

DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES (DACOWITS)

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

9–10 September 2015

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) held a full committee meeting on September 9 and September 10, 2015. The meeting took place at the Hilton Alexandria–Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22311.

9 September 2015

Introduction and Opening Remarks

COL Aimee Kominiak, Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, opened the meeting by reviewing the Committee's establishment and charter. DACOWITS Chair, LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson, thanked the day's briefers and public audience for their attendance. She asked all Committee members and meeting attendees to introduce themselves.

LtGen (Ret) Wilson noted that, with the graduation of the first two women from the Army's elite Ranger School, this is a historic time for women in the military. This event is part of a continuum of increased opportunities for women to prove themselves in combat. LtGen (Ret) Wilson provided a summary of the accomplishments women have made in the military. During the Revolutionary War, women served in the military, taking roles as laundresses, cooks, and nurses. Some brave women took part in combat, disguised as men. During the Civil War, women answered the call to serve, taking roles as matrons, nurses, and cooks. A few worked as spies or disguised themselves as men to serve as soldiers. World War I marked the first time that women were able to serve in the military in a more official capacity as nurses and support staff. Several women worked in France as telephone operators. However, women in the military were viewed as temporary contract employees and volunteers, and they were not granted full military status. During World War II, women again responded to the call for duty, carrying out several non-combat responsibilities. When the United States needed recruits, women joined the Reserve Component. It was only after World War II that women were officially offered full military status, with the passing of the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act. In 1973, the military draft ended and an all-volunteer military was formed, which provided more opportunities for women to serve. In 1976, the Service Academies opened to women. During the Persian Gulf War, women were deployed to combat zones. Congress authorized women to fly in combat missions and serve on combatant ships, and in 1998, female fighter pilots were able to fly combat missions off aircraft carriers during Operation DESERT FOX in Iraq.

In 2012, DoD eliminated the co-location provision of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule, which prohibited women from being assigned to units that engage in direct ground combat, and announced the opening of 14,000 combat-related positions to women, including jobs in artillery, tank, and combat engineer units. In 2013, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff GEN Martin Dempsey and then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta signed a

memorandum that rescinded the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule on the basis that no individual who wants to serve should be forbidden to do so based on gender. Rather, a person should be judged on individual merit. By January 1, 2016, all previously closed positions in the military, including frontline combat roles, will become open to women unless the Services provide specific justification for exceptions. LtGen (Ret) Wilson thanked all the women responsible for these actions and for inspiring a new generation of servicewomen. She reminded Committee members that DACOWITS received a briefing in March 2015 on the update in the assessment of opening the Ranger School to women. On August 21, two women passed and graduated from the Army's Ranger School course. LtGen (Ret) Wilson shared that Committee member Ms. Donna McAleer attended the graduation of CAPT Kristen Griest and 1LT Shaye Haver from Ranger School. LtGen (Ret) Wilson invited Ms. McAleer to give her personal account of the event.

Ms. McAleer was proud to be one of the many female West Point graduates who made the trip to watch the graduation of CAPT Griest and 1LT Haver and described the day as "monumental and historic." She felt it validated what should already be known—that women are strong, confident, and capable leaders. It is physical strength, relentless focus on accomplishing the mission, strong leadership, and the ability to inspire even in the worst moments that foster success. These qualities are not gender specific. The men and women that graduate from Ranger School are exceptional individuals, teammates, and soldiers. She recounted how SFC Robert Hoffnagle volunteered for the assignment to work with female soldiers who had been selected to attend the first gender-integrated class and praised the Army for how it handled the media and the skeptics. Ms. McAleer noted that this is only the beginning for women. She concluded that CAPT Griest and 1LT Haver are extraordinary and dedicated soldiers, and recognized the efforts of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) team, including MG Scott Miller, CSM Curtis Arnold, SFC Robert Hoffnagle, and COL David Fivecoat.

COL Kominiak reviewed the status of the Committee's Requests for Information (RFIs). The Committee received responses to most of its RFIs in either written or briefing format. The Committee received a partial response to one Assignments Group's RFI regarding chaplaincy; the response was incomplete because the Chaplaincy Board does not collect some of the requested data. DACOWITS requested that the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity provide a briefing on the status of its report to Congress on sexual harassment; the briefing was postponed until the December meeting, since the report has not yet been made public. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) (OASD(HA)) was scheduled to provide a briefing on pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding policies in response to an RFI that was deferred from the June 2015 quarterly meeting.

COL Kominiak also provided an update on congressional notifications. On July 21, 2014, the Army notified Congress that it intends to open 19,716 positions in two formerly closed occupational specialties (MOS 13B Cannon Crewmember and MOS 13D Field Artillery Automated Tactical Data System Specialist), along with one skill identifier position (U6-Field Artillery Weapons Maintenance).

Medical Review of the Services' Pregnancy/Postpartum Policies

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. DoD Instruction (DoDI)1342.1, "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," while DoD Directive (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 six months after pregnancy termination." 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 J. Krulewitch, Director, Women's Health, Medical Ethics and Patient Advocacy, OASD(HA)

To start her presentation, Dr. Krulewitch announced that her intentions were not to provide a medical briefing, as indicated by the 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 American Academy of Pediatrics' 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.

In regard to 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 assure 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)"; DoDD 4715.1E, "Environment, Safety and Occupational Health (ESOH)"; DoDI 6490.03, "Deployment Health"; and DoDD 6490.02E, "Comprehensive Health Surveillance." However, DoDI 6055.08, "Occupational Ionizing Radiation Protection Program," 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 forms at the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)-level; 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 document abortion or loss of pregnancy by the Services.

Dr. Krulewitch stated that DoDI 1342.1 on postpartum deployment deferment should not be methodologically aligned with DoDD 1308.1 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, suggest a need for further investigation.

Army Ranger Assessment Update

In accordance with the Secretary of Defense's (SECDEF) February 2013 memo, DACOWITS continues to monitor the Services' implementation plans to further integrate women into previously closed positions and units. Specifically, 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 on the assessment being conducted with three gender-integrated classes.

Mr. Dave Brinkley, Assistant Deputy, Office of the Chief of Staff (G-3/5/7), TRADOC

The Army has launched the "Soldier 2020" initiative to integrate women into previously closed occupational specialties. For this endeavor, 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 their systematic studies on integration. A member of the Committee inquired about the scientific testing that was 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.

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 is a small cohort of women that possess the physical and tactical ability to complete the course. The Ranger course is a 62-day 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 out of Camp Merrill at Fort Benning. 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 at Camp Rudder at Eglin Air Force Base, by the 6th Ranger Training Battalion. 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, and 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. Despite negative comments on social media, MG A. Scott Miller assured skeptics that 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, etc.) 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. Moving 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 due to 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 due to performance or LOM. The counseling addresses performance issues and provides instruction on how the student can improve and on which aspects of the course the student needs to focus.

Detailing/Assignment Process for Women Serving at Sea

Women were assigned to combatant ships in the Coast Guard in the 1970s and in 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 to 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 J. 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 physically have space available have women assigned. CDR Caston explained that there is a ratio of commodores 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 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.

The Committee requested the reports from previous years indicating the population of women on ships.

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 stressed that every cutter that can accommodate servicewomen does so, but that the number of available cutters is limited women in the Coast Guard and their interest and operational ratings. 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.

Army Ranger Assessment Update Continued

The Committee inquired about any changes to Ranger School culture that may 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, through work and action, facilitated a positive culture change. 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.

The Committee expressed concern regarding those servicemen that do not meet the new gender-neutral standards. Mr. Brinkley assured the Committee that, although approximately 10% 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 stressed 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 will be used for such transfers, which means that the decision to transfer will 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 stressed that the Army is not going to force women down any career path, stressing how the military is voluntary and will be influenced by the number of women who volunteer to make change happen.

Review of In-Home Childcare Provider Certification Programs

The Committee remains interested in quality of life and family issues affecting servicewomen, specifically regarding sufficient access to childcare. The Committee requested a briefing from each Service to explain the process of becoming an in-home childcare provider for the military via the In-Home Child Care Provider Accreditation System/Program. Briefers were asked to address the following: average length of time it takes to initially become a provider; whether certifications are reciprocal across State lines and between Services/installations; the certification differences, if any, for providers located within versus outside of the continental United States; the different levels of certification and how long it takes to achieve each level; the number of in-home military spouse providers; the percentage of in-home providers with an extended stay qualification; and the training and resources available to in-home childcare providers. Committee members are also interested in the Services' recommendations for encouraging and/or enabling military spouses to become in-home childcare providers.

Army: Ms. Cherri Verschraegen, Director, Child, Youth and School Services G9, Installation Management Command

The Army's Family Child Care (FCC) Program is one childcare option provided to military family members; through this program, military family members or civilians work as independent contractors. As of the day of the briefing, there were 489 childcare providers serving 2,024 Army children. Fewer than half of these childcare providers (36 percent) were qualified to offer extended-stay hours.

Ms. Verschraegen reviewed the application criteria and certification process. To apply to be a provider through the Army's FCC Program, applicants must be 18 years of age; hold a high school diploma or the equivalent; read, speak, and write in English; successfully pass a pre-employment physical, maintain current immunizations, and be physically and behaviorally capable of performing the duties of the job; have no conviction of, admission to, or evidence of family violence, child neglect, alcohol abuse, or use of illegal drugs by any person living in the home; and hold no other job during the hours the home is in operation. The certification process ensures providers and their homes meet specific requirements related to health, fire prevention, safety, and child development programming; providers also must pass stringent background checks and home inspections. Ms. Verschraegen outlined the five different certification status types: registered, provisional, full certification, inactive, and waiting.

Providers are offered a variety of different means of support and resources. FCC staff host professional training, and providers are able to connect with other providers through peer mentoring. To further support providers and help defray costs associated with opening a childcare home, a wide array of toys and equipment are made available to providers through the FCC lending library. FCC staff visit providers at least monthly. Ms. Verschraegen explained that the majority of these visits are unannounced, but that during these visits, the home is inspected and FCC staff are further able to assist and support the provider. In a similar vein, a Committee member inquired whether backup providers are available. Ms. Verschraegen clarified that trained backup providers are registered with the FCC office and are able to assist providers when needed.

If a provider must transfer to another location, the process is reciprocal across the Army and other Services. The provider must update paperwork, including an abbreviated application; complete local background checks; and draft a new contingency and back-up plan. Providers

who transfer locations also must undergo another round of training and series of home inspections.

Demand for FCC providers varies by each garrison and is affected by the availability of child development centers (CDCs). Efforts are being made to increase the number of FCC providers. The Army recommends the following to increase interest: (1) offer providers larger housing units, with an additional bedroom, to provide space for the business and allow for a separation between home and business, and (2) expedite placement on housing wait lists so providers can open their homes for business more quickly.

Navy: Mr. Gregory R. Young, Program Director, Navy Installations Command Navy Child and Youth

The Navy Child Development Home (CDH) program is an integral part of the Navy Child Care Program, providing up to 26 percent of the Navy's total childcare capacity. Mr. Young explained that CDHs are a safe and cost-effective means of providing childcare, especially for evenings, weekends, and hourly care. As of the day of the briefing, there were approximately 1,800 certified CDH providers, and 94 percent of those providers were military spouses.

To become a CDH provider, an applicant must submit to a medical screening, complete an application packet, provide three references, and undergo extensive background checks. Once committed to becoming a CDH provider, providers must complete initial and monthly training that focuses on developmentally appropriate childcare practices, child abuse, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation or CPR; maintain current liability insurance; and pass monthly inspections by the CDH Director. All CDH providers must renew their DoD childcare certification annually. Mr. Young conceded that while DoD certification ensures better quality providers, the process to obtain DoD certification can take three to nine months, mainly due to the time required to complete background checks. This is a challenge for the program.

Mr. Young addressed other CDH challenges. One of the most persistent problems is combating the stigma among parents that center-based childcare is better, safer, and more convenient. The Navy is attempting to overcome this notion by offering financial incentives. Providers are subsidized, and costs for participating in CDH have been reduced. With the subsidy, CDH childcare now costs 10 percent less than CDC childcare. As a result, the recruitment pool of individuals interested in becoming CDH providers has started to increase; however, it is still not the size the Navy would like it to be. A similarly related obstacle is the number of hours CDH providers are expected to work without help. CDCs have multiple staff members who work in shifts, making childcare less intensive and overwhelming.

Mr. Young identified one initiative that spans across Services—the MilitaryChildCare.com Web site—that outlines all potential childcare options based on a Service member's needs. The site is available now in pilot locations and is projected to be available in all locations by 2017.

Air Force: Ms. Debra Willey, Deputy Chief, Air Force Child & Youth Programs, Headquarters Air Force Services

Ms. Wiley explained that the Air Force's FCC Program is promoted not only to address the need for childcare services, but also as a means to provide employment for military spouses. As of the day of the briefing, there were 556 active FCC providers. Unlike the other Services, however, the Air Force's child support programs are a part of the core support squadron.

FCC is designed for children two weeks through 12 years old, and care is offered as an alternative to CDCs during duty hours, evenings, shifts, and weekends. In fact, as of June 30, 2015, 58 percent of FCC providers offered extended duty care; 24 percent of FCC providers offered overnight care; 55 percent of FCC providers offered weekend care; and 41 percent of FCC providers offered shift care.

Ms. Wiley further elaborated that FCC providers offer eight types of expanded childcare that accommodate atypical duty schedules or other unique needs, including offering care not available in CDCs for children with special needs and young infants. As part of expanded childcare, the Air Force offers a subsidy program that reduces out-of-pocket childcare expenses for families with unique needs, so parents are able to pay the same fee for FCC extended care as they would pay for CDC care. For example, if airmen are required to work extended hours or need overnight care for their children, they incur no additional cost beyond what they would pay for CDC care. In most cases, FCC members pay only for the first 50 hours of childcare received each week, and any extended childcare is provided at no extra charge.

Coast Guard: Mr. Kenneth O'Meara, Child Development Services Program Manager

Different from the other Services, the Military Child Care Act does not cover the Coast Guard. Mr. O'Meara explained that the Coast Guard's childcare programs are limited and small, since its population typically lives off installation premises. There are few standards across Coast Guard installations, and some have few to no childcare resources. The Coast Guard's FCC Home Program, funded under a Presidential Directive to increase accessibility and accountability of childcare programs, took the best practices from all of DoD and applied it to the Coast Guard instructions and regulations. The FCC application process begins with an introductory meeting with a Health, Safety, and Work-Life Child Development Services Specialist. Background checks, which have proven time consuming, are initiated, and applicants attend an orientation training and conduct a home inspection, medical evaluation, and verification of liability insurance. Once these steps are completed, they receive provisional certification from the installation's commanding officer. The timeline for providers to become certified is generally four to six weeks.

Mr. O'Meara explained that the Coast Guard faces the same challenges as other Services for recruiting new providers and marketing the home program to parents. In the Coast Guard, FCC is a commander's program; each installation commander can approve or decline the presence of home childcare at his or her installation. Resources such as lending libraries are available in some key locations. One other distinction from the other Services is that Coast Guard installations typically do not have a fire, safety, or medical inspector on site, meaning that agreements must be set up with local departments for inspections. The Coast Guard has established reciprocity of the FCC certification across the Service; DoD mandates Service-specific certification. Coast Guard districts have only nine child development program locations, primarily located on the east and west coasts. The Coast Guard has a total of 24 certified FCC homes; 62 percent offer extended care.

There are three levels of FCC certification: provisional, full, and renewal. Providers can transfer their certification, but the ability to do so depends on housing availability, community need, and availability of on and off base resources. FCC training includes two components: a 16-hour orientation training and a 24-hour full certification training. Training requirements and topics are standardized. Mr. O'Meara listed the following recommendations for improving services: (1)

change of mindset from facility-based to home-based care, (2) emphasis on childcare and mission readiness, (3) emphasis on oversight and accountability, and (4) stronger partnerships with State licensing agencies. The Committee expressed concerns that Coast Guard members have a lower priority on waiting lists for DoD childcare facilities compared with other Service members, but Mr. O'Meara clarified that under the Coast Guard's agreement with DoD, the Coast Guard is given the same priority as other Services for childcare. The Committee expressed concerns about Coast Guard members lacking resources if they are stationed in remote locations, and Mr. O'Meara acknowledged that this is a challenge.

Marine Corps: Maj Veronica Kaltrider, Office of Legislative Affairs

Similar to some of the other Services, the Marine Corps operates an FCC program. Maj Kaltrider reviewed the application and certification process. Perspective providers apply with the installation FCC Office and are subject to background and reference checks. Potential FCC homes are inspected by subject matter experts in fire, safety, and health to ensure it meets spatial and other requirements, and by early childhood specialists. In addition, the prospective FCC provider must develop written policies and emergency procedures; obtain childcare insurance; and receive initial Child and Youth Programs orientation, training, and resources to be used in the daily operations of the program. The Quality Review Board (QRB), the installation mechanism for FCC certification, reviews all application materials and approves or disapproves the prospective provider. If approval is given, the installation commander (or representative) awards FCC certification to the home. On average, it usually takes two to three months for initial certification as a provider (depending on background check adjudication). There are 121 FCC homes across the Marine Corps, and nine out of the 14 Marine Corps installations operate an FCC program.

Maj Kaltrider explained that, once approved, the FCC provider is supported by the QRB, and the provider's home is monitored by the FCC monitor. All certified homes receive an FCC license to operate and are encouraged to obtain an external FCC accreditation certificate. If a provider relocates to a new installation, he or she must reapply through the FCC Director and meet all specified DoD, Marine Corps, and installation policy requirements.

10 September 2015

Morning Remarks

The Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, COL Aimee Kominiak, opened the meeting to the public and introduced the agenda topics for the day. COL Kominiak congratulated COL Linda Sheimo, Army representative to DACOWITS, on her retirement scheduled for December 8, 2015. DACOWITS Chair LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson thanked the day's briefers and public audience for their attendance. She asked all Committee members and meeting attendees to introduce themselves.

Public Comment Period

The Committee received four written statements from the public in advance of the deadline published in the Federal Register Notice; Ms. Doris Turner asked to make an oral presentation in addition to her written statement.

Ms. Doris Turner

Ms. Turner shared her opinion that women can succeed in all areas of the military if given the opportunity. She attributed the fact that women had been limited to certain positions in the military to a physiological difference—when Ms. Turner learned of these limitations during her time at West Point, she interpreted it as things women could and could not do because of their bodies. In her experience, she has observed no difference in mission. Ms. Turner stated that courage, tenacity, and the ability to perform the mission are not based on hormones or physiology, and that women in the military should be given the opportunity to try.

2015 Propose and Vote on Recommendations

Committee members discussed and voted on the following recommendations.

ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Effective and Full Integration of Women Into Closed Positions and Units

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.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

B. Female Accessions

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 Armed Services, or estimates of the propensity of women to enter the service.*

Discussion: A Committee member moved to amend the recommendation to focus on goals rather than targets and to focus on systemically increasing the representation of women. After discussing the word choice of “goals” versus “targets” as a Committee, the member withdrew her amendment and instead proposed a different amendment, substituting “goals” for “targets” and specifying that the goals should be for systematic increases in the representation of women. The Committee voted to adopt the amendment (13 votes in favor, 4 votes against).

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the amended recommendation (16 votes in favor, 1 vote against).

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

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

4. *Continuing Concern: Properly Fitting Combat Equipment*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously (17 votes in favor).

WELLNESS:

A. Military Culture and the Elimination Of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

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.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

3. *Continuing Concern: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Training and Retaliation*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously (17 votes in favor).

B. Strengthening the Effectiveness of the Sexual Harassment Program

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 program in addressing sexual harassment.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

C. The Impact of Social Media on Service Members

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 which takes place wholly online can itself constitute sexual harassment.*

Discussion: The Committee discussed the meaning behind the word “wholly.” One member explained the Committee’s intention to broaden existing policy that covers written and verbal sexual harassment further to include activities taking place entirely online.

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

D. Pregnancy and Postpartum Policies

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.*

Discussion: As a point of order, one member proposed changing the structure of the sentence by moving the modifier “at least every two years” earlier in the sentence to be more grammatically correct.

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the clarified recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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 Armed Services.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

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

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

4. *Continuing Concern: Postpartum Policies*

Discussion: One Committee member commented that the brevity of this continuing concern does not reflect the attention and work that the Committee has put into this topic over the past year. At the time of the vote, the issue was evolving quickly. Since all Secretaries and Service Chiefs recognize postpartum policies as an important issue, the Committee decided to propose a continuing concern rather than a recommendation in this area.

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously (17 votes in favor).

E. Improvements in the Use of Protected Health Information

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.*

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

F. Marine Corps Performance Evaluation System Improvements

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.*

Discussion: As a point of clarification, one member inquired whether the Committee was certain that no other Service faced the same issue as the Marine Corps. The Chair responded that the Committee was recently briefed on this issue and the only Service stating that it addressed pregnancy specifically was the Marine Corps.

Voting: The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously (17 votes in favor).

Final Remarks

Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, COL Aimee Kominiak, thanked the remaining attendees and closed the public meeting.

Meeting was adjourned.



**Report Submitted by:
COL Aimee Kominiak, USA
DACOWITS Director**

**Report Certified by:
LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson
DACOWITS Chair**

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson (Chair)
CMSgt (Ret) Bernise F. Belcer (Vice Chair)

Dr. Kristy E. Anderson	Ms. Teresa Christenson
FLTCM (Ret) Jacqueline DiRosa	Ms. Sharlene W. Hawkes
CAPT (Ret) Beverly G. Kelley	Rev. Dr. Cynthia R. Lindenmeyer
MG (Ret) John Macdonald	Ms. Donna M. McAleer
Ms. Monica Medina	Mr. Brian Morrison
LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park	MG (Ret) Gale S. Pollock
VADM (Ret) Carol M. Pottenger	SMA (Ret) Kenneth Preston
Dr. Jackie Young	