they can't follow the rules, just get them out."

— Senior Enlisted Man

"I wouldn't want the Service to be seen as being insensitive. Any sexual assault is too many. But I think the way we're going about bringing it to our attention has gone past what is needed to beating a dead horse. There's got to be a better way to do it—not the same topics over and over again to the point of glazed eyes."

— Male Officer

“I fell asleep in so many [sexual harassment and sexual assault training] classes when it's PowerPoint. When it's PowerPoint, after PowerPoint, after PowerPoint, people are going to stop listening. And if you have people whose first language isn't English, they may not understand what to do in situations.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“[Sexual harassment and sexual assault] training in units. It is taught at all leadership levels. If you teach it, you see it two to three times per week. . . . It seems nice, like make sure it is in everything, but it is complete overload where everyone in the [Service] can recite the training.”

— Senior Enlisted Man

Desire for Mentorship

A few participants expressed the need for female mentorship. Some male participants specifically mentioned their desire to mentor women in the Military Services as well.

“Find more senior female leaders who can mentor down to us.”

— Junior Enlisted Woman

“For the mentoring, I think that definitely more is needed. For women in the military, that's something that should be stressed a little more. Avenues for mentorship.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“[Mentorship] not necessarily by a female. It can be a male.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“ . . . We have served with women in combat and are fathers of daughters and we have aspirations for [mentoring females] too, and the women taking care of women as the primary [model] doesn't seem to be working that well . . . ”

— Male Officer

Uniform-Related Concerns

Similar to previous years' findings, several participants mentioned issues with military uniforms. Participants' concerns were mainly about uniform design.

“We have two times as many uniforms as men, and we don't have enough money to cover it as a woman. Even as [senior enlisted women], we don't have the money to cover it, and they don't always fit.”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“ . . . The only thing I have been consistently frustrated with is my uniform. These boots are horrible, the rise on these pants, the stupid purse they want me to carry. Like coveralls, do you have to undress every time you go to the bathroom?!”

— Female Officer

“I think that the [Service] is doing a disservice for making them dress like male [Service members].”

— Female Officer

“They want to change our uniforms to make them more like men’s, but there isn’t anything wrong with our uniform. Why is it so bad to be a woman and wear a more feminine outfit but still be a pretty darn good [Service member]?”

— Senior Enlisted Woman

“I hate the hat! I don’t see my males signing up to wear a female [hat]. I don’t wanna be a man, I don’t need a dude to wear my [hat]; it’s the whole female uniform that has history and tradition.”

— Female Officer



Appendix H

Briefings Presented to DACOWITS During FY 2015 Business Meetings

DoD Women in the Services Review Implementation Plan Update December 2014

Ms. Juliet Beyler, Director, Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management, Military Personnel Policy, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness

Health Affairs Briefing: Military Health System Review December 2014

Dr. Cara Krulewitch, Director, Women's Health, Medical Ethics and Patient Advocacy, Clinical and Policy Programs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness

Delayed Entry Program and Basic Military Training Attrition December 2014

Mr. Tom Defilippo, Army, Staff Program Integrator, Training and Doctrine Command; CDR Kertreck Brooks, Navy, Executive Officer, Recruit Training Command and CDR Denise Spanier, Navy Recruiting Command Liaison; LtCol Timothy Owens, Air Force, Deputy Chief of Technical Training Strategic Planning and Policy Division; CDR Gina Freeman, Coast Guard, Gender Policy Advisor, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Coast Guard Headquarters; LtCol Jonathan Swope, Marine Corps, Branch Head, Enlisted Recruiting Operations, Marine Corps Recruiting Command

Selective Service System Program Overview December 2014

Ms. Jessica Myers, Deputy Director, DACOWITS

DoD Office of the General Counsel December 2014

Ms. Maria Fried, Associate Deputy General Counsel, Personnel and Health Policy

Increasing Female Accessions March 2015

CDR Renee Squier, Director, Navy Diversity and Inclusion Office, March 2015

Enlisted Women in Submarines Update March 2015

CAPT Rodney Hutton, Commanding Officer, Trident Training Facility

Ranger School Update March 2015

COL Linda Sheimo, Chief, Command Programs and Policies Division, Headquarters, Department for the Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel

Overview of DoD Childcare Programs and Initiatives March 2015

Ms. Barbara Thompson, Director, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, Office of Children and Youth

State and Federal Laws: Impacts to Military Families March 2015

Mr. Marcus Beauregard, Chief, DoD–State Liaison Office, and Ms. Kathleen Facon, Chief, Educational Partnership and Non-DoD School Program, DoD Education Activity

Australian Defence Update March 2015

Ms. Julie McKay, Gender Adviser to the Chief of the Australian Defence Force

Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Assault Briefs June 2015

Mr. James Love, Acting Director, Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity; Dr. Nathan Galbreath, Senior Executive Advisor, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, and Ms. Kayla Williams, Senior Project Associate, RAND Corporation

Marine Corps Infantry Officer Course Update June 2015

Mr. Leon Pappa, Deputy Branch Head, Ground Combat Standards Branch, Training and Education Command

U.S. Special Operations Command Studies Update June 2015

Mr. Jeffrey Resko, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Force Management and Development Directorate Liaison to the National Capital Region, and Ms. Alden Burley, Contractor, USSOCOM Force Management and Development Directorate

Increasing Female Marine Corps Accessions June 2015

LtCol Jonathan Swope, Marine Corps, Branch Head, Enlisted Recruiting Operations, Marine Corps Recruiting Command

Marine Corps Personal Protective Equipment Presentation June 2015

Col. Daryl Crane, Product Manager, Infantry Combat Equipment, Marine Corps System Command

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs Briefing June 2015

Dr. Kathleen Charters, Nurse Consultant to the Defense Health Agency, Healthcare Operations Directorate, Clinical Support Division

Review of Installation Visits and Focus Group Findings June 2015

Ms. Rachel Gaddes, Insight Policy Research; Ms. Ashley Schaad, ICF International

Services' Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies Review June 2015

COL Cheryl Martinez, Chief, Distribution and Readiness; Director, Military Personnel Management, Army; CDR Christine Caston, Branch Head of Diversity, Inclusion, and Women's Policy, Navy; Col. Brendan Reilly, Branch Head, Manpower Military Policy, Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Marine Corps; Maj David Miller, Chief, Physical Standards Development, Air Force Medical Support Agency, Pentagon, Air Force; LCDR Russell Mayer, Team-Leader, Policy and Standards Division, Office of Military Personnel, Coast Guard

Medical Review of the Services' Pregnancy/Postpartum Policies September 2015

Dr. Cara Krulewitch, Director, Women's Health, Medical Ethics and Patient Advocacy, Clinical and Policy Programs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness

Army Ranger Assessment Update September 2015

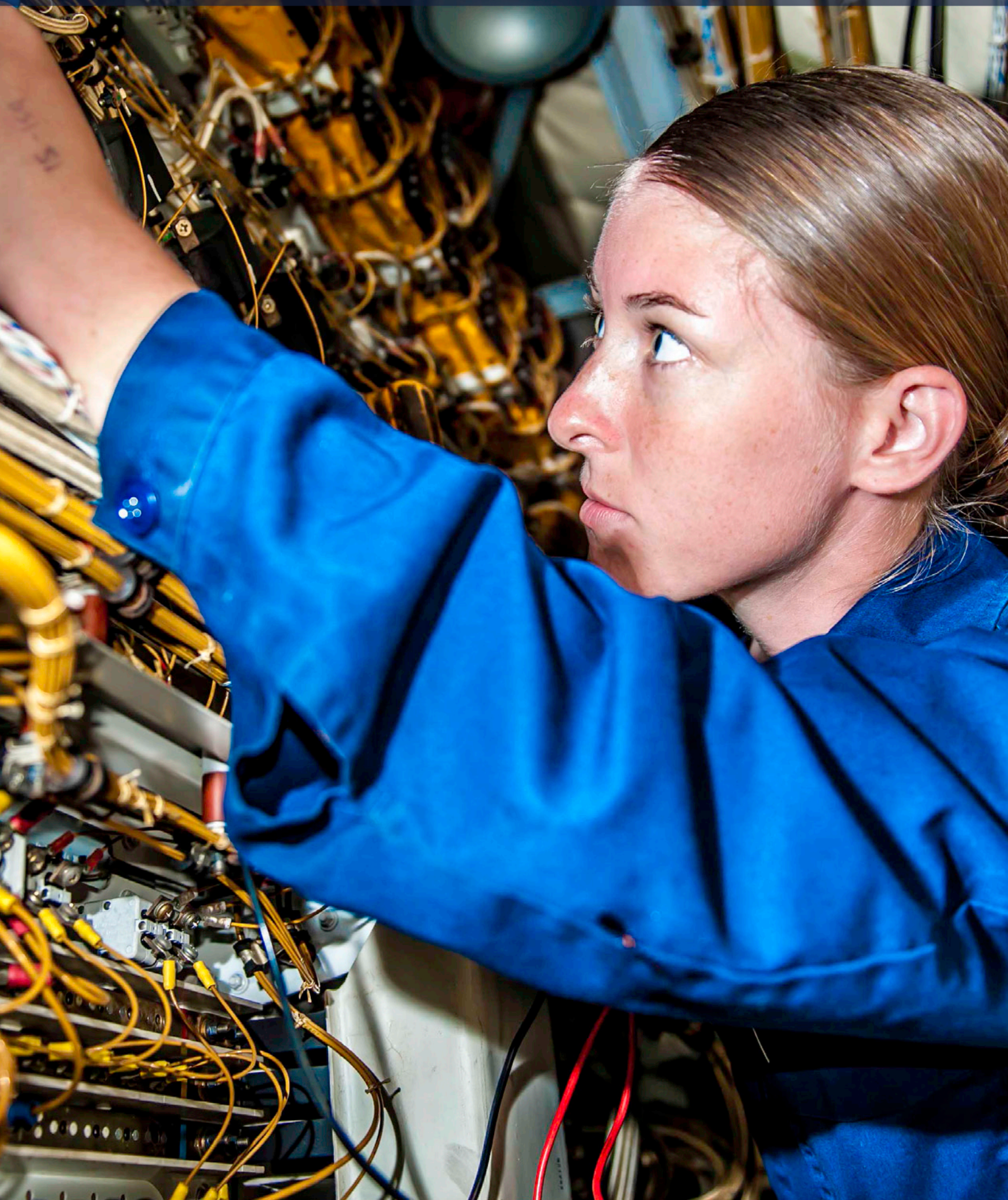
Mr. Dave Brinkley, Assistant Deputy, Office of the Chief of Staff (G-3/5/7), Training and Doctrine Command; COL David Fivecoat, Commander, Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade

Detailing/Assignment Process for Women Serving at Sea September 2015

CDR Christine Caston, Office of Outreach and Engagement, Navy; Chief Jennifer Bell, Women Afloat Coordinator, Enlisted Personnel Management Division, Coast Guard

Review of In-Home Childcare Provider Certification Programs September 2015

Ms. Cherri Verschraegen, Director, Child, Youth and School Services G9, Installation Management Command, Army; Mr. Gregory Young, Program Director, Navy Installations Command Navy Child and Youth, Navy; Ms. Debra Willey, Deputy Chief, Air Force Child & Youth Programs, Headquarters Air Force Services, Air Force; Mr. Kenneth O'Meara, Child Development Services Program Manager, Coast Guard; Maj Veronica Kaltrider, Office of Legislative Affairs, Marine Corps



Appendix I

DACOWITS Requests for Written Information During FY 2015

In addition to the briefings presented to DACOWITS during FY 2015 (Appendix H), the Committee requested written information from DoD, the Services, and other entities on a variety of topics. The information provided in response to these requests is available on the DACOWITS Website, www.dacowits.defense.gov.

December 2014

1. DACOWITS continues to be interested in the overall progress of the Women in the Service Review Implementation Plan.
 - The Committee requests a written response from the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps on the current path to opening the following occupations to servicewomen and/or integrating servicewomen into the following occupations:
 - Rangers, Enlisted Women in Submarines, and infantry
 - The Committee asks that the Marine Corps also provide an update on the standards for any Infantry Officer Course (IOC) student that have to be met in order to pass the hike/march portion of the course.
 - Additionally, what instruction covers the standards set forth and evaluated at IOC for eventual award of the infantry military occupational specialty?
2. Outreach and recruiting of women is critical to ensuring the U.S. military has the strongest possible pool of highly qualified individuals to draw from in meeting its leadership needs. DACOWITS received briefings during the September 2014 meeting from each of the Services on the accessions of females into the military.
 - The Committee requests a written response from each of the Services to address these follow-up questions:
 - What is the current percentage of female recruiters?
 - What efforts are being or will be taken to increase the number of female recruiters?
 - What is the total dollar amount spent on marketing, and how much of those funds are designated specifically for targeting women and/or increasing women's propensity to serve?
 - What social media are used to target Millennial Generation and Generation Z women?
3. The retention of servicewomen is equally as important as the recruiting mission.
 - The Committee requests a written response from each of the Services on the relative number of men and women who are being forced out of the military under the current drawdown (i.e., reduction in force).
 - Additionally, the Committee requests that the Services explain the methodology, if any, used to ensure the proportionate numbers of women were retained as compared with the percentage of recruiting.

4. DACOWITS continues to be interested in the upward career progression of women into senior enlisted ranks.
 - The Committee requests a report via a written response from each of the Services indicating the number of women currently serving as senior noncommissioned officers (e.g., the number of females E7–E9 as compared with men, the number of women serving in major command leadership positions, and the number of women serving nominative level assignment tours.)

March 2015

5. Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) scholarships are an important method of attracting capable individuals to enter the Armed Forces.
 - The Committee requests the Services provide a written response on the following:
 - The number and type of ROTC scholarships given out the last five years (2010–2014)
 - A breakdown on the total number and the percentage of scholarships that were offered
 - The numbers of scholarships accepted by men and women
6. DACOWITS continues to be interested in the career progression of female officers and senior enlisted women.
 - The Committee requests the Services provide a written response, utilizing data current as of 1 January 2015, on the following:
 - The number and percentage of men and women at each rank from E1 to O10
 - The number of Service members categorized by rank and gender who have completed a command tour at that rank
 - The number of Service members who have completed or are currently attending Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Phase I
 - The number of Service members who have earned joint credit or are serving in a joint credit billet
 - The number of Service members who have completed or are attending JPME Phase II or equivalent
7. Impacts of social media on military women.
 - The Committee requests a written response from the Services on the following:
 - What are the Services' current policies regarding social media usage?
 - Are there any policies specifically addressing social media and sexual harassment?
 - What, to date, are the cases of punishment/accountability relating to social media and service members?

- Do the Services actively review Service members' social media accounts when determining discipline?
- Can complaints of online harassment be brought to the commanding officer?
- Are online harassment remarks addressed? If so, what means are the Services utilizing to address this?
- Is there training or guidelines conveyed to recruits, both officers and enlisted? Is refresher training given? If so, how often?

June 2015

8. DACOWITS continues to be interested in the Marine Corps' research assessments, which will assist the Secretary of Defense in determining whether women will integrate into combat roles beginning next year.
 - The Marine Corps' Infantry Officer Course (IOC) research concludes in June and will no longer be open to female volunteers. As a repeat request, the Committee requests a written response from the Marine Corps on the following:
 - What is the fixed weight requirement for the IOC March?
 - Does the fixed weight requirement fluctuate between IOC classes? If so, why?
 - What is the overall attrition rate for men who have attended IOC over the past five years?
 - If there is a higher attrition rate for women due to leg and/or hip injuries, has research been conducted studying potential ways to adjust or modify the gear and/or the way the gear is packed in order to help minimize the risk of these types of injuries?
 - Is there any preconditioning in place for men or women that best prepares them to complete IOC without or with minimal medical setback or attrition?
 - When were the IOC requirements established (e.g., carrying a rucksack up a rope)?
9. DACOWITS continues to be interested in the career progression of female officers and enlisted women. The Committee is concerned about the potential effects on women who report substantiated sexual harassment (SH) and/or sexual assault (SA) (e.g., retaliation).
 - The Committee requests DoD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, DoD's Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity, and the Services provide a written response on the following:
 - How do DoD and the Services track career progression of Service members who have substantiated reports of SH and/or SA to ensure career progression is not negatively impacted from reporting?
 - What is the retention rate of Service members (by gender and rank) beyond their initial contracts/obligations who report SH and/or SA?

10. In accordance with the Secretary of Defense's February 2013 memo, DACOWITS continues to be interested in the Services' implementation plans to further integrate women into previously closed positions and units.
 - The Committee requests the Services provide a written response on the following:
 - Update on the current progress and review being conducted, as well as potential exceptions to policy that have been drafted and the rationale.
 - Explanation of the methodology being used to validate occupational performance standards for each occupational specialty (physical and mental).
 - Are the occupational performance standards for initial screening only or have they been rank/age adjusted?
 - What efforts are being made to ensure women are given the opportunity to succeed in these newly opened career paths?
11. DACOWITS continues to be interested in gender integration.
 - The Committee requests a written response from Services on the following:
 - Have the Services surveyed/interviewed females engaged in combat operations to capture lessons learned or better understand combat integration (e.g., Special Operations, Cultural Support Team)? If so, where is this documented, and how has it been applied to the Women in Service Review?
12. DACOWITS continues to be interested in gender integration.
 - The Committee requests a written response from Services on the following:
 - Data breakdown by Military Occupational Specialty/Air Force Specialty Code/ Rating/Community by rank and gender for both enlisted and officer personnel for the previous 10 years, with data current as of January 2015.
13. DACOWITS is interested in reviewing the Services' pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies.
 - The Committee requests a written response from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs, on the following:
 - What does the medical community recommend regarding postpartum operational deferment?
 - How do the pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies in the military differ from those of the civilian sector?
 - Does the medical community's current research and recommendations align with DoD's and the Services' policies?
 - What policy and/or programs exist to ensure servicewomen are not exposed to reproductive or lactation hazards?
 - What specific forms are used to document pregnancy for servicewomen?
 - What specific terminology is used to indicate pregnancy?

- Who are these forms sent to? Who has access to these forms?
- How are miscarriages or abortions documented on these forms (terminology)? Who has access to this information?

September 2015

14. DACOWITS continues to be interested in the career progression of women.
 - The Committee requests a written response from the Air Force, Army, and Navy on the following:
 - Which denominations do not ordain women?
 - Of the denominations that do ordain women, provide data on rank representation by gender.
 - Additionally, provide data on the rank representation of men who serve in denominations that do not ordain women.
15. DACOWITS continues to be interested in the propensity of women to serve in the military.
 - The Committee requests a literature review in the form of a written response from Insight on studies and research associated with the following:
 - Reasons why people join groups; visible evidence of being a part of a group; what attributes are commonly associated with success in a group context; the need for visible representation to associate oneself with a group; female athletics and sports teams; etc.
16. DACOWITS remains interested in sexual harassment and sexual assault training provided to Service members.
 - The Committee requests a written response from the Services on the following:
 - “Sexual Assault ‘Bystander Intervention Training’” programs and/or policies (e.g., “Take a Stand,” “Peer-to-Peer Mentorship”).
 - If data is available, any documentation that indicates an increase in reporting of and/or the reduction of sexual harassment and/or sexual assault cases that is directly attributed to these training programs.
17. DACOWITS remains interested in proactive programs that educate Service members on ways to prevent a sexual assault from occurring.
 - The Committee requests a literature review in the form of a written response from Insight on studies and research associated with a decrease in the occurrence of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault related to programs such as the following:
 - Prevention training; socialization of women (potential victims); training on behaviors (e.g., warning signs, environmental awareness); resistance programs; self-defense training; etc.

18. DACOWITS is interested in reviewing medical research and laws that support the health and welfare of pregnant and postpartum women.
- The Committee requests a literature review in the form of a written response from Insight on medical studies and research related to pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies and/or regulations, and federal and/or state laws that delineate the rights of pregnant and postpartum mothers. Examples may include the following:
 - Pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies in the civilian sector
 - Current Federal Government policy on pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding for federal workers
 - Laws which protect the rights of nursing mothers in the workplace, time provided, and outline the type of space which must be provided
 - Standard or average length of civilian sector pregnancy/maternity leave policies (e.g., Family and Medical Leave Act)
 - Medical correlations between postpartum depression and military deployments
 - Medical reasoning in regards to the health of the mother and the infant, which support the need for postpartum operational deferment

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



Appendix J

Congressional Notifications: Intent to Continue to Expand the Role of Women in the Military

Between August 2014 and October 2015, DoD issued two notifications to Congress—under U.S.C. 10 § 652—of the Military Departments' and U.S. Special Operations Command's intent to continue to expand the role of women. The notifications were signed by the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, and they were addressed to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Chairpersons of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, and the Chairpersons of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees. Verbatim excerpts from the cover letter of each of the two notifications are provided below.

Army, March 2015

This letter provides notification as required by Section 652 of Title 10, United States Code, that DoD intends to assign women to certain previously closed positions in the Army. The enclosure provides a detailed description of the intended changes and the required analysis of their impact on the constitutionality of the application of the Military Selective Service Act to males only. Additionally, the position descriptions for this Military Occupational Specialty and courses to award skill identifiers are enclosed. DoD will implement changes to unit and occupations listed in the enclosure at the end of 30 days of continuous session of Congress (excluding any day on which either House of Congress is not in session) following the date this notification is received.

The Department of the Army intends to open 20,563 positions to women in 1 formerly closed occupation along with 7 skill identifiers in the Active and Reserve Components.

These occupations and positions were previously closed due to the now-rescinded 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule. The Department of the Army reviewed the occupational standards associated with these positions and determined they are gender-neutral. The performance of women in these positions will help inform further policy decisions regarding the assignment of women to all positions by January 1, 2016.

DoD appreciates your continued support of the extraordinary men and women serving our Nation.

Army, July 2015

This letter provides notification as required by Section 652 of Title 10, United States Code, that the Department of Defense (DoD) intends to assign women to certain previously closed positions in the Army. The enclosure provides a detailed description of the intended changes and the required analysis of their impact on the constitutionality of the application of the Military Selective Service Act to males only. Additionally, the position descriptions for these Military Occupational Specialties and course to award a skill identifier are enclosed. DoD will implement changes to unit and occupations listed in the enclosure at the end of 30 days of continuous session of Congress (excluding any day on which either House of Congress is not in session) following the date this notification is received.

The Department of the Army intends to open 19,716 positions to women in two formerly closed occupation along with one skill identifier in the Active and Reserve Components.

These occupations and positions were previously closed due to the now-rescinded 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule. The Department of the Army reviewed the occupational standards associated with these positions and determined they are gender-neutral. The performance of women in these positions will help inform further policy decisions regarding the assignment of women to all positions by January 1, 2016.

The DoD appreciates your continued support of the extraordinary men and women serving our Nation.



Appendix K

Active Duty Gender Percentages for Officers and Enlisted Service Members by Service, 2011–2014

This appendix presents the percentages of men and women in each rank for each Service for the past five years. The tables in this appendix were calculated using Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) workforce data.²⁵

Table K.1. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Officers by Service, September 2011

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (15,727)	% Male (81,513)	% Female (8,464)	% Male (44,388)	% Female (1,325)	% Male (20,497)	% Female (12,291)	% Male (53,196)	% Female (37,807)	% Male (199,594)
O10	8.33	91.67	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	2.44	97.56
O9	4.00	96.00	2.56	97.44	0.00	100.00	6.52	93.48	3.92	96.08
O8	4.63	95.37	12.00	88.00	2.94	97.06	13.00	87.00	8.83	91.17
O7	7.64	92.36	10.40	89.60	0.00	100.00	7.59	92.41	7.84	92.16
O6	11.01	88.99	12.67	87.33	3.03	96.97	11.98	88.02	11.31	88.69
O5	12.64	87.36	11.58	88.42	2.04	97.96	13.15	86.85	11.85	88.15
O4	15.24	84.76	13.85	86.15	4.83	95.17	17.19	82.81	14.65	85.35
O3	20.01	79.99	17.71	82.29	6.42	93.58	20.99	79.01	18.65	81.35
O2	21.07	78.93	20.40	79.60	7.60	92.40	22.54	77.46	19.39	80.61
O1	18.67	81.33	20.25	79.75	9.30	90.70	22.80	77.20	19.12	80.88
W5	5.48	94.52	3.64	96.36	6.80	93.20	0.00	100.00	5.53	94.47
W4	7.21	92.79	5.83	94.17	3.90	96.10	0.00	100.00	6.75	93.25
W3	8.87	91.13	5.41	94.59	6.61	93.39	0.00	100.00	8.17	91.83
W2	10.26	89.74	4.51	95.49	4.73	95.27	0.00	100.00	9.29	90.71
W1	10.43	89.57	0.00	100.00	3.88	96.12	0.00	100.00	9.79	90.21
Total	16.17	83.83	16.01	83.99	6.07	93.93	18.77	81.23	15.93	84.07

Table K.2. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Enlisted Service Members by Service, September 2011

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (60,224)	% Male (403,381)	% Female (44,022)	% Male (223,724)	% Female (12,352)	% Male (166,983)	% Female (50,307)	% Male (213,235)	% Female (166,905)	% Male (1,007,323)
E09	7.70	92.30	5.61	94.39	3.69	96.31	10.63	89.37	7.33	92.67
E08	9.75	90.25	6.68	93.32	5.14	94.86	14.53	85.47	9.31	90.69
E07	11.44	88.56	9.22	90.78	5.79	94.21	16.82	83.18	11.86	88.14
E06	11.26	88.74	12.85	87.15	6.10	93.90	19.78	80.22	13.27	86.73
E05	12.42	87.58	14.84	85.16	6.82	93.18	20.28	79.72	14.59	85.41
E04	13.91	86.09	17.51	82.49	6.88	93.12	20.40	79.60	14.83	85.17
E03	14.64	85.36	21.74	78.26	7.35	92.65	18.33	81.67	15.66	84.34
E02	13.83	86.17	22.19	77.81	8.25	91.75	17.61	82.39	14.35	85.65
E01	13.20	86.80	23.32	76.68	6.01	93.99	16.24	83.76	13.95	86.05
Total	12.99	87.01	16.44	83.56	6.89	93.11	19.09	80.91	14.21	85.79

²⁵DMDC. (2015). DoD personnel, workforce reports & publications [Online data repository]. Retrieved from https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports

Table K.3. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Officers by Service, September 2012

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (16,001)	% Male (82,422)	% Female (8,634)	% Male (44,575)	% Female (1,348)	% Male (20,543)	% Female (12,487)	% Male (52,525)	% Female (38,470)	% Male (200,065)
O10	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	7.14	92.86	2.50	97.50
O9	9.80	90.20	10.00	90.00	0.00	100.00	6.82	93.18	7.74	92.26
O8	5.83	94.17	5.80	94.20	3.03	96.97	11.11	88.89	7.17	92.83
O7	6.02	93.98	11.97	88.03	0.00	100.00	9.52	90.48	8.39	91.61
O6	11.14	88.86	12.61	87.39	2.77	97.23	12.09	87.91	11.36	88.64
O5	12.80	87.20	11.38	88.62	2.50	97.50	13.76	86.24	12.11	87.89
O4	15.91	84.09	14.28	85.72	5.17	94.83	17.18	82.82	15.03	84.97
O3	20.13	79.87	17.78	82.22	6.53	93.47	21.71	78.29	18.80	81.20
O2	18.88	81.12	20.81	79.19	7.04	92.96	23.54	76.46	18.96	81.04
O1	19.77	80.23	20.51	79.49	10.04	89.96	22.77	77.23	19.81	80.19
W5	6.03	93.97	5.80	94.20	4.95	95.05	0.00	100.00	5.88	94.12
W4	7.38	92.62	5.75	94.25	4.70	95.30	0.00	100.00	6.93	93.07
W3	9.04	90.96	4.44	95.56	5.34	94.66	0.00	100.00	8.05	91.95
W2	10.82	89.18	5.53	94.47	4.66	95.34	0.00	100.00	9.79	90.21
W1	8.64	91.36	0.00	100.00	7.96	92.04	0.00	100.00	8.58	91.42
Total	16.26	83.74	16.23	83.77	6.16	93.84	19.21	80.79	16.13	83.87

Table K.4. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Enlisted Service Members by Service, September 2012

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (57,429)	% Male (389,645)	% Female (44,274)	% Male (216,856)	% Female (12,593)	% Male (164,336)	% Female (49,750)	% Male (214,050)	% Female (164,046)	% Male (984,887)
E09	7.16	92.84	5.50	94.50	3.89	96.11	11.25	88.75	7.29	92.71
E08	10.17	89.83	6.37	93.63	5.07	94.93	16.58	83.42	9.80	90.20
E07	11.39	88.61	9.77	90.23	5.94	94.06	17.68	82.32	12.26	87.74
E06	10.90	89.10	12.56	87.44	6.09	93.91	19.85	80.15	13.12	86.88
E05	12.18	87.82	15.13	84.87	6.91	93.09	19.78	80.22	14.43	85.57
E04	14.33	85.67	18.87	81.13	7.76	92.24	19.56	80.44	15.46	84.54
E03	14.58	85.42	22.92	77.08	7.43	92.57	17.74	82.26	15.49	84.51
E02	12.50	87.50	22.86	77.14	8.32	91.68	16.81	83.19	13.79	86.21
E01	11.32	88.68	22.56	77.44	5.98	94.02	17.40	82.60	13.86	86.14
Total	12.85	87.15	16.95	83.05	7.12	92.88	18.86	81.14	14.28	85.72

Table K.5. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Officers by Service, September 2013

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (16,186)	% Male (82,448)	% Female (8,995)	% Male (44,866)	% Female (1,375)	% Male (19,863)	% Female (12,692)	% Male (52,106)	% Female (39,248)	% Male (199,283)
O10	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	8.33	91.67	2.70	97.30
O9	11.54	88.46	9.30	90.70	0.00	100.00	11.11	88.89	9.49	90.51
O8	7.08	92.92	7.25	92.75	0.00	100.00	10.89	89.11	7.69	92.31
O7	5.63	94.37	11.30	88.70	3.13	96.88	6.80	93.20	7.34	92.66
O6	11.52	88.48	12.58	87.42	2.65	97.35	13.14	86.86	11.79	88.21
O5	12.55	87.45	11.61	88.39	2.90	97.10	14.24	85.76	12.28	87.72
O4	16.68	83.32	14.56	85.44	5.27	94.73	17.06	82.94	15.35	84.65
O3	18.74	81.26	18.44	81.56	6.57	93.43	21.90	78.10	18.97	81.03
O2	19.25	80.75	20.77	79.23	7.91	92.09	24.79	75.21	19.56	80.44
O1	19.57	80.43	21.64	78.36	11.17	88.83	23.31	76.69	20.43	79.57
W5	5.77	94.23	7.79	92.21	4.26	95.74	0.00	100.00	5.78	94.22
W4	7.42	92.58	5.94	94.06	4.17	95.83	0.00	100.00	6.92	93.08
W3	9.86	90.14	5.17	94.83	5.39	94.61	0.00	100.00	8.76	91.24
W2	10.29	89.71	6.18	93.82	5.41	94.59	0.00	100.00	9.49	90.51
W1	9.63	90.37	0.00	100.00	11.38	88.62	0.00	100.00	9.76	90.24
Total	16.41	83.59	16.70	83.30	6.47	93.53	19.59	80.41	16.45	83.55

Table K.6. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Enlisted Service Members by Service, September 2013

	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
Rank	% Female (55,660)	% Male (373,263)	% Female (46,991)	% Male (218,986)	% Female (12,826)	% Male (161,784)	% Female (49,111)	% Male (212,664)	% Female (164,588)	% Male (966,697)
E09	7.30	92.70	6.08	93.92	3.91	96.09	11.41	88.59	7.50	92.50
E08	10.57	89.43	7.08	92.92	5.24	94.76	17.87	82.13	10.39	89.61
E07	11.42	88.58	10.83	89.17	6.20	93.80	18.35	81.65	12.74	87.26
E06	10.75	89.25	13.03	86.97	6.07	93.93	20.04	79.96	13.29	86.71
E05	12.63	87.37	15.88	84.12	7.24	92.76	19.40	80.60	14.78	85.22
E04	14.62	85.38	20.49	79.51	8.46	91.54	18.45	81.55	15.86	84.14
E03	13.81	86.19	22.39	77.61	7.45	92.55	18.21	81.79	15.17	84.83
E02	13.69	86.31	22.92	77.08	7.84	92.16	17.09	82.91	14.29	85.71
E01	13.05	86.95	25.26	74.74	6.63	93.37	17.48	82.52	15.38	84.62
Total	12.98	87.02	17.67	82.33	7.35	92.65	18.76	81.24	14.55	85.45

Table K.7. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Officers by Service, September 2014

Rank	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
	% Female (16,162)	% Male (81,135)	% Female (9,248)	% Male (45,192)	% Female (1,426)	% Male (19,488)	% Female (12,404)	% Male (49,945)	% Female (39,240)	% Male (195,760)
O10	0.00	100.00	10.00	90.00	0.00	100.00	9.09	90.91	5.26	94.74
O9	10.42	89.58	11.11	88.89	0.00	100.00	11.36	88.64	9.66	90.34
O8	5.31	94.69	10.61	89.39	0.00	100.00	10.42	89.58	7.57	92.43
O7	6.57	93.43	6.90	93.10	3.03	96.97	5.80	94.20	6.13	93.87
O6	11.58	88.42	12.37	87.63	2.46	97.54	12.99	87.01	11.66	88.34
O5	12.91	87.09	11.78	88.22	3.22	96.78	14.61	85.39	12.54	87.46
O4	17.31	82.69	15.22	84.78	5.27	94.73	17.40	82.60	15.82	84.18
O3	20.04	79.96	18.92	81.08	6.71	93.29	22.36	77.64	19.26	80.74
O2	19.22	80.78	21.36	78.64	8.81	91.19	24.36	75.64	19.65	80.35
O1	19.67	80.33	20.92	79.08	13.40	86.60	23.56	76.44	20.61	79.39
W5	5.95	94.05	7.89	92.11	5.77	94.23	0.00	100.00	6.10	93.90
W4	8.37	91.63	6.02	93.98	4.84	95.16	0.00	100.00	7.69	92.31
W3	9.78	90.22	4.33	95.67	4.87	95.13	0.00	100.00	8.56	91.44
W2	10.14	89.86	7.86	92.14	6.45	93.55	0.00	100.00	9.60	90.40
W1	9.02	90.98	0.00	100.00	5.88	94.12	0.00	100.00	8.66	91.34
Total	16.61	83.39	16.99	83.01	6.82	93.18	19.89	80.11	16.70	83.30

Table K.8. Active Duty Gender Percentages for Enlisted Service Members by Service, September 2014

Rank	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Force	
	% Female (53,840)	% Male (352,679)	% Female (48,079)	% Male (219,080)	% Female (12,781)	% Male (154,196)	% Female (46,696)	% Male (203,408)	% Female (161,396)	% Male (929,363)
E09	7.37	92.63	6.53	93.47	4.03	95.97	12.56	87.44	7.92	92.08
E08	11.15	88.85	7.48	92.52	5.18	94.82	18.83	81.17	10.90	89.10
E07	11.52	88.48	11.41	88.59	6.12	93.88	18.41	81.59	12.88	87.12
E06	10.79	89.21	13.26	86.74	6.32	93.68	19.80	80.20	13.27	86.73
E05	13.29	86.71	16.67	83.33	7.91	92.09	19.02	80.98	15.17	84.83
E04	14.61	85.39	20.60	79.40	8.28	91.72	17.96	82.04	15.62	84.38
E03	14.47	85.53	22.89	77.11	7.05	92.95	18.73	81.27	15.85	84.15
E02	14.38	85.62	23.14	76.86	9.64	90.36	18.60	81.40	15.48	84.52
E01	13.28	86.72	25.01	74.99	8.24	91.76	17.76	82.24	15.79	84.21
Total	13.24	86.76	18.00	82.00	7.65	92.35	18.67	81.33	14.80	85.20



Appendix L

Abbreviations and Acronyms Used in Report and Appendices

AAP	American Academy of Pediatrics
AFB	Air Force Base
AFI	Air Force Instruction
AWAG	Americans Working Around the Globe
BCT	Basic Combat Training
BOC	basic officer class
BMI	body-mass index
BUMEDINST	Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Instruction
CFT	Combat Fitness Test
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
CO	commanding officer
COMDTINST	Commandant Instruction
COMSEC	communications security
CONLV	convalescent leave
CPO	Chief Petty Officers
DACOWITS	Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services
DEP	Delayed Entry Program
DFO	Designated Federal Officer
DMDC	Defense Manpower Data Center
DoDD	DoD Directive
DoDI	DoD Instruction
DoJ	U.S. Department of Justice
EO	Equal Opportunity program
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EWSTF	Enlisted Women in Submarines Task Force
FACA	Federal Advisory Committee Act
FY	fiscal year
GAO	U.S. Government Accountability Office
GS	general schedule
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
IOC	Infantry Officer Course
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JAMRS	Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies program

JPME	Joint Professional Military Education
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender
LOM	lack of motivation
LOR	Letter of Reprimand
MCO	Marine Corps Order
MHS	military health system
MLDC	Military Leadership Diversity Commission
MRO	Marine Reported On
MSSA	Military Selective Service Act
MTI	Military Training Instructor
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NAVSTA	Naval Station
NCO	noncommissioned officer
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NDU	National Defense University
NEC	Navy Enlisted Classification
NMED	Not Medical Qualified
NPIC	National Perinatal Information Center
OASD(HA)	Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs
OB/GYN	obstetrician/gynecologist
ODMEO	Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity
OIC	Officer in Charge
OPNAVINST	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction
OPSEC	operations security
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSD(HA)	Office of the Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs
OUUSD(P&R)	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness
PES	performance evaluation system
PFT	Physical Fitness Test
PHI	protected health information
PTSD	posttraumatic stress disorder
RET	retired
RGE	regular government employee
RMS	Remember My Service

ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
SA	sexual assault
SAPRO	Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office
SECDEF	Secretary of Defense
SH	sexual harassment
SME	subject matter expert
SSS	Selective Service System
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice
USA	U.S. Army
USAF	U.S. Air Force
USCG	U.S. Coast Guard
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness
USMA	United States Military Academy
USMC	U.S. Marine Corps
USN	U.S. Navy
USO	United Services Organization
USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
WISR	Women in the Services Review
WPAFB	Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
XO	executive officer