

DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES (DACOWITS)

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

11 June 2019

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) held a quarterly business meeting on June 11, 2019. The meeting took place at the Hilton Alexandria—Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22311.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

COL Toya Davis, DACOWITS Military Director and Designated Federal Officer, opened the June quarterly business meeting by reviewing the Committee's establishment and charter. COL Davis reminded those in attendance that comments made by individual Committee members during the meeting are their own and do not necessarily reflect the thoughts of the full Committee. COL Davis then turned the meeting over to Gen (Ret.) Janet Wolfenbarger, DACOWITS Chair.

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that DACOWITS had the honor of swearing in five new members who were to serve on the Committee. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger asked all Committee members and meeting attendees to introduce themselves.

Swearing-In of New Committee Members

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger introduced the guest speaker, Honorable James Stewart, who was performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, to preside over the swearing-in of the five new Committee members. Mr. Stewart also serves as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. In these roles, Mr. Stewart serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness on all matters relating to civilian and military personnel policies, reserve integration, military community and family policy, and total force planning and requirements. He also exercises day-to-day supervision of DoD Education Activity and the Defense Commissary Agency.

Prior to his tenure as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Mr. Stewart served as the Economic Development Committee Chair, North Carolina Military Affairs Commission. In that position he provided advice, counsel, and recommendations to the General Assembly, the Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs, and State agencies on initiatives, programs, and legislation that would increase the role that North Carolina's military installations, the National Guard, and the Reserve play in America's defense strategy. Mr. Stewart retired from the United States Air Force as a Major General after 37 years of service in the Active and Reserve Components. He is a command pilot with more than 4,700 hours of flight time and experience with five different types of aircraft.

Mr. Stewart thanked the Committee for the invitation and stated he was honored to swear in five new members who will further strengthen the Committee's work and impact. Mr. Stewart described how DACOWITS is one of the oldest Federal Advisory Committees in existence along with the Reserve Forces Policy Board, both of which were established in 1951. He acknowledged that these are the longest serving Committees to provide advice and counsel to the Secretary of Defense. Mr. Stewart described the critical role of DACOWITS in the integration of women within mainstream military. He stated that women have played a vital role in the U.S. military and that their ability to serve in all positions was long overdue. He commended the efforts of the Committee toward the integration of women into all positions, including combat roles. Mr. Stewart stated that the Committee's work is important and that he reviews the annual report each year for suggestions to implement. He commended the Committee members for their great dedication serving within their voluntary positions and thanked them for their important work. Mr. Stewart ended his remarks by thanking the current 11 members of the Committee and stated that the 5 additional members were all supremely qualified to advise the Secretary of Defense on policies related to women in the military.

Mr. Stewart introduced and read a short biographical sketch for each new DACOWITS member: CAPT (Ret.) Kenneth Barrett, Ms. LeeAnne Linderman, LTG (Ret.) Kevin Mangum, Brig Gen (Ret.) Jarris Sanborn, and Brig Gen (Ret.) Allyson Solomon. COL Davis then administered the oath to them in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Mr. Stewart presented each new member with a DACOWITS pin, and he and Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger congratulated them. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger thanked Mr. Stewart for hosting the swearing-in ceremony and for his continuing support of the Committee. COL Davis announced a short break while the Committee recessed to the lobby area for a group photograph.

Status of Requests for Information

COL Davis reviewed the status of the Committee's requests for information (RFIs). The Committee received responses to 9 of its 10 requests. The response to RFI 3 was postponed to accommodate the Marine Corps' in-depth study of the recruit training cycle. All the written responses to the RFIs were published on the DACOWITS website.

Brief: Findings from the Coast Guard 2019 Diversity Study (RFI 2)

To follow up on previous briefings the Committee received indicating that women are disproportionately leaving the Services at a higher rate than men and a 2017 recommendation by the Committee that the Secretary of Defense "direct the development and adoption of an exit survey or surveys to assess why the attrition level for women is higher than that for men at various career points," the Committee requested a briefing from the Coast Guard on the findings and actions being taken as a result of their 2019 Improving Gender Diversity in the U.S. Coast Guard: Identifying Barriers to Female Retention study.

Coast Guard briefer 1 began by reviewing the origin and background of the Coast Guard women's retention study. The study was conducted by the Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center, which is a federally funded research and development center operated by RAND. The purpose of the study was to identify root causes for attrition for women in the Coast Guard and develop recommendations for the Coast Guard that will help mitigate retention

barriers identified in the study. Coast Guard briefer 1 stated the idea for this study began in February 2017. Focus groups were held for 4 months beginning in March 2018; the researchers then detailed their findings in a report that was released in March 2019.

Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that the Coast Guard prepared to operationalize the recommendations made in the report by commissioning the Personnel Readiness Task Force (PRTF). The task force was formed in November to prepare for the March release of the study. PRTF is composed of seven Service members from across the Coast Guard: a team lead, a deputy, and five program analysts and advisors. PRTF was created to ensure the Coast Guard was making recommendations that would facilitate the action items identified in the report as drivers for personnel readiness.

Coast Guard briefer 3 described her role as being tasked with delving into specific programs and directories within the Coast Guard to understand how the study's recommendations might affect those areas. She said her role was to ensure the Coast Guard was continuing to make progress with any recommendations or actions it pursued.

Coast Guard briefer 1 stated that the Coast Guard wanted to identify root causes [for issues noted by the study] and develop recommendations based on the study. There had been multiple policy changes since the last study conducted by the Coast Guard in 1990. Although the previous study identified issues, it did not examine the root causes of those issues. The briefer clarified that by root causes, she meant the underlying causes of attrition for women in the Coast Guard. She cited the example of a woman who completed the survey and said she was leaving the military for education or family reasons. The root causes were the factor(s) that did not allow that woman to manage both career and family or the reason(s) why the Coast Guard was not able to help her do so. Prior to the study, the Coast Guard had a sense of what the root causes were, but this research gave the Service a better sense of those causes through outside perspectives rather than internal assessments with internal biases about the Service's needs. The briefer stated that the study helped the Coast Guard identify early action items that could be accomplished quickly.

Coast Guard briefer 1 described the methodology of the study, which included a quantitative component, qualitative component, and benchmarking measurements. There was a quantitative statistical analysis of Coast Guard personnel data to examine gender differences in retention and which characteristics may help explain these differences. The briefer stated women were retained at a lower rate than men during the first 10 years of service and were more likely to serve in traditional support roles such as yeoman and storekeeper. The qualitative component of the study used focus groups to gather women's stories of why they wanted to leave the Coast Guard or what their tipping points were for leaving the Service. The study compared the focus group data with the quantitative analysis. There were 164 focus groups conducted with approximately 1,100 participants, which included 127 men. Coast Guard briefer 1 stated that the purpose of including men in the focus groups was to help determine whether men left the Service for the same reasons as women and to use those findings to better understand whether retention challenges were a gender or general workforce issue. The last part of the study methodology was benchmarking, which included data sources to validate the issues that arose organically within the Coast Guard study. The briefer stated that the RAND Corporation (RAND), the contractor that conducted the study, used the DACOWITS 2017 focus group report for benchmarking. Appendix A of the Coast Guard's report showed a comparison of the study findings against other relevant studies.

Coast Guard briefer 1 held up a hard copy of the final report to show the Committee and stated that the report was included as an attachment in the Coast Guard's response to the RFI. The briefer said the benchmarking section showed all the metrics used. RAND researchers determined the findings of their study were aligned with those of other, similar surveys and studies on the Coast Guard.

Coast Guard briefer 1 presented the findings from the research study. The study findings were focused on three topic areas: work environment, career, and family or personal life. Regarding work environment, the briefer said the study found incidents of toxic leadership, unfamiliarity with policies specific to female Coast Guard members, and a lack of female role models; these were topics that resonated with male focus group participants as well. Eighty percent of the focus groups cited examples of gender bias and discrimination such as the exclusion of women, a "boys' club," and a sense that women were not valued or respected in the Service. Half of the women in the study said sexual harassment and sexual assault were more pervasive in some communities, there was a fear of being assaulted aboard ships, and there was a lack of confidence in how leaders dealt with these incidents. One-third of the participants expressed concerns about weight standards; for example, that the standards did not account for different body types and were not aligned with their jobs, and that the taping policies for measuring body fat were problematic. Findings about workload resources suggested that women in the Coast Guard felt they had to do more with less.

Coast Guard briefer 1 then described the findings related to career; these related to advancement and bias in evaluations; female berthing limitations; collateral duties stereotyped as female and assigned to females; being far from family; remote locations; women not assigned with other women; and the unpredictable, frustrating nature of the detailing and assignment process. Participants felt there were better civilian job prospects that would allow them to avoid deployment, present fewer gender-related climate issues, and offer higher salaries.

Coast Guard briefer 1 cited the findings about family and personal life as the tipping point that pushed many members to leave the Coast Guard. Participants felt as if they could not balance family and career—they had to choose one. Participants stated that they felt they could handle other types of problems but that the issues related to family and personal life were what led them to decide they could no longer serve. Members felt their civilian spouses had limited career opportunities, deployments were stressful, and male military spouses had to battle stereotypes. Participants also mentioned that assignments were scheduled at different times for dual-military members, which made managing two careers more difficult. The briefer stated that there were 5,200 women in the Coast Guard and that half of those women were in a dual-military marriage. There were also reported issues with child care; child care affordability; separation from children; pregnancy and breastfeeding; discrimination; the timing of pregnancy; and a lack of understanding from both peers and supervisors, which included not understanding the need and frequency for expressing breastmilk.

Coast Guard briefer 1 asserted that the Coast Guard survey also identified what the Service was doing right and what factors women said made them want to continue to serve. Some of those reasons were benefits, healthcare, retirement, pay, rewarding work, a desire to be a female role model, and the people and camaraderie within the Service.

Coast Guard briefer 3 presented the recommendations resulting from the study, which were not to be confused with the action items. One recommendation was to update the personnel

management system. Another was to augment human capital to cover staff absences during parental leave. She stated the parental leave recommendation was one in which the Coast Guard took immediate action. The Service began using Reservists as surge staffing to cover absences by members who were on parental leave for more than 41 days; the extra staffing was funded through Coast Guard headquarters. Coast Guard briefer 3 stated that smaller units who lose personnel for 120 days may not have the capacity or funds to pay for a Reservist to cover the time; the surge staffing allows for coverage and also helps Reservists to be a more integral part of the fleet.

Coast Guard briefer 3 stated another recommendation from the study was to explore ways to improve child care options. Military spouses who are interested in being in-home care providers can request Coast Guard housing with an additional bedroom for child care purposes. Another recommendation from the study was to modify the weight and body fat standards program. The study discovered a perceived inequality about how body fat standards were applied that disproportionately affected women and minorities. In response, the Coast Guard created a team to examine different ways to restructure the program. The study also recommended the Service explore creative solutions to address berthing limitations for women. Coast Guard briefer 3 said that the Service has a Women Afloat Coordinator to manage women's assignments within the fleet but that the advanced age of many Coast Guard ships makes it hard to secure separate berthing space for 1 or 2 women as opposed to berthing 10 or 15 people together.

Coast Guard briefer 3 then discussed the study's recommendation to develop a communication plan and strengthen leadership education. She asserted that there were already a range of Coast Guard leadership programs and trainings and that the Service wanted to examine how to restructure the programs to make them more robust and to educate leaders on policies specific to female Coast Guard members. She said that the Coast Guard already has documents, resources, and policies specific to being a parent in the workforce and that it would like to make it easier for members to access those resources and for commanders to obtain the necessary information. The study similarly recommended expanding opportunities for comprehensive leadership development training.

Coast Guard briefer 3 then discussed another recommendation resulting from the study, the importance of assignment policies designed to meet the needs of Service members' personal lives. For junior enlisted members and junior officers, this would include guaranteeing co-location and tour lengths for dual-military marriages. However, if Service members in a dual-military marriage chose not to be co-located for professional reasons, they could forgo this option. If dual-military Service members desired to be stationed in a specific location, the Coast Guard would do everything possible to allow them to co-locate with their spouses.

Coast Guard briefer 3 next discussed the recommendation on improving accountability and metrics. She explained that the Service's support systems were antiquated; for example, when a record is finalized, the system does not verify whether the record is correct. As a result the Coast Guard wants to improve quality control. The study also recommended that the Service ensure workforce data collection include comprehensive, relevant variables.

Coast Guard briefer 1 described the implementation framework from RAND, which categorized recommendations into three groups by the potential for impact and the expected difficulty of implementation. Quick wins were early action items with a high potential for impact and a low level of implementation difficulty. Contributors to incremental change were changes with a low

potential for impact and a low level of implementation difficulty. Enduring systematic changes were those with a high potential for impact and a high level of implementation difficulty.

Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that the Service was not surprised by the findings of the study. She described the Coast Guard's actions prior to the study release, which included efforts by senior leadership to build momentum for the study's findings by preparing a list of early action items that were accomplished prior to the completion of the report. One such item was an improvement to parental leave by extending leave for new parents. Another was an expansion of the temporary separation policy, which is now available to those at a lower rank and Service members who have experienced sexual assault. Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that Service members can now defer temporary assigned duty for up to 12 months after giving birth, allowing a new mother the choice not to take temporary duty that would keep her away from her child. The Coast Guard also has taken steps to discontinue the use of personal pronouns within evaluations to mitigate bias in the evaluation system.

Coast Guard briefer 2 next described an action item related to making co-location easier for dual-military couples. She noted that, 52 percent of married female Coast Guard members were married to another Service member, whereas 7 percent of male members were married to another Service member. Another co-location change was to ensure assignment timelines align for dual-military couples. Dual-military couples can now receive matched tour lengths to reduce stress on these couples. The Coast Guard also now provides more flexibility for Permanent Change of Station moves. Service members' families who reside in military housing are now permitted to vacate 60 days before or after the member's assignment date to allow them to relocate at a convenient time.

Coast Guard briefer 3 listed the initial actions of the PRTF, categorized as level 1 initiatives by the PRTF. These initiatives were easier to implement because they were isolated within the same program or directorate. These actions included surge staffing for parental leave, commissioning a 100-day weight and body fat review team, expanding the family child care grant program and additional housing allowance, and publishing a guide to parenting. The PRTF helps to sustain the positive momentum of the study and ensure the Coast Guard obtains the greatest benefit from the findings and recommendations. Coast Guard briefer 3 reported that 30 units have used the staff surge programming, which as of the date of the meeting had been available for only 2 months.

Coast Guard briefer 3 then described the level 2 initiatives, categorized by the PRTF; these will take longer to implement because it likely will be harder to enact these changes. The first level 2 initiative is an update to the tattoo policy, which is a Coast Guard-wide issue because it may alter the Service's image and identity. Another initiative is for the Coast Guard to develop and conduct local family wellness resource symposiums. Coast Guard briefer 2 explained that one of the findings of the study was that women did not feel that their leaders and supervisors were aware of female-specific policies or those that tended to have a negative impact on women. In September 2019, Vice Admiral Charles Ray and the Assistant Commandant will host the first personnel readiness symposium, which will bring together individuals who sponsor relevant resources to discuss policies. The goal is to open these events to everyone, not just parents or women. The symposium's goal is to address important personnel readiness and leadership issues for everyone in the Coast Guard. The first of these events will be held in the area of Washington, DC, and the Service will create toolkits for smaller units that are not centrally located to give units in remote locations the ability to hold their own symposiums. Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that this will ensure the information is disseminated so that everyone from leadership to other

Service members will be aware of their responsibilities regarding lactation rooms, child care, and other issues affecting women.

Coast Guard briefer 1 explained it can be difficult to provide continuous policy education for very small Coast Guard stations. For example, a small station with 13 individuals, all male, may not need to know about or apply resources or policies specific to women, but the Coast Guard wants to design a one-stop shop resource for supervisors and leadership to utilize when and if such issues do arise. The briefer stated that leadership's lack of understanding is not intentional; some were at stations that had not been assigned a female member in many years, so they did not know of the applicable policies. The Coast Guard wants to ensure commands can easily access the resources.

Coast Guard briefer 3 described another level 2 initiative to update the Service's temporary separation policy. Coast Guard members can request temporary separation for up to 2 years and are not required to return to active duty at the end of that period (unlike DoD's Career Intermision Program). The briefer reported that only 5 to 10 percent of the members who participate in the program return. Service members who utilize the program must complete their Service obligation. The intent of the separation policy was to provide time for the care of newborn children; however, some members use this time for a sabbatical or education. The Coast Guard has found it challenging to convince some members to return after temporary separation. Coast Guard briefer 3 said that the program lacks a streamlined process and that the procedures are different for officers and enlisted personnel. The briefer suggested that Coast Guard members who express interest in using the program may already be thinking about leaving the Service. Another consideration is that members who wish to return must undergo a tedious bureaucratic process that may discourage them from returning. When members do come back after a temporary separation, it can be challenging because they may return during an off season, so they may not be able to select an optimal or prime billet. The briefer stated that the goal is to have a process that will allow Service members taking temporary separation to notify the Coast Guard of their intent to return prior to the end of the separation period so that they can access the same open job positions as their peers. This initiative would streamline the return process and make it more appealing to members.

Coast Guard briefer 2 then described a workforce communications initiative. The briefer noted that although workforce communications may not seem to be related to women's retention, the study found the Coast Guard used antiquated methods to spread information to its members. The workforce news initiative will be an "all hands on deck" strategic communication plan that will allow spouses, Service members, active duty, reserve duty, and auxiliary members access to information that is mobile friendly. Implementing this initiative within the Coast Guard will take time, but the Service is working to better support and communicate with its members.

Discussion

RADM (Ret.) Cari Thomas asked the Coast Guard briefers how their recommendations and action items fit within the implementation framework described in the presentation. She posited that the Coast Guard is starting with the recommendations easiest to implement and then addressing those hardest to implement. RADM (Ret.) Thomas questioned which changes would be most difficult to implement and if the Committee should be examining any aspect of the "enduring systematic change" category of the framework. Coast Guard briefer 2 described how the Coast Guard began with implementing level 1 and level 2 changes. She cited the parental

leave step-in policy that supported 30 members within the first 2 months of its implementation. The hardest part of implementing that change was identifying a funding source. The Coast Guard must update the personnel manning system to achieve enduring systematic change. Coast Guard briefer 2 said that current policies are designed for men with stay-at-home spouses but that the Coast Guard now has more women serving and more working spouses. Addressing assignment policies and how those affect the retention of men and women is a cross-programmatic effort that will be a long-term initiative. It is difficult to determine what the Coast Guard is willing and able to do, especially amid leadership changes. The briefer encouraged the Committee to keep pressure on the Coast Guard to show it is making changes as a result of this study and suggested the Service owed it to women to implement new policies because Coast Guard members went out of their way to participate in the study's focus groups. The Service wants to show it is taking immediate action as a result of the study. In summer 2019, the Coast Guard will have a new chief of human resources and will have a longer term implementation plan in place. Enduring systematic change involves cultural change, and the Coast Guard's Office of Diversity and Inclusion is developing an implementation plan to help with that process. Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that a long-term implementation will be very difficult and estimated it will take 5 to 10 years to see the resultant changes. Service members want to see the changes happen now, but culture change requires deliberate steps and a holistic system theory approach. Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that each action must be broken into multiple steps, including identification of the problem, policy change, and training and education for the fleet, followed by accountability, coaching, feedback, and strategic communications. This process takes time, the briefer stated, and the Coast Guard is collaborating with Navy counterparts to develop an optimal plan. Within the military, all the Services are trying to determine how to change the culture and convince leadership of the value of the changes. The recommendations from the study were released in March 2019, but the Coast Guard has been working on these issues since November 2018.

CAPT (Ret.) Kenneth Barrett asked about RAND's benchmarking and whether the study examined other, similar industries—such as those for manufacturing and petroleum—that have had trouble retaining women. Coast Guard briefer 1 responded that the report highlighted trends and best practices in the public and private sectors for different industries. She described how the report compared Coast Guard jobs with those in industries such as law enforcement, firefighting, academia, law, medicine, and science, technology, engineering, and math. Coast Guard briefer 2 added that it was difficult for the study to find a perfect benchmark to the Coast Guard. The researchers tried to identify industries with some similarities and examine the issues within that industry. Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that for each recommendation the Coast Guard makes—for example, regarding the temporary separation program—it benchmarks other companies with successful sabbatical programs. Benchmarking will be ongoing even though the study has been completed. Coast Guard briefer 2 suggested the petroleum industry may be a good one to examine. She added the Coast Guard continually examines the policies and practices of the other Services.

FLTCM (Ret.) JoAnn Ortloff applauded the Coast Guard's discontinuation of the use of personal pronouns in its evaluation system but stated that for some promotion packages, a photograph is still required, which shows a Service member's gender. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff asked if the Coast Guard still mandates photographs within its evaluation system and asked whether the pronoun issue was a concern raised by women in the focus groups. Coast Guard briefer 1 responded that the Service does not use photographs in uniform for evaluations. She also stated that the evaluations no longer include the pronouns and associated biases of "he," "she," "his," "her," or

the Service member's name. The gender bias in evaluations also refers to the descriptive language that is used to describe men and women who are both performing the same job, such as scheduling aircraft. Coast Guard briefer 2 provided some examples, such as the terms "pleasant personality" or "cheery" that may be used to describe women, whereas men may be described with different language. Coast Guard briefer 2 stated that she could follow up with the Committee about whether photographs are used for recruiting purposes. Coast Guard briefer 3 responded that certain special assignments require a photograph as part of the application package but noted it has never been reported that members of certain groups are less likely to be selected for a job because of the inclusion of their photos. Coast Guard briefer 3 said these special assignments are not plentiful and are high-visibility jobs.

Dr. Kyleanne Hunter asked whether the Coast Guard tracks trends by gender and occupational specialty for Service members returning from temporary separation. Coast Guard briefer 3 responded that officers are allowed to take temporary separation once they complete 5 years of service. She added that it can be difficult to determine the occupational specialty of an individual participating in the program, citing the example of someone who was on a ship and then went to a Special Forces unit. Coast Guard briefer 3 stated it is possible that Service members in the engineering and aviation communities are less likely to return after temporary separation because of opportunities in the civilian market as well as higher pay in those industries. Coast Guard briefer 2 responded that both men and women are taking temporary separation. She said that women are both taking temporary separation and returning after the separation period at higher rates than men. The Coast Guard to date has not been able to identify trends within occupational specialties but does know an equal number of officers and enlisted members have used the program. The majority of members who returned had planned to use their temporary separation to address a specific identified concern such as caring for young children and had planned to come back. Coast Guard briefer 1 responded that one of the recommendations related to accountability in metrics. Service members who participate in the program currently are assigned a code for temporary separation, but additional codes are needed to more specifically indicate individual members' situations and show whether they returned to service. Greater accountability in metrics could allow for an enduring systematic change if the Coast Guard began collecting data to examine the return on investment for these types of programs.

As a follow-up question about temporary separation, Brig Gen (Ret.) Jarrisse Sanborn asked whether there has been an effort to recruit those on temporary separation into the Reserve. Coast Guard briefer 3 responded that a Reserve affiliation is required when they are on temporary separation and that they can choose the Individual Ready Reserve. However, the briefer continued, it is difficult to manage the process because there has been an increase in the number of Reservists, and the process is not as seamless as it should be. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn asked if the Service recommends the Reserve if the member does not return after the temporary separation ends. Coast Guard briefer 2 replied that if 2 years has passed and the Service member does not return, the member does not serve in the Reserve. The briefer stated that the Coast Guard has learned that the temporary separation program is not being managed effectively. Once members enter the program, it is not easy to return to service, and there is a lack of proper management and communication with those on temporary separation. It is currently up to the individual members to initiate contact about whether they will return to or leave the Coast Guard.

MAJ (Ret.) Priscilla Locke asked if there is enough density within the temporary separation program to designate someone to manage the program at the personnel command level. Coast

Guard briefer 2 affirmed that there is sufficient density within the program; approximately 200 Service members have taken temporary separation per year, but only 1 to 2 returned. The Coast Guard wants to use staffing to better manage the program and members who use it so that the Service can obtain a better return on investment and efficiently manage members in the program.

Col (Ret.) John Boggs asked the briefers to describe the charter of the task force on personnel readiness. Coast Guard briefer 2 said the briefers could provide a copy of PRTF's charter to the Committee. Coast Guard briefer 2 said PRTF works with Vice Admiral Ray and utilizes the study to identify recommendations that could be implemented. The task force also works directly with the human resources directorate to be a catalyst for change. There were programs and initiatives that were already underway before this study, but PRTF has worked to move initiatives forward that were already in place as well as implement new ideas. Coast Guard briefer 2 said PRTF's role is to support recommendations and examine the Service to identify other initiatives to implement. The task force has a 2-year charter that will be in place through summer 2020.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff asked whether the Coast Guard will publicize the date of the resource symposium in September 2019 and whether it will be open to other Services attending given that the symposium may become a best practice. Coast Guard briefer 2 responded that the Service will share the date and that all are welcome to attend.

Panel: Child Care Resources and Initiatives (RFI 5)

Following up on a previous briefing on DoD child care resources, the Committee requested a briefing from the Military Services on the following issues: (1) current and new initiatives to expand child care support to Service members (e.g., 24/7 facilities); (2) current and new initiatives to increase awareness of child care options and resources; (3) current or pending policies to enforce Child Development Center (CDC) priorities via revalidation of enrolled children versus those given higher priority for child care; (4) the percentage of CDC child care slots filled by children of Service members; (5) the percentage of CDC child care slots filled by children of DoD civilians; and (6) the percentage of CDC child care slots filled by other children.

Army

The Army has a history of being supportive of families. In particular, the briefer noted that between 2005 and 2012, the Army added 3,000 new spaces in child care facilities and additional resources for Soldiers that were deploying. The Service also built a child care center for the National Guard in West Virginia. The Army currently provides child care for approximately 5,700 children aged 1 to 12 years old. Approximately 5,000 children are on the waitlist for child care. The Army reported that its child care waitlist is composed primarily of infant and toddlers. As a result the Army is working to ensure available spaces for infants and toddlers. The briefer also noted that the waitlist consistently increases in the summer months because parents are preparing for Permanent Changes of Station.

The briefer noted that background checks for Family Child Care Center and CDC staff are now centrally managed and maintained by the Child Services Suitability Cell (CSSC). This new process has reduced the amount of time needed to process background checks by half. Prior to this change, if a child care staff member was transferring from one installation to another, a new background check was required. CSSC allows the background information to be transferred

between installations more efficiently to allow CDC staff to begin working more quickly after a transfer. The briefer noted that CDC staff whose background checks have not been fully processed can continue to work in a child care center with line-of-sight supervision in classrooms that have video surveillance, vision panels, management, and trainers who work directly with those staff. The Army similarly allows Family Child Care Center providers to provisionally provide child care in their homes with unannounced inspections at least once per week while their background checks are under review.

The Army now uses the Children and Youth Services Employee Assignment Tool (CEAT) to help CDC and other staff transition from one installation to another without needing to reapply to different programs. The Army briefer noted several accomplishments. For example, the Army reported that 98 employees had used CEAT to transfer from one installation to another. The average time for workers to transfer was 45 days. Using CEAT has allowed the Army to retain more staff despite transfers; it was able to increase the percentage of filled positions from 79 to 86 percent in 2019. The Army also reported being able to increase the starting salary of CDC staff from \$10 to \$15 per hour. The Army briefer reported that senior Army leaders were actively engaged with CEAT. For example, the Secretary of the Army was actively involved in updating and proposing solutions to the CDC waitlist status to increase CDC space.

The Army briefer noted that all of the Service's installations are using militarychildcare.com to provide updates on child care facility waitlists and provide 24/7 access to military parents who want to request child care on installations. The Army would like to increase the number of Family Child Care Center homes. Family Child Care Center home revitalization has also become a focus for Army leadership and is seen as an opportunity for military spouses to gain employment and for that employment to benefit the Army as they provide resources to families.

The Army briefer noted that the Army ensures military families receive priority in child care centers and that the Service follows DoD policies, including the directive that certain occupied child care slots, deemed "Space Available" should be vacated when necessary to accommodate families given higher priority for child care. The Army presenters also noted that there are civilians on most installations whose children are receiving DoD child care who play vital roles to the Army.

Navy

The Navy briefer noted that because the Services work together to provide child care services, some of the Navy's responses may be similar to those from the other Services.

Similar to the Army, the Navy has grown since 2019. It has commissioned 7,000 new child care spaces since 2009 and operates 7 child care centers that operate 24/7, including in Bethesda, MD; Norfolk, VA; San Diego, CA; and Hawaii. The Navy's preferred child care facilities are child care homes. The Navy briefer reported that 9,000 children are on the Navy child care waitlist, which represents approximately 54 percent of the DoD waitlist. He noted that a major contributor to the size of the waitlist is the fact that many Naval bases are located in high-cost seaport areas with child care facility shortages and high-cost child care.

The Navy has implemented an employee transfer program that allows child care employees to transfer to any Navy-operated child care program seamlessly and to maintain their rate of pay. The Navy is trying to address the child care waitlist shortfall. As of the date of the meeting, there

was a deficit of 1.4 million spaces for child care in States where the Navy operates, which has exacerbated the child care access problem within the Navy.

The Navy has no construction plan for additional naval child care centers, but the Service is investigating creative options to partner with local communities. For example, in San Diego, developers set aside land (e.g., for churches and other community organizations) when they undertake a large development. One developer approached the Navy and offered to build a facility to provide child care to military families—which would allow the developer to meet its requirement to provide a community resource—if the Navy would lease the facility back to the developer. This agreement would allow the facility to provide child care to military families for a price only slightly higher than that charged by the CDC.

Similar to the Army, the Navy utilizes militarychildcare.com as a resource for Service members to research DoD child care programs across the world. The Navy also has a fee assistance program and is working to expand the number of commercial child care facility slots featured on the website so that it can truly be a one-stop shop for military families to find child care. There are civilians that utilize CDC services (e.g., National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA] employees who work on Naval installations), and the Navy does not bump civilians from child care slots to accommodate military families except for designated “Space Available” slots that may be given to families with higher priority for child care.

Marine Corps

The Marine Corps briefer noted that 5,200 children are receiving child care on base. There are an additional 1,300 children receiving off-base care. A total of 800 children are on the child care waitlist. Since 2004, the Marine Corps has provided fee assistance to Service members who are geographically dispersed. In 2015 the Acting Secretary of Defense directed the Marine Corps and the Navy to extend hours at child care facilities. As a result the Marine Corps extended hours at child care facilities for 2 additional hours per day, but there was minimal use of the facilities during those hours. Currently 6 of the 10 installations offer care beyond the extended hours, but care provided during those hours has accounted for fewer than 1 percent of the child care hours provided. The briefer noted that, with the exception of one facility (on the Miramar installation), 24/7 child care is not provided because there has not been enough demand for it. The briefer noted that installation leadership has been paying more attention to child care waitlists and is working to reduce waitlist numbers.

The Marine Corps briefer noted that militarychildcare.com is used by Service members and is an example of collaboration across the Services. The Service also uses militaryonesource.mil to provide resources to parents. Local Marine Corps installations also have their own websites that offer resources to families.

When discussing the priorities for child care, the briefer reported that the Service follows DoD guidance when prioritizing child care slots. For example, families of combat-related wounded warriors, surviving spouses, and certain others receive highest priority. The Marine Corps does not reprioritize child care slots except for designated “Space Available” slots.

Air Force

The Air Force briefer noted that on average, about 3,200 are on the child care waitlist at any time. The Service has acknowledged this challenge and is working to meet the unmet child care need. The Chief of Staff increased Air Force funding from \$19,000,00 to \$23,000,00 to allow

additional child care positions to be added. During the past year and a half, the Air Force has focused on child care personnel, including taking advantage of the authority to expedite hiring child care professionals to staff facilities. The Air Force is focused on family child care as an avenue to expand child care capacity, especially for missile sites and to provide deployment care for families who work nontraditional hours. The briefer reported the number of family child care providers increased. Last September the Air Force focused on increasing subsidies and benefits providers received. Between September 2018 and May 2019, the Service hired 65 additional family child care providers.

The Air Force has utilized unique approaches to meet the child care needs of families, including having its operations team travel to locations that lack large installations to find providers that can meet the needs of military families serving in the locale. Because new military construction projects are limited, the Air Force is investigating expanding current buildings (e.g., adding a classroom or two onto an existing CDC) as a way to increase their capacity. The Air Force directs families to militarychildcare.com and provides them a copy of the “FCC and Your Family” booklet and access to Community Child Care Coordinators. The community child care coordinator works with child care providers on and off installations.

At present 85 percent of child care slots are filled by children of military families, 13 percent by children of civilians, and 2 percent by other children. The Air Force adheres to the waiting list priorities established by DoD Instruction (DoDI) 6060.02. For “Space Available” slots, families are notified during the time of enrollment that if a family given higher priority requires the slot, they will be given 30 days of notice to vacate the space.

Coast Guard

The Coast Guard will continue to conduct its child care needs assessment in the fourth quarter of 2019. Plans for the needs assessment were being finalized as of the date of the meeting. The Service is working with its foundation to provide a grant to allow child care providers to more easily establish a child care home. The grant will provide approximately \$1,000 per child care home to help offset the setup cost. The Coast Guard has developed a new formula for the distribution of child care subsidies in areas with a high cost of living. The Service previously used a State average to provide subsidies to Service members. The Coast Guard has changed the distribution formula so that subsidies are calculated based on child care costs within a ZIP Code.

The Coast Guard briefer discussed several resources available to its members. The Service provides information and resources to support its members as they search for child care through the use of Family Resource Specialists. There are also five Child Development Services Coordinators. The Child Development Services website and Coast Guard mobile app similarly serve as a resource for members. The Service has been pushing the utilization of the ombudsmen registry to help advocate for resources to military families. Coast Guard spouses have a national counsel to provide information to families. The Service currently requires units of a certain size to have child care facilities. The Coast Guard briefer noted that efforts are made to connect CDCs with Family Child Care Center providers to post information about available spaces on militarychildcare.com listings.

The Coast Guard has a relatively small number of CDCs—nine in total—compared with other Services. If at any point in time the Coast Guard determines there is not enough space to serve its members’ families, it will reassess the enrollment priorities. At present the current policy is to

give a family 1 month notice to vacate a slot if more space is needed, and the Service's legal department is reviewing the process for removal and revising the policy.

The Coast Guard briefer ended the presentation by sharing statistics on the breakdown of child care enrollment. The briefer noted that a total of 650 children are currently enrolled across 9 CDCs, of which the majority (66 percent) of spaces are occupied by children of active duty and active duty/retired families. The Coast Guard has an agreement with DoD that allows for 450 children to use DoD spaces. At present 15 percent of CDC spaces are filled by children of Federal employees, 8 percent by children of non-Federal employees, 3 percent by children receiving nontraditional care, and 1 percent by children of other types of employees such as contractors.

Discussion

Col (Ret.) Boggs asked what would have the greatest impact on military child care. The Navy briefer said constructing child care facilities would have the most impact but added that modifying current buildings would also be helpful. The Navy's greatest challenge related to child care is the limited capacity of the child care facilities in the communities surrounding Naval installations. The Coast Guard briefer responded that child care subsidies would be most effective because Coast Guard installations are geographically dispersed. The Marine Corps briefer said capacity has been the greatest challenge and expressed a need for consistent funding to subsidize off-base child care and perhaps expand it in some locations to offset shortfalls. The Air Force briefer noted that in some locations, capacity is the main challenge, but in others, staffing—including finding qualified staff and onboarding them—is more of an issue. When asked whether capacity or staffing was of more concern, the Air Force briefer said that depended on the demographics in each location and added that more locations face challenges with hiring qualified staff than exceeding capacity. The Army briefer said capacity is the issue of most concern and added that previously, when military construction funds were more accessible, some of the installations prioritized expanding, which led to an excess of facilities in certain areas, whereas others now do not have enough space to meet the demand.

Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn asked what restrictions or limitations in the military, other than budgetary, determine who can take advantage of child care resources. The Army briefer noted that the Service offers subsidies as well as DoD assistance to military families. The briefer referred the Committee to another Army colleague attending the meeting who explained that eligibility for Army child care programs mirrors that of the other Services. The Army refers members of the other Services to their Service representatives. The Navy briefer noted that all the Services utilize the Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN) program, which was originally intended to be for geographically dispersed populations. To qualify for MCCYN, providers must offer a safe, quality program that meets the standards. Eligible programs receive fee assistance. The briefer noted that the Army and Navy allow active duty and DoD civilians into the fee assistance program, whereas the Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard do not.

Col (Ret.) Boggs noted that all of the briefers mentioned militarychildcare.com as a resource for families with children. He asked who was responsible for the website and inquired about its effectiveness. The Navy briefer responded that the Navy is the executive agent for militarychildcare.com; it executes the contract and manages the services. The briefer noted that, regarding the website's effectiveness, the Navy found the website sped up members' ability to join a waitlist and increased accessibility. Prior to the establishment of militarychildcare.com,

Service members would have to individually call every potential provider to join the provider's waitlist, and it was a race to obtain care. Besides being a waitlist management tool, militarychildcare.com serves as a centralized management system. When asked how the Navy gains feedback on the website, the Navy briefer said the Service conducts regular discussion groups with users and utilizes these stakeholders to shape the design of the website. The briefer concluded by stating that most Service members give the website a 9 out of 10 ranking and that the Navy is preparing to upgrade the website next month.

Ms. Therese Hughes followed up on Col (Ret.) Boggs' question by commenting that child care is a problem for not only the military but also across the world. Ms. Hughes said the military has an opportunity to set the standard for the child care program so that other programs can imitate the successful practices of the military. Ms. Hughes asked about the ranks of the personnel responding to the survey, those who had provided militarychildcare.com a 9 out of 10 rating. She said she was curious because she has heard that when Service members join a new installation and integrate into the community, some have difficulty finding community members to help them with child care, and added that she could not imagine anything scarier than not knowing how to access care for one's children. She asked what percentage of the population may be facing these challenges. The Navy briefer said the 9 out of 10 Service members who highly rated militarychildcare.com likely have access to child care because they are the ones that are satisfied with it. The Air Force briefer added the Service is hopeful that Community Child Care Coordinators will bridge the gap to help leaders better understand the resources available to Service members.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff noted that when the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps briefed on the availability of child care, there was a discrepancy in the language used surrounding whether families "must" vacate their slots for families given higher priority or if they are simply asked to do so. The Air Force briefer noted that when a family accepts a designated "Space Available" child care slot, it is informed at that time that under the contract, the slot must be vacated if someone with higher priority needs child care. The Army briefer noted that this is a new policy for the Service. All families with children in "Space Available" slots are informed of the policy when they first enroll in child care.

LTG (Ret.) Kevin Mangum asked about the child care utilization by employee category. LTG (Ret.) Mangum noted that 10 percent of the Army's child care slots are filled by children of employees in the "other" category, as are 8 percent of the Coast Guard's. LTG (Ret.) Mangum asked whether the "other" category is composed of NASA employees or similar employees and suggested that if those in the "other" category were no longer eligible for military child care, it might be enough to clear the waitlist. The Army briefer noted that the Service was monitoring the use of child care by employees in the "other" category with the new directive in place. The briefer noted that the Army has seen the use by "other" employees decrease over time and is seeing the number on the waitlist decrease on certain installations. The briefer also noted that at some installations, there is no waitlist for child care, so they allow families with "Space Available" designations to enroll in child care. The briefer said it is cost effective for the Army to keep spaces filled with any category of employee when there is no waitlist.

MAJ (Ret.) Locke asked all briefers for their suggestions on how to increase the number of infant and toddler spaces. The Army briefer noted that the Service is expanding the Family Child Care Center program but is not at liberty to provide more detail about the plan because it is still being discussed with the Secretary of the Army. When MAJ (Ret.) Locke asked whether families

of military children are eligible for fee assistance if they are providing care to military children, the Army briefer deferred to a colleague who was not on the panel and who stated that providers must be accredited and show certification to receive fee assistance from the Army.

Ms. Jacquelyn Hayes-Byrd asked whether the Air Force has a process for outreach to and recruitment of child care staff and whether this process includes any nontraditional techniques or incentives to bring on skilled staff. The Air Force briefer replied in the affirmative to all of the posed questions and explained that the Service uses different avenues to incentivize and recruit staff, including hiring and recruiting at local fairs and colleges. The Office of the Secretary of Defense has a working group that examines compensation from a holistic DoD perspective on some of these child care challenges. The briefer noted that some challenges must be addressed at the systemic level, whereas other challenges may be solved at the local installation level. The Navy briefer noted that staff turnover is a major issue on a national level, and although staff turnover is significantly lower within CDCs, it still needs to be addressed. The Marine Corps briefer said that Service's turnover is a bit higher than the Navy's because Marines typically are relocated every 3 years. This means that after child care providers are trained and undergo the background check, they may need to relocate. The Marine Corps is a very transient Service. Camp Pendleton has an annual attrition rate of approximately 50 percent among child care providers because of the number of Service members relocating.

Panel: Pregnancy and Parenthood Policies (RFI 6)

The Committee requested a briefing from each of the Military Services and the National Guard on policies and practices with respect to reassigning servicewomen to different jobs or mandating return from deployment when they become pregnant. The Committee requested information on the following: (1) written policies requiring women in some job specialties or in deployment to be reassigned to different duties because of pregnancy, (2) who reassigns these servicewomen, (3) where and how pregnant servicewomen are reassigned, (4) any waiver processes for avoiding reassignment, (5) at what point in the gestational timeline women are reassigned, (6) whether pregnancy-related reassignments are tracked by each Service, (7) if pregnant servicewomen are being reassigned to only specific locations/commands within each Service, (8) if new assignments are aligned with the servicewoman's career specialty, (9) whether there have been assessments to examine the career progression of women reassigned because of pregnancy, and (10) what initiatives are being undertaken to mitigate potential career impacts of pregnancy-related reassignments.

Army

The Army briefer began by listing multiple regulations within DoDI 1315.18 (Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments) regarding assignment and reassignment of Soldiers. He saw the first question within the RFI as having two parts and addressed them separately: (1) reassignment requirements for women in some specialties, and (2) reassignment during deployment. First, he explained, the Army does not view pregnancy as a reason for switching primary occupational specialties; it considers pregnancy a temporary medical condition. As with other temporary medical conditions, the Army does not require pregnant Soldiers to change specialties. Second, he said, regarding pregnancy and deployment or combat, pregnant Soldiers are restricted from deployment. A Soldier who is deployed and pregnant is sent home.

Regarding the procedures for reassigning women because of pregnancy, first, the Medical Profiling Officer provides a list of activities prohibited for that Soldier within her individual profile. The Army does not reassign Soldiers solely because of pregnancy. If the date on which a Soldier is projected to return from an overseas tour falls after the date she will no longer be able to fly (i.e., at the 7-month gestational mark), then she may be sent home. If appropriate prenatal or postpartum care is not available at her current location, she may be sent back to the continental United States. The Army briefer added that there is a policy waiver. If a Soldier is assigned overseas and becomes pregnant, she is not eligible to go unless a waiver is provided by the Army. These waivers take into account the availability of sponsorship and child care among the servicewoman's other relevant needs. Local commands in overseas installations can determine whether to let a pregnant Soldier come overseas.

The next question within the RFI asked at what point in the gestational timeline a pregnant woman is reassigned, to which the Army briefer reiterated that there is no timeline aside from the 7-month gestational mark, which is the no-fly date. If a pregnant Soldier has not flown out of her post by the 7-month mark, she can stay in the theater assuming proper care is available. If a Soldier's deployment is curtailed, it must be completed before the 7-month mark to allow for safe travel. The Army does not track pregnancy-related reassignments. The briefer noted that reassignments follow the normal process to fill needs within the Army. Pregnancy is a secondary consideration, and in most cases, these reassignments follow the normal process. He added that pregnancy-related reassignments are made to ensure proper care is available to pregnant Soldiers, but they are not tracked differently than other reassignments. Pregnant Soldiers are not reassigned to any specific locations simply because of pregnancy. They are allowed to go to any assignment as long as adequate care is available, and all assignments are done to fulfill the requirements and professional needs of the Soldier. The briefer noted that when this process is performed correctly, reassignments will build professional development while also filling the requirements of a Soldier's career specialty.

The Army briefer next addressed the question of whether there has been an assessment to examine the career progression of servicewomen who become pregnant while serving. His response was that such an assessment was not done within the Enlisted Career Systems Assignments Division, because it is a limited career division. He was not aware of any such assessment that had been done by any office. The final question within the RFI asked what initiatives are being undertaken to mitigate potential career impacts that are directly caused by reassignments because of pregnancy. The briefer stated that this question was not applicable because there had been no assessment of whether there were career impacts for pregnant servicewomen.

Navy

Navy briefer 1 said his team has policies for directing pregnant Sailors back from operational or overseas billets. The operational commander has the opportunity to direct Sailors off an operational platform at 20 weeks gestation or further into the pregnancy. He added that a pregnant Sailor can request to be waived from this policy and remain with her operational unit but that this option depends on the deployment cycle, the availability of medical and hygiene provisions near that unit, and the overall safety of the individual. Navy briefer 1 emphasized that the safety of the servicewoman drives the ultimate decision, but that the norm is for pregnant Sailors to be removed from operational units at the 20-week gestational mark. If a ship is within 3 hours of emergency obstetric care, the pregnant Sailor can go to sea, but he said this is rare

because commanding officers do not want to take the risk. In these cases, the individual will be taken to a shore unit. When her ship returns to shore, she will rejoin her unit. He added that this process is similar for operational units that are flight based. When these operational units are deployed, they will leave the pregnant Sailor behind to support the operations of the unit.

The authority to reassign pregnant Sailors is directed by several military personnel manual (MILPERS) articles. Once a pregnant Sailor is identified, her command contacts the Deployability Assessment and Assignment Branch to see where she may need to be moved. If she is at a shore-based unit, she will stay if possible. However, if she has few family members in the area or there is some other related concern, the Navy offers a case-by-case review of each Sailor's situation to reassign the Sailor to both facilitate career progression and support proper care during and after her pregnancy.

Navy briefer 1 next addressed the question about where and how women are reassigned because of pregnancy. He noted the MILPERS manual article for treatment and transition of pregnant Service members. For personnel in pay grades E3 and below, those Sailors are sent home from overseas. Sometimes this process can involve bringing that Sailor back to a unit that is closer to family or other support systems. Those in pay grades E4 and above will remain outside the continental United States if proper care is available. If care is not available, the Navy will move the Sailor to a unit near adequate care that still allows for proper career progression.

Regarding available waivers, members can ask to stay with their current units during both the pregnancy and the postpartum period. The waiver requires endorsement from the commander and a recommendation from the obstetrics provider. All endorsements are submitted on command letterhead, and they can be changed at any time at the member's request. With respect to removing pregnant Sailors from sea duty, commands try to move them by the 28-week gestational mark to avoid complications during flight. The Navy tracks the number of pregnant Sailors, but because of limitations in the current computing and tracking systems, it cannot track transfers; therefore, it could not determine whether a pregnant Sailor remained with her unit during pregnancy. Navy briefer 1 added that this could change in the future and that it could be easier to track transfers than full reassignments because reassignments are given by detailers. A reassignment either becomes a detailer action or involves a series of processes in which the Sailor's skillset and rate are assessed, and it is noted which unit she was in when orders were executed for her to be removed from that unit because of pregnancy.

In the Navy, Sailors are not assigned to specific locations or commands based on pregnancy, but rather in a way that aligns with both their pregnancy-related needs and career progression. If the servicewoman is in the Naval Academy, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), or training, she is in a holding pattern because she needs to complete her training first. The relocation options for some individuals are based on their jobs. Navy briefer 1 offered the example of a Service member in the flight line who may not be able to perform her job while pregnant because of how physically demanding it is. He also provided the example of how a pregnant Sailor likely would not be allowed to work with the type of foam used to put out fires because such a substance could pose a risk to a pregnant mother or her unborn child.

Regarding assessments of the impacts of pregnancy or reassignment on a servicewoman's career progression, Navy briefer 1 mentioned a workforce demographic analysis done in 2018 for the Vice Chief of Naval Operations. The analysis found that early career parenthood had a more negative impact on women than men. Conversely, for those in pay grades O4 and higher, the

Navy discovered women with families did better than men with respect to promotion rates. The Navy introduced initiatives to address these disparities by offering mentorship and preparation for family planning, especially with junior Sailors and new officers. These initiatives have included additional training on pregnancy, parenthood, and the impacts of these life events on military career progression. The Navy also offers the Career Intermision Program. For Service members who need a break, this program allows them to enroll in the Reserve for up to 3 years. The program is meant to be used by those who wish to take a strategic pause in their careers. The member can return to active duty afterward. The program offers an opportunity for families who may need time off beyond caregiver leave without affecting their careers. Navy briefer 1 ended by noting that the Navy's goal was to offer individuals every opportunity to be successful members of the organization.

Marine Corps

The Marine Corps briefer stated that the related overarching DoD policy requires the Marine Corps to publish detailed guidance to protect a pregnant Service member's career from being negatively affected. Marine Corps Order 5000.12E addresses the temporary reassignment of pregnant Marines. Marines are not normally reassigned because of pregnancy, but they cannot be operationally deployed. However, pregnant Marines may be temporarily reassigned when deemed medically necessary. The briefer added that this policy was last updated in June 2007 and that it was currently under revision.

The Marine Corps briefer explained that there is a difference between temporary and permanent reassignment. Permanent reassignment requires Manpower Headquarters authorization. Temporary reassignment is performed to protect the health of the unborn child, the pregnant Marine, or other Marines. It may be required if the pregnancy limits a Marine's ability to perform routine occupational or billet tasks, and healthcare providers have the authority to reassign a pregnant Marine when medically necessary. When a pregnant member cannot perform her tasks or it is unsafe to do so, the commanding officer determines the temporary reassignment. A pregnant Marine cannot be kept from serving in her primary occupational role unless she could potentially be exposed to health risks. The briefer added that if permanent reassignment is necessary, the Marine Corps attempts to reassign that Marine within a similar billet that aligns with the member's career progression.

Regarding the timeline for reassignment of pregnant Service members, the Marine Corps briefer explained that temporary reassignment may be required upon medical confirmation of a pregnancy if the Marine is operationally deployed, has embarked on a naval vessel, is assigned to a sea tour with limited obstetrics care, or is assigned as flight personnel. If the Marine needs to receive credit for an overseas tour to continue on her career path, the new assignment can be overseas assuming there is adequate medical care in the vicinity. If there are inadequate civilian or medical facilities in the vicinity, pregnant Marines stationed in the continental United States or Hawaii will not be reassigned after the 36th week of pregnancy. Commanders must reassign Marines after the 20th week of pregnancy if they are on naval vessels and too far from adequate care. Pregnant Marines may remain on ships if the time required to evacuate for an emergency is less than 3 hours. Regardless, commanders must consult with ship medical staff when pregnant Marines are onboard. With respect to flight assignments, pregnant Marine flight personnel are not allowed to fly after the 28th week of pregnancy.

Based on the results of Marine Corps industrial hygiene or occupational hearing conservation program evaluation surveys, the briefer noted that pregnant Marines may be temporarily reassigned if they are either unable to perform routine duties or if remaining in their current assignments poses a health or safety risk to themselves, their unborn children, or other Marines. Permanent reassignments require Manpower Division oversight. In certain instances, pregnant Marines may continue to serve on ships until the 20th week of pregnancy and on aircraft until the 28th week. The Marine Corps briefer added that there is no waiver process for reassignment because of deployments or inadequate obstetric capabilities that dictate the reassignment decisions.

Regarding tracking pregnancy-related reassignments, the briefer stated that Marine Corps Headquarters keeps no statistics regarding the frequency of temporary reassignments because of limitations related to pregnancy. The Service also has not conducted a quantitative assessment of the career progression for Marines who become pregnant while serving; therefore, it has no record or evidence-based research on the negative effects of pregnancy-related temporary reassignment and has not commenced any initiatives to mitigate such effects.

Air Force

The Air Force Assignment Policy states that assignments must be fair and equitable and based on the merit, fitness, and capability of the Airman. It also attempts to balance the needs of the Air Force with the members' desires as well as input from the commander. The Service has a policy in place to protect the health of the pregnant Airman and the unborn child based on recommendations from a healthcare provider. Similar to the approach taken by the other Services, an overseas assignment could be curtailed depending on the availability of medical care and the location of the assignment.

The authority to reassign starts with advice given by a medical provider and depends on an individual Airman's situation. Commanders may reassign duties to meet a pregnant member's medical requirements; for example, if she is unable to carry heavy equipment. If a pregnant Airman must be deferred from deployment, commanders may assign duties as appropriate, which could involve simply keeping her in her current duties. If a member's overseas assignment must be curtailed or cancelled because of her pregnancy, the Air Force Personnel Center or Air Force Reserve Command has the authority to reassign her to accommodate her medical needs. The briefer noted that Air Force Reserve assignments are voluntary. When reassignments do occur, they are done on the advice of the medical provider. The commander will review the Airman's career and specialty capabilities and ensure the new assignment is fair, equitable, and in line with her skills. For a member who is reassigned within the same unit, the commander will make the reassignment using Air Force guiding principles.

Regarding waivers, pregnant Airmen have the opportunity to work with medical providers to waive their restrictions. It is then up to the medical provider to decide whether such a waiver is safe. Once this decision is made, the subsequent chain of command will adhere to this guidance. A pregnant Airman is typically reassigned prior to the 24-week mark in her pregnancy but may be reassigned up to 6 weeks prior to the delivery date depending on the situation. If the member is married or partnered with another Airman, the Air Force does its best to co-locate these members.

The Air Force does not track pregnancy reassignments deliberately but can track how many overseas assignments have been curtailed. The Air Force does not have the capability to track

reassignments from deployment but does maintain some related information on these individuals. Data from 2014 to 2018 showed that 204 female enlisted Airmen and 8 female officers had their overseas assignments curtailed because of pregnancy. When an Airman is reassigned because of pregnancy, there are no specific locations or commands to which she must be reassigned. The briefer reiterated that the overarching goal is to ensure that the assignment is fair and equitable and matches the member's skillset and medical needs. Regardless of why an Airman is reassigned, an assignment must be in line with the member's career and consider her career progression.

The Air Force has not completed a direct assessment of the impacts of reassignment for pregnant members. However, its Air Force Barrier Analysis Working Group is charged with identifying and proposing the elimination of barriers to equal employment opportunity within the Service. In the past this group has looked at career progression barriers related to pregnancy. The Air Force briefer did not know whether the group had conducted further studies. Regarding initiatives undertaken to mitigate negative impacts on career progression for pregnant servicewomen, the briefer said that if the Air Force follows its guiding principles, it can hopefully avoid such negative impacts, and that the Service ensures its members are reassigned to areas and units that fulfill its mission needs and align with the member's skills. The Air Force proactively markets programs to allow flexibility to accommodate many personal circumstances, including post-pregnancy deferment, Career Intermission Program, humanitarian reassignment, and other needs. If a need arises, the Air Force has options to help Airmen balance family and work while advancing their personal goals.

Coast Guard

The Coast Guard focuses on safety above all other considerations. After safety, the Service next looks at the member's medical needs and then housing. The Coast Guard does not want to expose pregnant women to any safety hazards and wants to ensure a pregnant Coastguardsman has adequate medical care. The briefer added that the Service is often most concerned about shipboard duty because there are unique hazards onboard ships. For example, a pregnant woman cannot be allowed to crawl through tight spaces on ships and risk injury. The Coast Guard uses an approach similar to those taken by the other Services: it defers to the commanding officer as the first line of decision making to determine whether reassignment should be temporary or permanent. The Coast Guard briefer said reassignment depends on housing availability and medical facilities. The Service has overseas assignments in Guam, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Alaska, Bahrain, and Europe. If a Coastguardsman becomes pregnant, it does not mean she must be reassigned to the continental United States. This decision depends on the availability of care near those locations. Permanent assignments are handled by the Personnel Service Center, but temporary assignments can be made by the commanding officer. These decisions take into consideration the length of tour duty, if the member becomes pregnant mid-tour, and if she can continue in her current assignment if there is no risk. In some cases, no reassignment is made.

Regarding the timeline for shipboard duty and aviation assignments, the Coast Guard's policy is similar to those of the Navy and Marine Corps. Pregnant members are removed from ships at 20 weeks of pregnancy, and they can fly up to the 28th week of pregnancy with medical permission and adequate available care. The briefer added that if a pregnant Coastguardsman is, for example, standing watch in port and working 12-hour shifts, that duty is curtailed after the 28-week mark. The Coast Guard limits pregnant members to 40-hour workweeks for shore assignments after the 28-week mark. Lack of availability of medical services leads to a

permanent reassignment to a location with available care. The waiver process is also similar to those of other Services. The Coast Guard requires a waiver of assignment restrictions be approved by a medical professional. If the pregnant member is capable and willing to continue in her current assignment, the Service will request permission from medical staff to waive reassignment or restrictions. These decisions are also determined by tour length and the nature of the member's duties on tour.

The Coast Guard does not currently track pregnancy-related assignments; the situation of each member is so varied that reassignments happen on a case-by-case basis. A member may only be reassigned to a different duty within her current unit, which is not typically reported at all. The Coast Guard also does not limit the locations to which pregnant Coastguardsmen can be reassigned. This decision is determined most often by the availability of medical care or housing. If the member is a young, single woman, she may be transferred if she lives in the barracks overseas. The briefer clarified that most stations do have adequate care available.

The Service requires all assignments to be fair and equitable. It examines the pregnant Coastguardsman's career and promotion requirements and considers every reassignment position that would meet those needs. If a member is removed from her occupation because of pregnancy, she is afforded the option to return after her pregnancy. The Coast Guard does not assess the impact of reassignment on career progression. The briefer noted the RAND study discussed earlier also did not examine the progression of women who became pregnant during their service.

The briefing by the Coast Guard earlier in the meeting addressed several relevant initiatives, including its intent to implement some Service-wide policy changes. The Coast Guard ensures that its members are not temporarily deployed during the first 12 months after birth and that caregiver leave can be taken in multiple stints instead of all at once if the member so chooses. If a member takes her caregiver leave in multiple chunks, she can maintain currency in her career and not worry about being disqualified from her duties. The briefer noted that these policies should positively affect the career progression of Coastguardsmen who become pregnant during their service. She also noted that similar to the Navy's Career Intermision Program, the Coast Guard has a temporary separation program. The briefer did not include this program in her presentation given that it is not a new initiative. The Coast Guard offers this program for members to care for newborn children, pursue education opportunities, and address other needs. Members can currently utilize this program for up to 2 years, but the Coast Guard is attempting to match the programs offered by the other Services by expanding the allowed period of separation to 3 years. Many members take advantage of the existing program.

National Guard Bureau

The National Guard utilizes two different member statuses that dictate the process for reassignment. Guard members who operate in the United States have title 32 status. Members who are federalized or deployed have title 10 status. For those with title 10 status, the Guard follows the policies of the parent Service, either the Army or the Air Force. The Guard does not have any written policies that require reassignment of pregnant members. The National Guard would defer to the Army or Air Force regarding these policies. Reassignment typically involves assigning a member to a different job. The Guard does follow medical advice for reassigning pregnant members. If a Soldier or Airman is pregnant, she first is examined by a medical professional and then receives a temporary medical profile. The Service member then delivers

that profile to her commanding officer, who reviews the member's required duties and makes accommodations based on the medical advice for both the mother and the unborn child. The commanding officer may change the member's duties to accommodate her pregnancy. There is a waiver process within the National Guard, but the Guard does not track the use of the waivers.

Discussion

Col (Ret.) Boggs thanked the panel for sharing information about their Services' pregnancy and reassignment policies and for prioritizing the health of the mother and baby. He then asked the panel what written policies or regulations exist in each Service to ensure a member's career is not negatively affected by pregnancy. The Navy briefer mentioned Navy instruction 1000.10B that directs the Service to ensure a member's career not be adversely affected by pregnancy, but this instruction does not offer any specific guidance on how to implement this guideline. The Marine Corps is subject to this instruction as well as Marine Corps Order 5000.12E. Both indicate a member's career cannot be negatively affected because of pregnancy. The briefer added that an updated policy will be issued soon.

The Air Force instruction 36.21.10 is similar to those of the Navy and Marine Corps. It includes broad language about providing equity in managing assignments and ensuring assignments are made to fill valid requirements and at a commensurate rate and grade of the member. Col (Ret.) Boggs reiterated that he is most interested in which policies exist specifically to prevent negative impacts, to which the Air Force briefer replied she would have to research promotion policies to see if they address that issue. The Coast Guard briefer mentioned two different Coast Guard manuals on the topic that generally discuss career progression and prohibit any mention of a pregnancy during the promotion process. The National Guard briefer added that, as previously mentioned, the Guard does not have any policies specific to pregnancy given that it does not require reassignment of pregnant Guard members. The Army briefer stated that the Service does not have any policy in place specifically to protect pregnant members from negative impacts aside from the common policy requiring that assignments be fair and equitable. The Marine Corps briefer added that similar to the Coast Guard and Army policies, Marine Corps Order 1610.7A includes comparable language to preclude any notation of pregnancy or any other medical issues during the promotion process. The Navy briefer mentioned that for any Sailor below pay grade E7, promotions are based mostly on one's score on an exam that does not ask about pregnancy. Col (Ret.) Boggs mentioned that the commanding officer usually has the final say in promotions regardless of the exam, to which the Navy briefer replied that this is the case only if a person is under investigation for misconduct or has not met the physical readiness requirements. He added that for officers, every promotion board has a precept that does not mention pregnancy, whether that person is transgender, or anything else that may affect the member's ability to be promoted. He stated that people are selected based on their ability to lead and execute the mission relative to their peers. This process does not call out any medical conditions, including pregnancy, because the Navy understands that mentioning a pregnancy could have a negative impact on the promotion board's ability to accurately assess a person. These precepts include only exam scores, evaluations, fitness reports, and rank.

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger then followed up on Col (Ret.) Boggs question by addressing the Navy. She noted that Navy briefer 1 had discussed a study that found early career parenthood had a greater negative impact on women versus men in the Navy. She then asked the Navy briefers what the Navy plans to do in response to this finding. Navy briefer 2 noted that the group that performed this study assessed enlisted and officer members semiannually to determine whether

the Navy was recruiting and retaining Sailors across the board. For Sailors in pay grades E6 and below, the promotion process is formulaic. When the study team discovered this effect on examinations and being promoted, it noted the disparity in the performance of pregnant members. One initiative was to revise the Navy's life skills course because this disparity was found to disproportionately affect members at pay grades E4 and below. The initiative included providing more training in ROTC on the consequences and effects of an unplanned pregnancy on one's career in the military. The Navy expects members to plan life events to align with their sea-shore rotations. Other initiatives include having a point person on this policy available to educate Sailors on the effects of pregnancy and parenthood on one's career. Navy briefer 2 explained that the Navy needs to ensure each command has someone available to answer these questions for Sailors, whether a member is already pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant. Navy briefer 1 added that for any assignment, the career counselor works with both the member and the commander, especially when a member wants to go to a certain location specifically to be near family. The Navy tries to educate members on how pregnancy can affect their careers. Although pregnancy may not directly affect one's ability to advance, the Navy tries to offer this information up front so the member can be equipped to make the best decision.

Ms. Hughes noted that none of the Services track the effects of pregnancy-related reassignments or if they tend to be permanent or temporary. She added that the Services appear to have the proper regulations in place, which seemed reasonable to her as a civilian. However, there could be a disconnect between the regulations and what is actually happening on the ground for these servicewomen. There could be situations that regulators are not aware of if they are not monitoring these pregnant members. Ms. Hughes concluded by saying she would like to know whether the Services plan to start monitoring these women because it seemed that not doing so could negatively affect readiness. As the military moves forward and continues to gain higher percentages of women, this issue is one that could be addressed now and set the Services up for greater success in the future.

The Coast Guard briefer began by stating she often thinks of data as numbers, but some of what Ms. Hughes alluded to is qualitative data. When a member moves, the Coast Guard might not have the visibility to track that person, but it puts a lot of trust in its commands to monitor its members and raise issues up the chain of command when necessary. The briefer highlighted the RAND study that had been discussed earlier in the meeting. The study showed the Coast Guard was paying attention to women's experiences in the Service. She noted that the Service had gathered more qualitative than quantitative data through the study, but that obtaining quantitative data is much more difficult.

Navy briefer 2 described the Navy's Professional and Personal Choices Survey that is administered every other year. It is self-reported and not administered to the total force, but the Service did gather some data from 2016 to 2018. Most women (65 percent) self-reported that they continued to work in the same jobs while pregnant in 2018, whereas in 2016 only 15 percent of enlisted members and 30 percent of officers reported they did so. Navy briefer 2 noted that this difference was partly the result of education to help women know what is available to them, including working with detailers and planning waivers so they are not forced to change jobs. Education has allowed women to take more control over their career progression.

Ms. LeeAnne Linderman explained that in corporate America, there are multiple mentoring programs that pair an expecting mother with a woman who has already gone through this process and successfully maintained her career. Ms. Linderman asked the Services if they know of any

similar programs in the military that would offer these women the chance to share concerns with and be advised by other women who have been successful as both mothers and servicewomen. In the corporate world, these programs have been shown to increase a mentee's loyalty to her company and increase her satisfaction with her job.

The Air Force briefer was not aware of any such programs in the Air Force but found it to be an interesting concept. She reported hearing of informal mentorships forming in units or installations but was unaware of any formal mentorship program. Navy briefer 2 again highlighted the role that her office holds, including providing best practices. She mentioned an online SharePoint site offering resources for new parents or for anyone who has adopted a child, gone through in vitro fertilization, or is pregnant or whose partner is pregnant. She added that this is meant for both men and women, as this is not a female issue but a force-wide issue. The Navy wants to ensure all parents have those resources available, including people to talk with who have gone through these experiences before.

The Coast Guard briefer said the Service does not have a formal mentorship program but has recently published a new parent resource guide intended for both men and women. With respect to informal mentoring, the briefer noted that social media is a powerful tool and mentioned knowing current Coast Guard members who use social media to connect with other members as well as retirees and veterans about uniforms or other issues. She noted it can be hard to raise some of these questions with one's command, so these sorts of mentoring opportunities are happening more informally. The Marine Corps briefer mentioned a formal order that promulgates mentorship in the Marine Corps. These mentorships focus on life skills, including parenthood. The briefer added that he has heard this program is taking root in the Marine Corps and generating positive results for members. He has not heard anything negative about the program.

Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn noted the Coast Guard had alluded to legislation allowing for nonconsecutive caregiver leave. She asked whether the other Services have considered a similar policy. Navy briefer 1 said that the Service is looking into this option but that the National Defense Authorization Act did not authorize this for Services within DoD.

CSM (Ret.) Michele Jones mentioned that not all of the Services had addressed all four of the categories of reassignment or related outcomes addressed by the RFI. She pointed out that there are four different areas in which a pregnant Service member could be negatively affected: reassigned duties, reassignment to a new unit, reclassification, and deployment. She gave an example of a jump master who becomes pregnant. That person would not be able to continue her role on an aircraft while pregnant but could return after the pregnancy. This would be similar to a servicewoman breaking a leg in that she would have to leave her job temporarily but would be able to return once she had healed.

Navy briefer 1 noted that these differences present a major concern with respect to the Navy's ability to track its pregnant Sailors. He said he could tell the Committee the number of pregnant Sailors in the Navy at a point in time and who was reassigned—and probably the commands they were reassigned to—but could not tell what jobs they were reassigned to or when they were reassigned. He noted that all pregnant Sailors who were set to go on sea tour would return to those tours after completing their caregiver leave; however, they could be assigned to a frigate or carrier rather than back to a destroyer. The Navy also tracks who is reassigned and who does not return to the Service after their leave, although the latter is rare. He noted there is competition

among many intellectually capable individuals who come into the Navy looking for opportunities. He added there is always an issue with establishing mentoring programs because sometimes it can feel like mentoring relationships are being forced. He gave an example of a young female coming to his unit and trying to pair her with a sponsor who is similar to her, but he does not know whether she has a family until she arrives. Until you meet and speak with that person, it can be hard to find someone who would be a good mentor for her. He asked whether the Committee wants to know if the Services know where people are reassigned, which is hard to track because many Sailors—especially junior ones—will move from unit to unit until they finally decide what they want to do. He added that it is more important for him to know that people are fully prepared to fulfill their duties wherever they are placed. If a person is not qualified for a position, then the goal should be to provide that Sailor the skills he or she needs to be successful.

LTG (Ret.) Magnum read from the Marine Corps presentation slide that stated that temporary reassignment may be necessary if a pregnancy poses a risk to another Marine. LTG (Ret.) Magnum then asked the Marine Corps briefer when or how pregnant Marines pose a risk to other Marines. The briefer answered that if a pregnant Marine cannot do her job, it could put another Marine in danger. LTG (Ret.) Magnum clarified that this means the issue is really about the Marine being able to correctly perform her duties; the briefer agreed.

CAPT. (Ret.) Barrett noted that his question was not part of the RFI but that he wondered about the Services' attempts to capture assignment data. He asked whether the Services have collected data on female Service members who have taken advantage of the Career Intermission Program and similar programs to know how they progressed afterward. The Coast Guard briefer answered that the Service does track members who have used the temporary separation program and that the program is intended to give Service members time for events other than just pregnancy, including education. Tracking the program allows the Coast Guard the chance to track a member's return to the Service, although returning is voluntary; many who participate in the program do not return as a result. She added that it appears the Committee wants to know about reclassification, not just reassignment. This process is different for everyone. The Coast Guard briefer noted that the Navy has rates that require sea time for advancement, so although an enlisted member can choose whether to go back to sea after temporarily separating, it is a difficult choice. Another example she provided to illustrate this issue is that it can be very hard for an aviator who temporarily separates from the Service to regain that job upon return.

The Air Force briefer answered that the Service tracks the Career Intermission Program as well as the reason a person decides to use the program. It also tracks the progress of Airmen upon their return to the Air Force. The Army briefer stated that he would not say the Army tracks the program but that there is a single process for everyone going through the program. The Army could pull the data for Soldiers who noted why they chose to use the program to see how many decided to temporarily separate because of pregnancy. The Navy briefer noted a similar process, adding that the Navy has seen evidence that members who rejoin after temporarily separating are successfully promoting.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff recalled that the Army had briefed the Committee at an earlier time on a program that pairs pregnant Soldiers with Soldiers who had been pregnant during their service to help them understand the related policies and procedures. She asked the Army briefer whether he was familiar with this program. The Army briefer answered that his area of expertise is reassignment and that this program likely falls within another division. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff

then suggested that this program might have been specific to working with pregnant or postpartum Soldiers to prepare for the fitness test.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff then mentioned how the Services have physical fitness requirements for promotions and asked the Marine Corps briefer whether this is a detriment to women who are waived from the physical fitness test because of pregnancy. The Marine Corps briefer answered that he did not have evidence of promotions being withheld because of the physical fitness aspect. Once a Marine is medically confirmed as pregnant, she receives an exemption from the physical fitness test that lasts through the pregnancy and for 9 months following. Her fitness report will be marked as “exempt.” The Marine Corps briefer mentioned that the fitness report used to say “PREG” to denote that an exemption was for a pregnancy, but that practice was discontinued after the relevant policy was updated. Navy briefer 1 noted that this process is the same for the Navy. The fitness report will state that the Sailor was medically waived from the physical fitness test but not that it was because of pregnancy. He added that promotions are based on the last successfully completed physical fitness assessment. The Army also has an exemption period and relies on the most recent test for lower-level promotions. For upper-level promotions, Soldiers undergo a board screening process.

Final Remarks

COL Davis, DACOWITS Military Director, stated the next meeting would be held September 17 and 18, 2019. Details will be published in the Federal Register. She thanked the attendees and concluded the public portion of the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned.

RFI 1

WOMEN’S RETENTION (R&R)

The Committee has received briefings from the Department that validate the Military Services are losing women disproportionately to men at various career points. Senior leaders have expressed concern that as the Military Services work to attract more women this attrition will result in a disproportionate impact to mission readiness if left unresolved. In 2017, the Committee recommended that the Secretary of Defense “*direct the development and adoption of an exit survey or surveys to assess why the attrition level for women is higher than that for men at various career points.*”

The Committee requests a **written response** from each of the **Military Services** on the status of exit surveys:

- a. How is the exit survey structured? Please provide a copy of your Service’s exit survey.
- b. Does the survey differentiate the reasons why men and women leave the military?
- c. Does the survey differentiate between career fields?
- d. Does the survey differentiate between rank/grade and years of service?
- e. If the survey data is releasable, please provide. If not, when are the findings projected to be released?
- f. Has any analysis of the survey data been conducted? If so, what are the findings/recommendations?

Organization	Description
Army	The Army provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI and provided copies of its exit surveys for officers and enlisted Service members.
Navy	The Navy provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Marine Corps	The Marine Corps provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Air Force	The Air Force provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI and provided a copy of its exit survey.
Coast Guard	The Coast Guard provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI and provided a copy of its Career Intentions Survey and analysis of the 2019 Career Intentions Survey data. Because the Career Intentions Survey data did not provide the level of specificity requested in parts “b,” “c,” and “d” of the RFI, the Service also provided analysis of its 2017 Organizational Assessment Survey.

RFI 4

WOMEN ON SHIPS (E&I)

In 2015, the Secretary of the Navy recommended keeping specific positions closed to the assignment of enlisted women on three classes of ships scheduled to be decommissioned: frigates (FFGs), mine countermeasure ships (MCMs), and patrol coastal craft (PCs). The rationale for keeping these classes of ships closed to women was in part due to lack of appropriate berthing spaces and decommissioning schedules. Ship modifications were determined to be an injudicious use of resources. However, in recent years there have been changes to these decommissioning schedules, as well as to the delivery of new gender neutral surface ships and submarine platforms. Therefore, the Committee is concerned about potential impacts to women’s career progression due to a lack of availability for women to serve in sea duty assignments. In [March 2019](#), the Committee received an initial briefing on this topic from the Navy and Coast Guard via RFI 7.

The Committee requests a **written response** from the **Navy** on the following:

- a. Please provide the percentage of racks at sea utilization for men and women (both officer and enlisted) for each class of ship.

Organization	Description
Navy	The Navy provided the percentage of racks at sea utilization for its male and female officers and enlisted service members for each class of ship.

RFI 7

REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY MOTHERS (WB&T)

Military mothers and their children cope with unique issues when a mother deploys. According to *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, “Mothers who had deployed reported greater distress than non-deployed mothers (higher scores on measures of PTSD and depression symptoms)...” The impact on these deployed servicewomen and their children is not broadly understood. There are potentially short- and long-term impacts to individual health, readiness, and familial situations that should be better understood and addressed. In [March 2019](#), the Committee received an initial briefing on this topic from the Military Services via RFI 10.

The Committee requests a **literature review** from the **Research Contractor** to address the following:

- a. What studies exist concerning how to assess the impact of deployments on military mothers?
- b. Are there existing programs to address their specific needs to mitigate or prevent negative outcomes to military mothers? If so, are these programs effective?
- c. What literature addresses the challenges unique to deployed and returning servicewomen:
 - i. who are mothers and have non-deployed spouse;
 - ii. who are mothers and have deployed spouse;
 - iii. who are single with children; and
 - iv. who are mothers and are part of the National Guard or Reserve components.

Organization	Description
Insight Policy Research and ICF	Insight Policy Research and ICF provided a literature review addressing all the questions in this RFI. In doing so, they noted that the impact of deployments on military mothers is limited and that no research has evaluated or studied the effects of programs intended specifically to address the reintegration needs of this population.

RFIs 8 and 9

DOMESTIC ABUSE / DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AFFECTING SERVICEWOMEN (WB&T)

In 1996, the Committee recommended “that the Assistant Secretary of the Defense for Force Management Policy expand the information currently being collected on spouse abuse to include all violence against military women (including sexual assault).” Recently, media headlines have spotlighted multiple servicewomen being affected by domestic abuse and domestic violence. The Committee is concerned about the impacts of these incidences on the safety and welfare of servicewomen as well as on operational readiness. In [March 2019](#), the Committee received an initial briefing on this topic from the Military Services via RFI 11.

RFI 8

The Committee requests a **written response** from each of the **Military Services** on the following:

- a. Provide a copy of the annual report provided to DoD on domestic violence fatality reviews, per DoDI [6400.06](#), "Domestic Abuse Involving DoD Military and Certain Affiliated Personnel," for the past five years.
- b. Does your Service collect domestic abuse and domestic violence data on current or former intimate partners who have not been married, and do not have children together and with whom the abuser has not or does not share a common domicile (e.g., data on 'dating partners' as provided by the [Air Force](#)). If so, please provide the data from 2014-2018.
- c. Provide a list of what prevention programs are in place to preclude domestic abuse and domestic violence, to include but not limited to:
 - i. training for potential domestic abuse and domestic violence bystanders;
 - ii. adopting domestic abuse and domestic violence prevention programs from non-military entities like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention; and
 - iii. partnering with other non-military entities on assessing the effectiveness of domestic abuse and domestic violence prevention programs.
- d. What is being done to encourage servicewomen to report incidents or indicators of domestic abuse and domestic violence?
- e. What is being done to ensure servicewomen feel safe reporting incidents of domestic abuse and domestic violence?
- f. What actions are being taken to communicate what resources are available from Family Advocacy, including the domestic abuse victim advocates?

Organization	Description
Army	The Army provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Navy	The Navy provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Marine Corps	The Marine Corps provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Air Force	The Air Force provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI and provided the annual review of domestic abuse- and violence-related fatalities for 2014 through 2018 and the related data.
Coast Guard	The Coast Guard provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI. Upon doing so, it noted that an annual report was not provided to DoD on domestic violence fatality reviews per DoDI 6400.06 because the instruction does not apply to the Service.

RFI 9

The Committee requests a **written response** from the **National Guard** on the following:

- a. Based on available data and reporting, what resources are available to servicewomen to help prevent and address domestic abuse and domestic violence?
- b. What prevention strategies are offered to reduce/prevent incidents of domestic abuse and domestic violence?

Organization	Description
National Guard	The National Guard provided the Committee with responses to both questions in this RFI. In doing so, it noted that it does not offer prevention strategies to reduce/prevent incidents of domestic abuse and domestic violence. Prevention strategies are offered through the respective Family Advocacy Programs of the parent services, and only National Guard members in active duty status are eligible.

RFI 10

PRIMARY CAREGIVER LEAVE (WB&T)

The Committee is concerned with the ability of National Guard and Reserve servicewomen to receive creditable military service pay and retirement points during the time they are pregnant and/or on maternity leave. The [National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017](#), Section 521, increased parental leave benefits for active duty members to 12 weeks of total leave in the case of the birth of a child. However, under the current law, National Guard and Reserve servicewomen lose credit for their military service and points towards retirement while they are pregnant and/or on maternity leave and unable to attend unit training (e.g., drill weekend). Anecdotal evidence suggests lack of legislation in this regard impacts women’s affiliation with and retention of women in the National Guard and Reserves.

The Committee requests the **Department of Defense** position on proposed legislation to support National Guard and Reserve servicewomen receiving creditable military service pay and retirement points when impacted by pregnancy or the birth of a child. For example, the proposed Mothers of Military Service (MOMS) Leave Act.

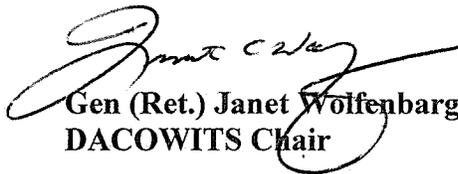
Organization	Description
DoD	DoD provided documentation explaining that it has not taken a formal position on this legislation.

Report Submitted by:



**COL Toya Davis, USA
DACOWITS Military Director**

Report Certified by:



**Gen (Ret.) Janet Wolfenbarger, USAF
DACOWITS Chair**

Members in Attendance:

Gen (Ret.) Janet Wolfenbarger, USAF
CAPT (Ret.) Kenneth Barrett, USN
Col (Ret.) John Boggs, USMC
SGM (Ret.) Norma Helsham, USA
Ms. Therese Hughes
Dr. Kyleanne Hunter, USMC Veteran
CSM (Ret.) Michele Jones, USA
Ms. LeeAnne Linderman

MAJ (Ret.) Priscilla Locke, USA
LTG (Ret.) Kevin Mangum, USA
Ms. Janie Mines, USN Veteran
FLTCM (Ret.) JoAnn Ortloff, USN
Brig Gen (Ret.) Jarris Sanborn, USAF
Brig Gen (Ret.) Allyson Solomon, ANG
RADM (Ret.) Cari Thomas, USCG

Ex-Officio Member in Attendance:

Ms. Jacquelyn Hayes-Byrd, Executive Director, Department of Veterans Affairs' Center for Women Veterans

Absent Member:

Lt Gen (Ret.) Judith Fedder, USAF