

# **DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES (DACOWITS)**

## **Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

**1–2 September 2020**

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) held a quarterly business meeting September 1–2, 2020. The meeting took place virtually via video teleconference.

**1 September 2020**

### **Opening Remarks**

Elaine Freeman, DACOWITS Military Director and Designated Federal Officer, opened the September quarterly business meeting by reviewing the Committee’s establishment and charter. COL Freeman reminded those in attendance any comments made during the meeting by Committee members are their personal opinions and do not reflect a DACOWITS or Department of Defense (DoD) position. COL Freeman then turned the meeting over to General (Ret.) Janet Wolfenbarger, DACOWITS Chair.

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all participants for joining the meeting virtually. She introduced the seven new members of the Committee who were appointed in June 2020: Major General (Ret.) George Alexander, Vice Admiral (Ret.) Robin Braun, Colonel (Ret.) Many-Bears Grinder, Commander Master Chief Petty Officer (Ret.) Octavia Harris, Major General (Ret.) Ronald Johnson, Ms. Robin Kelleher, and Fleet Master Chief (Ret.) Susan Whitman.

During the nearly 70-year history of the Committee, this was DACOWITS’ first time conducting a virtual meeting. Meeting virtually is not preferred, but given the circumstances of the ongoing pandemic, it provides a way to meet safely.

The Nation and the world have been grappling with not only the pandemic but also civil unrest and social injustice during the past several months. One of the actions being taken in response by DoD is to establish the Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Services, which will examine issues related to equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion in the military. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper’s June 18, 2020, message to the force announced this new Federal Advisory Committee “will mirror the well-regarded and successful DACOWITS.” The two committees will examine separate areas of concern based on the provisions outlined in each of their charters. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger said she is excited to see DACOWITS emulated in this way, which speaks to the Committee’s reputation and credibility.

It has been 6 months since the Committee last met together, and much has occurred in the world. One event particularly pertinent to DACOWITS was the loss of a longtime supporter, Major General Carol Timmons, who passed away in August 2020. She was the Adjutant General of the

Delaware National Guard and had served as the National Guard liaison to DACOWITS for many years. A true trailblazer, she deployed seven times overseas; logged more than 400 flight hours; and spent 42 years in uniform—first as an enlisted member, then as an officer. She became the first woman to serve as a two-star general in the National Guard. She was the first woman to lead the Delaware National Guard and was one of only four women to ever lead a State guard.

### **Status of Requests for Information**

COL Freeman reviewed the status of the Committee’s requests for information (RFIs). The Committee received responses to all six of its RFIs. The Committee also received two written public comments. RFI responses were published on the DACOWITS website.

### **Brief: Making the Selective Service System Inclusive**

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (NCMNP) offered to brief the Committee on (1) its findings from a review of the selective service process for the Military Services and (2) its recommendations to increase participation in military, national, and public service to address national security and other public service needs in America.

The NCMNP briefer opened by explaining the Commission was created by Congress through the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 to examine the Selective Service System (SSS), to include who should be required to register for selective service and whether SSS should be maintained, as well as how opportunities for military and public service could be extended to reach more people. She noted NCMNP was the first such commission to be tasked with examining military, national, and public service holistically in America.

The briefer explained NCMNP spent nearly 2 1/2 years engaging with youth and adults in various regions of the United States, such as small towns, big cities, and coastal areas, to better understand their perceptions of military and public service. She reported the Commission identified many positive perspectives toward public service throughout America and found providing opportunities and reducing barriers to service could increase Americans’ capacity to serve. The Commission’s interim report was released in January 2018, and the final report was released in March 2020.

The briefer stated NCMNP’s vision is that “every American will be inspired and eager to serve.” The Commission examined strategies for increasing access to and awareness and aspirations of public service and found many young Americans were unaware of the opportunities available to them through military, national, and public service. She noted most public servants and Military Services personnel told NCMNP they “stumbled into their position[s]” rather than sought out their careers because they lacked awareness of the opportunities available to them.

The briefer explained NCMNP’s recommendations regarding national mobilization focused on three major goals: defense of the Nation, modernization, and ensuring a qualified and capable force. Regarding the defense of the Nation, she said the Commission examined whether there was still a need for SSS given current national security needs and found the United States still required a mechanism for calling on American citizens to serve during a national emergency. Regarding modernization, she said NCMNP examined whether any modifications were necessary to modernize SSS and the selective service process. The Commission determined the current draft approach was the only proven process available for calling on Americans during a

national emergency and should therefore be retained, but it also found the registration system could benefit from certain modernizations. For example, the briefer reported most young Americans did not understand the purpose or implications of registering for selective service, so one way to modernize the process would be to better communicate the purpose and importance of SSS to young Americans and what their responsibilities might be during a Military Services draft. Last, in regard to ensuring a qualified and capable force, the briefer said the Commission examined whether SSS currently ensured the Military Services access to the most qualified people to meet future, unforeseen national security needs. For example, NCMNP recommended the President, before implementing a draft, first call for volunteers—the citizens who desire to provide military service—to meet national security needs that arise.

The briefer said NCMNP also examined and provided various recommendations on how to address DoD's needs for personnel with critical skills currently and in a time of emergency while preserving fairness and equity. For example, the Commission recommended DoD generate and maintain a classified list of skill deficiencies, including the number of individuals needed. NCMNP also recommended authorizing a Critical Skills Individual Ready Reserve and developing a national roster of individuals willing to volunteer during a national emergency.

The briefer reported NCMNP also reviewed strategies for improving the readiness of the national mobilization system to ensure SSS could operate as an effective “insurance policy” by holistically reviewing institutional and organizational functions and roles and implementing new standard operating procedures. The Commission noted a lack of clarity on whether the registration and lottery procedures had been recently tested to ensure they would work smoothly in a time of national emergency. For that reason, the Commission provided the following recommendations to DoD to ensure it could conduct an SSS mobilization for a draft:

1. Conduct SSS mobilization exercises, including a public awareness campaign communicating purpose
2. Conduct interagency mobilization exercises to develop strategies and operational concepts for all stakeholders involved in the mass mobilization process
3. Designate a lead national mobilization official within the National Security Council and the Office of the Secretary of Defense
4. Update DoD personnel requirements and timeline for obtaining draft inductees
5. Develop a joint DoD–SSS plan for responding to a large influx of volunteers
6. Include a section on the state of SSS and total mobilization in future Quadrennial Defense Reviews and National Defense Strategies

NCMNP also reviewed whether SSS registration should be expanded to include women to leverage the full range of talent, skills, and abilities available to DoD during a national emergency and to extend a fundamental civic obligation. Ultimately, the Commission recommended the Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) be amended to eliminate male-only registration and expand draft eligibility to all individuals in the applicable age range. The briefer confirmed young women told NCMNP their lack of ability to register with SSS made them feel like secondary citizens because their country would not call on them in a time of emergency to use their skills. However, she also noted multiple religious organizations did not believe the MSSA should be expanded to require women to register with SSS.

The briefer explained NCMNP's recommendations regarding military service focused on two major goals: strengthening the Military Services to meet current and future national security needs, and narrowing the civil-military divide to raise awareness and support pathways to military service. She confirmed the Commission had talked to a variety of youth living in areas in close proximity to Military Services bases who had never visited those bases and had no understanding of what types of activities occurred there. She noted most young Americans were unaware of the different opportunities available to them through the Military Services, and many believed they would have to take part in dangerous combat activities if they joined.

The briefer said NCMNP also examined current trends that might pose a challenge to the long-term viability of the all-volunteer force. For example, 71 percent of youth were not eligible to join the Military Services because they did not meet the necessary physical, mental health, or educational requirements for initial eligibility. Sixty-eight percent of Military Service recruits came from the Southern and Western United States, and five States provided 40 percent of all new active-duty enlisted accessions. She noted civilian and military communities are becoming increasingly isolated from each other, which leads to a lack of awareness and misunderstanding of the breadth of opportunities and benefits of military service. Finally, the briefer stated veterans were twice as likely as nonveterans to have a son or daughter join the Military Services.

NCMNP made a variety of recommendations related to military service. For example, the Commission recommended ways to improve the outreach by Military Services around the country, which included increasing opportunities for engagement with American youth by improving access to Military Service installations and cadet programs such as the DoD Starbase program and the National Guard Youth Challenge Program. She noted many of these cadet programs are located in communities without another military presence, so they act as youths' only connection to the Military Services in those areas. She clarified the purpose of these programs is not to recruit youth but rather to provide them with accurate information about each Military Service, such as what their responsibilities would be. The Commission also recommended using State National Guard units to increase the exposure of American youth to the Military Services, noting many State National Guard units are familiar with their surrounding communities and what outreach strategies may work best in their areas.

NCMNP also examined and made recommendations on how to increase opportunities for youth to explore military service, such as establishing the goal of striving to educate and inspire youth by providing more meaningful opportunities to explore the nuances of military service. For example, the Commission recommended increasing the scope of the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Course (JROTC) into more communities. NCMNP was told by Military Service recruiters the current single-year structure by which the Services received marketing funding created challenges for them because they usually did not receive their annual marketing funding until October or November each year, when most of the prime-time marketing opportunities had already been purchased. For that reason, the Commission recommended the Military Services' marketing and advertising budget be structured as multiyear funding to provide them with more opportunities to establish more strategic marketing campaigns.

NCMNP believes the Military Services should ensure their outreach strategies are optimized for today's youth by leveraging internet marketing and other innovative education opportunities. For example, the Commission found one of the primary reasons people joined the Military Services was for access to educational opportunities and recommended the designation of grants for "pre-service education." The briefer said currently, the Military Services will pay for a Service

member's education after they complete a certain amount of commitment to the Service, but the Commission recommended the Military Services flip this process to enable Service members to access that benefit prior to fulfilling their military commitments. NCMNP also recommended the Military Services establish stronger partnerships with community colleges and work with them to establish tuition assistance programs.

The briefer said NCMNP found many children would not join the Military Services because of their families' perceptions of the military. For example, during a focus group with about 10 youth in Wisconsin, 3 confirmed they would consider military service after graduation, but the others reported they would not consider pursuing such a career because their parents would not support the decision. One youth who confirmed they would consider a military career said they were also considering a career in finance, which the Military Services could not offer. This finding highlights how American youth may be unaware of the opportunities available to them through military service.

The briefer explained NCMNP also examined strategies for more effectively managing Military Services personnel, such as by developing new processes and using existing authorities for recruiting advanced specialists, and accommodating civilian career models to attract and retain talent with critical skills. For example, the Commission recommended options for people who may be less interested in a full-time military career to allow them to transition from a civilian industry job into military service more efficiently. NCMNP recommended establishing permanent billets for the Defense Digital Service (DDS) and other similar entities. The Commission heard from many people who transitioned out of the Military Services to work in civilian industry and were interested in returning to service on a part-time basis but had not been contacted about this option after leaving service. NCMNP also recommended collecting more robust individual performance data and administering standardized exit surveys across the Military Services to better understand why Service members leave service and to establish more reliable historical baselines.

The briefer confirmed NCMNP will terminate in September 2020, and the Inspire to Serve Act of 2020 had been introduced in the House of Representatives as a result of the Commission's efforts in the hope a similar bill would be introduced in the Senate soon. She explained not all 164 of NCMNP's recommendations would pertain to DACOWITS' interests but recommended DACOWITS review the recommendations related to military service and SSS.

### Discussion

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger thanked the NCMNP briefer and confirmed much of the information presented dovetails with DACOWITS' current and past research and recommendations.

LTG (Ret.) Kevin Mangum explained DACOWITS is currently focused on exploring marketing strategies to increase propensity to military service among young women. He asked if NCMNP's recommendations primarily focus on American youth and if any are specific to young women. The briefer confirmed many of the Commission's recommendations are focused on American youth but not necessarily on young women. The briefer noted many of the recommendations related to building propensity to serve in youth focus on expanding youth programs such as DoD Starbase and JROTC. The briefer explained these programs provide education to participants about the Military Services they otherwise would not receive in communities without an established military presence. The briefer said NCMNP also made recommendations focused on implementing a holistic approach to recruiting and retaining youth in the Military Services and

public service positions. For example, she noted recruiters informed the Commission many families in Seattle, WA, do not want their children to join the Military Services but are open to them pursuing national service opportunities such as with AmeriCorps and Teach for America. As a result, the Commission met with local recruiters and local national service representatives together, and these entities decided to partner during recruiting events to ensure individuals who may be interested in national service instead of military service have both options available to them. She noted youth who participate in national programs such as AmeriCorps may develop a desire or achieve the physical requirements for military service during their national service.

Brigadier General (Ret.) Allyson Solomon asked what objections NCMNP heard from stakeholders regarding the expansion of the MSSA to include women. The briefer responded multiple religious organizations objected to expanding SSS to women because their faiths were against putting women in dangerous situations. NCMNP also heard from other stakeholders women should not be allowed to serve in the Military Services at all, and should not have to register with SSS because of the threat of sexual assault in the Military Services. However, the briefer reiterated young women, which included middle-school-aged girls, had cited not being able to register with SSS as a major concern and wanted the process to be equitable. The briefer stated NCMNP had heard women reference this issue of inequality in the MSSA more frequently than it had heard objections by other stakeholders who were against expanding the MSSA to include women.

Major (Ret.) Priscilla Locke referenced the briefer's statement about State academies and asked if any of the academies NCMNP had visited were Military Services-based. The briefer confirmed she visited State military academies prior to her work with the Commission and noted these institutions were fully funded by State agencies or local school boards and used modified JROTC curricula to ensure they were appropriate for middle school students. The briefer said the academies focused on themes similar to those for JROTC, such as military discipline and the importance of serving one's country through military service or other types of public service. The briefer noted these academies likely would not be maintained if they were not effective given the costs associated with them. The briefer suggested DACOWITS examine the Kansas and Texas State military academies to determine if they should be expanded through DoD investment.

Rear Admiral (Ret.) Cari Thomas asked if NCMNP had engaged with the Coast Guard during its research. The briefer confirmed the Commission engaged with Coast Guard Service members in Washington, DC, as part of a Federal interagency working group.

MAJ (Ret.) Locke asked if NCMNP had identified any recommendations for recruiting technologically skilled youth into DDS. The briefer responded the Commission did not make any such recommendations but added recruitment is often driven by the needs of the specific Military Service. The briefer suggested DACOWITS submit an RFI asking DDS to brief the Committee on its strategies for recruiting people from the private sector.

Fleet Master Chief (Ret.) JoAnn Ortloff asked for clarification on the phrases "approach: standards first" and "leave flexibility with DoD, but sustain quality" from the briefer's slides regarding the Commission's recommendation to amend the MSSA to expand draft eligibility to all individuals, including women, in the applicable age range. The briefer said one concern related to expanding the MSSA was the belief it could result in lower standards for military service because women would be unable to meet the male standards. However, NCMNP found

men and women were equally qualified to meet the physical standard requirements for initial Military Services eligibility; about 29 percent of eligible women, and an equal percentage of eligible men, were qualified. The briefer confirmed NCMNP recommended maintaining the existing standards for both men and women after opening SSS registration to women. With regard to “flexibility with the DoD,” the briefer explained DoD updates the standards for military service over time, so NCMNP recommended considering flexible standards for eligibility given that DoD might need to draft individuals to work on cyber-warfare issues who would not necessarily need to meet the physical standards of women or men serving in infantry units.

CMDCM (Ret.) Harris asked if NCMNP examined the possibility of using monetary incentives to attract individuals who score high enough on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test to fill positions in the Military Services. The briefer confirmed the Commission did not explore the use of financial incentives to attract Service members into specific positions but reiterated it did recommend implementing a policy to have the Military Services pay for an individual’s educational training before they initiated their service commitment, and this approach could incentivize people to pursue advanced positions. The briefer also mentioned children in some States take the ASVAB in school to help them better understand their skill sets in relation to their future career options; however, many schools and parents have opposed requiring students to take the ASVAB because of concerns it may be used as a recruiting tool.

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger thanked the briefer for her presentation.

### **Brief: Pregnancy Discrimination (RFI 6)**

The Committee requested a briefing from the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) on the status of pending updates to DoD Directive (DoDD) 1020.02E, Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in the Department of Defense, and DoDD 1350.2, Department of Defense Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Program, and whether it will incorporate language about discrimination related to pregnancy as part of the updates.

The briefer began by describing ODEI’s vision, which is to foster a diverse and inclusive mission-ready total force. ODEI’s mission is to direct and oversee policies and programs to promote a DoD culture structured on dignity and to respect values, diversity, and inclusion as readiness imperatives. The briefer stated if DoD has an inclusive force, it will become a champion of diversity.

ODEI develops and reissues DoD policies and guidance and oversees 16 DoD regulations and instructions. The office is responsible for 21 reports that are sent to Congress, the Office of Personnel Management, or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or circulated within DoD. The briefer stated he is new to ODEI and has noticed many regulations and instructions are outdated; the office is focused on updating regulations to ensure it has the most contemporary and robust policies within DoD. In June, ODEI published a civilian harassment policy to complement the military harassment policy. The office is focused on establishing and executing compliance frameworks and partnering with the Military Services and DoD components to ensure a unified structure with accountability measures. ODEI is also engaging in strategic planning and assessment to ensure it can identify emerging issues and challenges. The office spends a significant amount of time with Military Service and DoD components stakeholders to identify gaps in policy and areas of need to ensure they are being addressed. Stakeholder engagement is incredibly valuable, and a best practice is to gather information from the field,

fleet, and wing. ODEI has developed the Defense Equal Opportunity Reform Group, which uses a military and civilian Equal Employment Opportunity framework, to champion and shape the direction on many of the diversity and inclusion policies. The Defense Diversity Workgroup, which meets quarterly, also champions these issues. Another ODEI objective revolves around training, education, and research. The briefer noted Committee members may be familiar with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute at Patrick Air Force Base. ODEI partners with the Diversity Management Operations Center. The briefer noted training is critical for everything in the diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity spaces to ensure that Service members have the requisite skill sets they need for dialogue in these critical areas. The briefer also noted research is critical and highlighted the partnership with the Office of People Analytics to ensure a holistic review of survey data. Recent efforts have included collecting data on hazing and bullying, and examining an extremism metric to assess the total force on these issues. ODEI develops and implements a strategic plan for internal and external communications to enable DoD to better communicate the effectiveness of ODEI's efforts.

The briefer then addressed Secretary of Defense Mark Esper's efforts to ensure DoD is leading in the space of diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity. Secretary Esper released his first memorandum June 19, 2020, outlining his three-tiered approach. First, Secretary Esper requested any recommendations from the Military Services, DoD components, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to bolster and increase diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity throughout DoD. DoD received almost 70 initial recommendations and stood up a team and a DoD diversity workgroup is helping to champion and shape these recommendations. Next, Secretary Esper appointed Secretary of the Air Force Barbara Barrett, a former DACOWITS member, to lead a newly established DoD board on diversity and inclusion to review the comprehensive recommendations DoD received. The recommendations included ways to address issues with recruiting, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Military Service-specific issues, language areas, the ASVAB, and others. The briefer stated there is a tremendous amount of focus within DoD on diversity and inclusion. Finally, Secretary Esper's memorandum addressed establishing an enduring framework for diversity and inclusion. Similar to DACOWITS, the new Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Services will be the enduring strategy for DoD going forward and will be implemented in December.

The briefer reviewed the historical lead-up to the current state of antidiscrimination policies. In 1951, the same year DACOWITS was established, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 10240, which permitted the Military Services to discharge women if they became pregnant, gave birth, or became a parent by adoption. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in public accommodation and employment. Executive Order 11375, issued in 1966, expanded the 1964 Civil Rights Act to prohibit sex discrimination. In 1968, Executive Order 9981 mandated equality of treatment and opportunity for all members of the Military Services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. In 1969, Executive Order 11478 required equal opportunity and affirmative action programs to be implemented in all Federal agencies. In 1971, DoD initiated a policy of waivers to discharge for pregnancy. This change to enlistment rules meant women with children were no longer automatically excluded from entering military service. In 1975, DoD instructed the Military Services to develop and implement voluntary separation policies for pregnancy and parenthood. In 1976, a court ruled a Marine Corps regulation requiring the discharge of pregnant Marines violated the Fifth Amendment of the due process clause. More recently, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 superseded several Supreme Court civil rights decisions and granted women and disabled individuals the



right to recover monetary damages under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In 1993, the Family Medical Leave Act gave families the right to take unpaid time off from work to care for newborn or recently adopted children, or an ill family member. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 enabled discriminatory compensation, extending the time an employee could bring a lawsuit forward. In 2010, the Military Services' "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was repealed, which allowed openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual Americans to serve without discrimination. In 2015, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter notified Congress of an intent to open to women all previously closed occupations and positions, and in 2016, he published a policy to rescind the Combat Exclusion Act for women in the Armed Forces. The briefer concluded the historical overview by noting the impending policy publication from Secretary Esper stating pregnancy discrimination as a form of sex-based discrimination will not be tolerated in the Armed Forces.

The briefer stated DoDD 1020.02E, Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in the DoD, is a foundational antidiscrimination policy. ODEI is considering revisions to modernize the language and definitions in the policy, which was last revised in 2016. DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1350.02, DoD Military Equal Opportunity Program, will include a change related to pregnancy discrimination. The briefer noted the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 prohibited pregnancy discrimination in employment but did not include Military Service members. DoDD 1020.02E prohibits unlawful employment discrimination based on sex—to include pregnancy—for DoD civilian employees but does not extend the same protections to Military Service members. The briefer highlighted a specific point from the memorandum "Immediate Actions to Address Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Military Services," issued July 14, 2020, by Secretary Esper. The briefer read the text under the bullet "Update the Department's Military Equal Opportunity and Diversity and Inclusion Policies": "The Department will update its military harassment policy to strengthen protections for Service members against inappropriate and intolerable harassment behaviors, especially racial bias and prejudice. Secondly, the Department will update its military equal opportunity policy to prohibit pregnancy-based discrimination. The Department will also update its policy on diversity management and equal opportunity in the Department of Defense to delineate roles and responsibilities of leaders and provide reference points to engage in critical thinking on this topic." The briefer stated the most important piece of the last sentence in this section of the memorandum is, "I direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to issue updates to these policies no later than 1 September 2020." The briefer noted the date of his briefing was September 1, 2020, and said the policies have been fully coordinated and signed off on and will be made public once they are published through Washington Headquarters Services. The briefer stated it is a groundbreaking day for DoD, ensuring Service members are provided the same protection as their civilian counterparts. The briefer commended the Department of the Air Force for providing its proposal regarding pregnancy discrimination in early February through the Air Force's Women's Initiative Team from the Barrier Analysis Workgroup. Once this issue was brought to ODEI's attention, the office met with its legal advisors to determine whether it required changes to laws or if it was a regulatory issue. Once it was determined the issue of pregnancy discrimination policy was addressed through DoD regulation, ODEI provided the avenue to coordinate with the Military Services to meet the policy update deadline. Secretary Esper's memorandum requiring the policy updates by September 1 helped to push the effort forward in DoD. The briefer stated this policy is a huge victory for pregnancy discrimination, and Service members and civilians now have the same protections through DoD.

## Discussion

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger thanked the briefer and commended ODEI for the tremendous amount of work accomplished in the short timeframe.

Brigadier General (Ret.) Jarris Sanborn asked if the briefer could provide additional information about the language for the pregnancy discrimination policy updates and specific areas it will address. The briefer responded there is a very precise definition in the DoDI: pregnancy discrimination is a form of sex-based discrimination and will not be tolerated within DoD, and DoD is leaving it up to the Military Services to apply the language to their respective regulations and instructions. The briefer did not have the language on hand but said in summary, it adds pregnancy as a form of sex-based discrimination. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn asked how DoD plans to review and oversee what each Service will do with this updated policy. The briefer responded every published issuance includes an implementation plan. DoD requests a plan from each Military Service within 90 days to ensure its regulations and respective instructions will be updated. DoD also conducts an assessment with each Military Service to ensure policy at the DoD level is implemented at the Military Service level. The briefer stated these Military Service implementation plans are critical. The plans include a dialogue within 90 days and a follow-up within approximately 6 months to ensure policies at the DoD level flow down to the Military Service level.

Ms. Janie Mines asked whether there was any dialogue with the Military Services about their future direction related to diversity and inclusion or concerns about the Secretary of Defense's memorandum. The briefer noted ODEI did not collect any input from Service members but instead tapped the expertise of the Air Force's Women's Initiative Team. The team had collected a tremendous amount of data and met with many Airmen to discuss the issues and barriers and presented a well-balanced position paper backed by focus group data. The briefer stated ODEI felt this was an area that required action and was able to make this policy change a reality.

FLTCM (Ret.) Whitman asked when the strategic communication plans will be released. The briefer responded the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has requested this information as well and stated he will need to check the program of milestones for the due date. The briefer said ODEI is aiming to release the plans by the end of the current fiscal year, but that goal might change based on other diversity and inclusion priorities from Secretary Esper. The briefer stated he will follow up with the Committee on this matter.

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger asked if there will be future efforts to address culture challenges alongside the current policy and language changes. The briefer offered to present at the next DACOWITS meeting to provide an update on the holistic diversity and inclusion efforts happening within DoD and added Secretary Barrett has already conducted almost 15 listening sessions. The DoD board on diversity and inclusion is composed of E-5 through O-7 Service members, including Secretary Barrett and Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Matthew Donovan. This group has visited several East Coast installations and has also been relying on a crowdsourcing campaign to solicit Service member feedback about Secretary Esper's diversity and inclusion campaign, which will run for 2 months. The crowdsourcing campaign started 2 weeks ago and has received more than 39,000 responses about what Service members feel should be done related to diversity and inclusion. The briefer noted they are already running analyses to identify trends and emerging issues to address. A prevalent theme among those responses has been culture and climate, which links back to dignity and respect.

ODEI is also partnering with the Office of People Analytics to understand the trends and identify what is on the minds of Service members. The briefer paralleled what is happening in the Nation with Service member concerns about racial injustice, the military justice system, and overall comments about equality. The briefer noted commanders have been seeking information about how to have discussions on these issues with their subordinates. ODEI has developed talking points and standardized definitions related to diversity and inclusion topics. The briefer stated every leader should have the confidence to have these candid conversations with their workforce. The DoD board on diversity and inclusion is conducting site visits and will bring back additional information about the sentiments and concerns being shared across the total force.

Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn asked what avenues are available for servicewomen to express concerns or complain, either anonymously or by attribution. The briefer stated there are informal and formal processes within the military to initiate a complaint. The informal process occurs through the chain of command through an individual's supervisor or someone at a higher level in their chain of command to help them address forms of harassment or to file a complaint. The formal complaint process occurs within the Military Services' respective Equal Opportunity Offices. Anonymous complaints can be submitted through written forms, a suggestion box, or email. As long as the command or Equal Opportunity Office is provided enough information by the Service member, they can initiate an investigation into the matter. The briefer stated most complaints occur through the informal route, signaling Military Service members have confidence in the chain of command and would rather have a complaint rectified within the chain than through an external third party. The briefer noted there are various ways to seek resolution, such as a facilitated dialogue or having the commander meet with the aggrieved individual or alleged offender. When Service members file complaints, it is seen as a good sign individuals are aware of their rights, and DoD is active in addressing complaints. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn asked if pregnancy discrimination complaints will be tracked. The briefer affirmed they will be tracked. The briefer explained each Military Service has a complaint database designating the complaint as formal or informal and identifying demographic information, and it will identify pregnancy as a form of sex-based discrimination. ODEI can analyze results from tracked complaints. The briefer stated he would welcome the chance to return in a year to brief DACOWITS on the complaint activities and metrics related to pregnancy discrimination.

Ms. Therese Hughes asked about other opportunities for discussing pregnancy discrimination with servicewomen who have been professionally harmed from this type of discrimination. Ms. Hughes commented on the loss to the Military Services when servicewomen leave because the Services failed them. The briefer responded the office is analyzing the separation data using the top separation codes to better understand the rationale of why servicewomen are leaving. Exit surveys are another data point for examination, but the briefer noted the Military Services do not have uniform exit surveys. Standardized exit surveys would help to understand why servicewomen are leaving across the total force. The briefer stated ODEI is looking at how to measure and understand how discrimination affects all Service members, especially those who feel they are being discriminated against based on their desire to start a family.

Ms. Hughes asked the briefer to clarify whether pregnancy discrimination will be prioritized or if it will be highlighted only if it comes through as a theme in the data. The briefer responded the office takes a holistic approach to reviewing the data on discrimination, including data on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, and pregnancy. Pregnancy will be one of the metrics when examining discrimination, and data from the coming months will help provide a picture of what

is happening. The briefer noted he would welcome the chance to come back and brief the Committee on future updates.

MG (Ret.) Johnson asked if there were any examples from the working group or the field showing commanders doing the right thing even without these regulations in place. The briefer responded he would share the information paper ODEI received from the Air Force's Women's Initiative Team because it was replete with evidence about why DoD should take on these actions and policy changes.

### **Brief: Gender Integration Implementation Plans (RFI 1)**

The Committee requested a briefing from ODEI on its role in the strategic oversight for the Military Services' gender integration implementation plans. The Committee was specifically interested in (1) metrics, trends, and timelines to measure the implementation of efforts underway to advance opportunities for women to service in previously closed combat roles; (2) efforts that lag implementation timelines and the plan to resolve these efforts; (3) how ODEI interacts with relevant policyholders across DoD to ensure gender-integration plans offer consistency across the Department; (4) shortfalls in resources to enable full support of plans for timely integration; (5) reports to Congress to outline the status of implementation plans and requirements; and (6) focus areas related to gender integration for ODEI during the next 2–5 years.

The briefer opened by noting the importance of monitoring the long-term implementation progress of expanding combat service opportunities for women was recognized prior to the transfer of implementation plan monitoring to ODEI in January 2020. Monitoring is now under the purview of ODEI. Their vision is to “foster a diverse and inclusive mission ready total force,” and their mission is to “direct and oversee policies and programs to promote a DoD culture of dignity and respect that values diversity and inclusion as readiness imperatives.” The briefer provided an overview of the Military Services' organizational structure and noted DoD and ODEI remain steadfast in their commitment to promote an environment free from personal, social, and institutional barriers that prevent personnel from realizing their full potential and rising to the highest level of responsibility possible.

The briefer provided an overview of gender integration policies since 1994. DoD policy in 1994 prohibited the assignment of women to direct combat units below the brigade level and allowed the Military Services to restrict the assignment of women based on privacy, berthing, physical requirements, special operations and long-range reconnaissance, and co-location with direct ground combat units. Between 2011 and 2012, DoD conducted an extensive review of all laws and policies governing the assignments of women in the Armed Forces. In January 2013, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey announced the rescission of the 1994 policy. In September 2015, the Marine Corps finished its study comparing the performance of gender-integrated and male-only infantry units in simulated combat. Results showed all-male units were faster and more lethal. In December 2015, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter directed the Military Services and the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) to begin executing gender integration implementation plans as soon as practical but no later than April 1, 2016, to open the remaining previously closed positions to women. At that time, the Military Services also began creating gender-neutral standards of assessment that now apply to men and women in previously closed

positions. At present, implementation is based on requirements (not accession goal or demographic metrics), and DoD “continues to implement processes that ensure combat effectiveness and protect the welfare of the force.” DoD recognizes it is essential for the ranks to reflect and be inclusive of all the American people they are sworn to protect.

In 1973, women made up 2 percent of enlisted personnel and 8 percent of officers; today, women make up 16 percent of enlisted personnel and 19 percent of officers. On May 19, 2020, GAO released “Female Active-Duty Personnel: Guidance and Plans Needed for Recruitment and Retention Efforts” (Report No. GAO-20-61). The report found between 2004 and 2018, the percentage of women in the Military Services increased from 15.1 to 16.5 percent. Attrition for enlisted and commissioned officers was higher for women than men, and women were 28 percent more likely than men to leave military service. The report also found enlisted promotion rates were slightly lower, but officer promotion rates were higher, for women versus men.

According to the briefer, the Army reported gender-neutral standards are in place for all occupations and at all occupation-producing schools and sites of instruction. Since the opening of all career fields to women, approximately 138,000 women have served in these positions across the Army. Since April 2016, more than 500 women have entered the Infantry and Armor Career Management Fields, and 1 woman has enlisted in Field Artillery. Enforcement of standards and conduct, along with adherence to Army values and the warrior ethos, remain a top priority for all organizations.

The Navy reported women are now fully integrated, and gender-neutral occupational standards are in place at schools and training for each designator, rating, and Navy enlisted classification. Special Warfare Sea, Air, and Land and Special Warfare Combatant Craft-Crewman occupations and enlisted occupations in the submarine warfare force have the least women compared with other occupations. The Navy has also adopted gender-neutral inclusive language across all outreach and communication products to encourage women to apply. Berthing on all Navy ships will be gender neutral by 2025.

The Marine Corps reported partial gender integration is now in place at Parris Island. In 2019, Parris Island saw at least three gender-integrated recruiting companies (made up of five all-male platoons and one all-female platoon).

The Air Force reported gender-neutral standards are in place for all Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC) and in use at all training locations and schools. The Air Force continues to actively recruit women into the seven Battlefield Airman AFSCs by incorporating programs focused on resilience mentorship, diversity, and integration. In October 2017, the Air Force established the 330th Recruiting Detachment dedicated to Battlefield Airman and Combat Support recruiting. The Service has also updated public-facing media to ensure maximum diversity and inclusion.

USSOCOM continues to recruit women to apply for Special Operations Force training and continues to work with the Military Services Recruiting Commands to ensure servicewomen are aware of Special Operations Force opportunities. In 2017, 11 women entered 4 of USSOCOM’s Assessment and Selection courses.

The briefer closed by stating DoD recognizes it has not done enough in the gender integration space and will be pursuing a comprehensive analysis of the efforts made. Although there are many lessons to be learned, the Committee must be mindful of the work DoD has already completed toward the effort. When DoD opened more than 200,000 previously closed positions

spanning 52 military occupational specialties, these efforts were the result of nearly 5 years of research, analysis, and scrutiny. Moving forward, DoD's goal is to ensure the mission is carried out by the most capable Service members, and mission effectiveness is retained. DoD will continue to proceed in a measured and responsible way to ensure the success of Service members, unit effectiveness, readiness, cohesion, and quality.

### Discussion

Lieutenant General (Ret.) Judith Fedder thanked the briefer for reviewing how ODEI is working on gender implementation plans. She noted this area has been a longstanding area of interest for DACOWITS, and the Committee has looked at the development of gender integration implementation plans across the Military Services over time. DACOWITS is very interested in how DoD is providing oversight and conducting assessments after the transition away from the Office of Force Resiliency in January 2020. She noted the briefer stated DoD is not doing enough to move forward with these plans. Lt Gen (Ret.) Fedder asked the briefer to talk about how ODEI will restructure its oversight and assessment and the types of metrics and tools it will use to ensure the timelines of these plans stay on track. The briefer responded there are several areas in which DoD and ODEI need to improve, and ODEI will look at what has been done and what needs to be done and will meet with the Military Services to figure out how it can best support them in moving the needle. The briefer said progress has been stale and stagnant, and she is looking forward to establishing metrics and working with DACOWITS to help figure out what needs to be done and how quickly improvements can be made. The briefer noted she assumed her position in June 2020, and this was an area she agreed to champion when she came on board.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff noted the previous briefer mentioned the Air Force's Women's Initiative Team. Previously, the Navy had an Office of Women's Policy, and other Military Services may have had offices focused on women's issues that have since disbanded. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff wanted to know how ODEI is receiving its information from the Military Services if they no longer have offices specifically overseeing gender integration plans and women's issues in general. She also asked if ODEI had addressed oversight of other women's issues. The briefer responded there is a shortfall of resources, and one of ODEI's concerns going forward is consistency in policies across DoD. She noted ODEI and DoD need to better determine how to work together and what the Military Services are focusing on so there is no duplication of effort. The briefer described how when her team went to the Military Services to collect information on the topic, many of the people they encountered did not realize the gender integration effort was ongoing. The briefer noted the focus areas of her position are retention, attrition, and career progression, especially rates of promotion and selection into key positions.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff again asked how ODEI is receiving its information from the Military Services given that they no longer have offices focused on women's policy. She noted many Military Services have folded their women's issues offices into their inclusion and diversity offices, but many of the women's issues those former offices addressed are separate from inclusion and diversity. The briefer responded she is working with those diversity and inclusion offices as counterparts, but it is difficult to determine where information is coming from and what those offices have done in this space. It is a challenge to track the most current progress, even though statistics show women are advancing. The briefer highlighted findings regarding women in ships from the "DACOWITS 2019 Annual Report" and stated it is difficult to determine how to ensure progress in one branch of the Military Services can also occur in the

other branches. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff thanked the briefer and stated the Committee is also looking forward to these answers.

With regard to stagnation in numbers, Ms. Kelleher asked the briefer how the culture change is being addressed and whether there is a culture change strategy in place. The briefer responded it is important to have conversations on the significance of equal opportunity and why women should be in combat roles and male-dominated fields. She believes these conversations will be the impetus for a culture change. Ms. Kelleher followed up and asked if anyone is leading this effort. The briefer responded she is taking the lead and looking forward to working with the Committee moving forward.

LTG (Ret.) Mangum noted how as he was preparing to retire from the Army and participating on a Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel Command Board, he observed the lack of women being considered. He asked the secretariat of the board about the rate of minorities and women who were self-selecting out from consideration and found 50 percent or more of women self-selected out of these roles compared with their White male counterparts. He asked the briefer if she has considered why women may be opting out of consideration for higher level jobs and, if she has not, recommended she do so. The briefer responded this is something she will be looking into. She stated some of the conversations she has had since taking her position overlap in certain ways—for example, regarding pregnancy discrimination, SSS, and gender integration. It comes down to women questioning whether starting a family will hamper or prohibit them from taking command. The briefer noted these are conversations she would like to start. LTG (Ret.) Mangum asked the briefer to let the Committee know how it can help in the future. The briefer stated she is looking forward to returning and demonstrating progress to the Committee in the future.

Regarding the briefer's statement about how 11 women had entered 4 of USSOCOM's Assessment and Selection courses, CMDCM (Ret.) Harris asked about the current status of those individuals and whether they are still in the pipeline. The briefer responded she will obtain that information and provide the answer to DACOWITS. CMDCM (Ret.) Harris also asked if there are any women—enlisted or officers—in the Space Force. The briefer responded she believed one woman took command in that Military Service in 2019.

**The first day of the meeting was adjourned.**

**2 September 2020**

### **Opening Remarks**

COL Freeman reopened the September quarterly business meeting by reviewing the agenda for the day. She reminded those in attendance any comments made during the meeting by Committee members are their personal opinions and do not reflect a DACOWITS or DoD position. COL Freeman then turned the meeting over to Gen. (Ret.) Wolfenbarger, DACOWITS Chair.

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger welcomed the attendees to the meeting and conducted a roll call.

### **Award Ceremony**

An award ceremony was held to honor the service of four departing Committee members: Dr. Kyleanne Hunter, Ms. Mines, FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff, and Command Sergeant Major (Ret.) Michele Jones. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger offered words of recognition and thanks to each departing member. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger invited each honoree to share departing remarks.

## **2020 Propose and Vote on Recommendations**

Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger began the voting session by stating the importance of the Committee's recommendations. Since 1951, the Committee has submitted more than 1,000 recommendations to the Secretary of Defense. Of those recommendations, approximately 98 percent have been either fully or partially implemented by DoD. Committee members discussed and voted on the following recommendations and continuing concerns.

### **A. Marketing Strategies**

- 1. The Secretary of Defense should increase oversight and assess the effectiveness and scale of outreach programs with the objective of directing new programs and/or adjusting the purpose of existing programs to positively impact adolescent women's propensity for military service.*

MAJ (Ret.) Locke moved to adopt the recommendation. Brig Gen (Ret.) Solomon seconded the motion.

#### **Discussion:**

No discussion.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should increase oversight and assess the effectiveness and scale of outreach programs with the objective of directing new programs and/or adjusting the purpose of existing programs to positively impact adolescent women's propensity for military service.*

### **B. Retention/Exit Surveys**

- 1. The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to share and implement best practices, to include leveraging civilian industry best practices, on utilization of retention and exit survey data to identify barriers and/or lessons learned to improve servicewomen's retention.*

Captain (Ret.) Kenneth Barrett moved to adopt the recommendation. LTG (Ret.) Mangum seconded the motion.



**Discussion:**

Lt Gen (Ret.) Fedder suggested the recommendation as written presupposes there are best practices to be shared amongst the Military Services and asked if the Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee could highlight any best practices it uncovered during the research process. CAPT (Ret.) Barrett confirmed the Subcommittee identified multiple best practices and lessons learned from the Military Services on the use of exit and retention surveys, highlighting the comprehensiveness of the Air Force's 2019 retention survey and the frequency of the recently implemented Army Career Engagement Survey as best practices.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to share and implement best practices, to include leveraging civilian industry best practices, on utilization of retention and exit survey data to identify barriers and/or lessons learned to improve servicewomen's retention.*

**C. Continuing Concern: Dual-Military Co-Location**

Brig Gen (Ret.) Solomon moved to adopt the continuing concern. RADM (Ret.) Thomas seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**

No discussion.

**Vote on Continuing Concern:** The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**D. Gender Integration Implementation Plans**

1. *The Secretary of Defense should designate a single office of primary responsibility to provide active attention and oversight to the implementation of the Military Services' gender integration plans in order to restore momentum and measure progress.*

Lt Gen (Ret.) Fedder moved to adopt the recommendation. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**

RADM (Ret.) Thomas asked if the intention behind this recommendation is to designate the Office of the Secretary of Defense as responsible for the oversight of the implementation of each Military Service's gender integration plan. LTG (Ret.) Fedder explained ODEI is currently responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Military Services' gender integration plans as well as their other diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. She explained the intention behind the recommendation is to move this responsibility to an office with the singular responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the gender integration plans.

MG (Ret.) Johnson cited how the ODEI briefing on the oversight of the gender integration plans from day 1 of the September 2020 DACOWITS Quarterly Business Meeting did not identify any metrics being used to measure the progress made in implementing the plans. He noted this recommendation is also intended to improve the measurement of the progress Military Services have made in implementing their plans. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff also reported the Employment and Integration Subcommittee is concerned the implementation of the plans has stagnated in recent years and believes moving the responsibility from ODEI to an office with a singular focus on overseeing the implementation of gender integration plans will help ensure they are executed efficiently.

LTG (Ret.) Mangum noted although ODEI has additional responsibilities, it is currently a single office with the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of gender integration plans and asked whether the recommendation should be amended to clarify the intent to move this responsibility to an office with a sole focus on the implementation of gender integration plans. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff reported the Subcommittee's intent was to keep the recommendation broad to allow the Secretary of Defense to decide which office should be responsible for this oversight. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger agreed with the Subcommittee's approach and suggested making clear the intent of the recommendation in the reasoning.

RADM (Ret.) Thomas asked if this recommendation would support the advancement of gender integration for women in the Special Forces. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff confirmed her belief this recommendation would help to advance gender integration in the Special Forces, noting many of those roles have opened to women since 2015 and are specifically addressed in the Military Services' gender integration plans.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should designate a single office of primary responsibility to provide active attention and oversight to the implementation of the Military Services' gender integration plans in order to restore momentum and measure progress.*

#### **E. Continuing Concern: Army Combat Fitness Test**

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff moved to adopt the continuing concern. MG (Ret.) Johnson seconded the motion.

##### **Discussion:**

RADM (Ret.) Thomas noted the Committee has received briefings and written responses from the Army and the Research Contractor regarding the Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) and asked whether the Employment and Integration Subcommittee felt it was unable to develop a recommendation on this topic because of a lack of data. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff explained the Subcommittee did not make any recommendations on this topic partly because it was unable to conduct installation visits because of COVID-19. This limitation hindered the Subcommittee's ability to collect focus group data from current Service members on their experiences with the ACFT and to see the ACFT take place in person. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff also said the primary reason the Subcommittee decided to make the ACFT a continuing concern is the Army postponed the implementation date for the test for administrative purposes. She confirmed the Subcommittee wants to allow the Army the opportunity to review and revise the ACFT after implementing it on a trial basis before making any recommendations.

MG (Ret.) Johnson noted soldiers are currently taking the ACFT in a diagnostic mode, so the Subcommittee will have more data during the next research year on how men and women are performing comparatively on the test to better inform a recommendation.

**Vote on Continuing Concern:** The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

#### **F. Continuing Concern: Marine Corps' Recruit Training**

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff moved to adopt the continuing concern. LTG (Ret.) Fedder seconded the motion.

##### **Discussion:**

No discussion.

**Vote on Continuing Concern:** The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

#### **G. Continuing Concern: Women in Aviation**

VADM (Ret.) Braun moved to adopt the continuing concern. Ms. Kelleher seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**

No discussion.

**Vote on Continuing Concern:** The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

#### **H. Continuing Concern: Women in Space**

Ms. Kelleher moved to adopt the continuing concern. VADM (Ret.) Braun seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**

CAPT (Ret.) Barrett referenced the Space Force Overview briefing from the Office of the Chief of Space Operations during the March 2020 DACOWITS Quarterly Business Meeting and noted the briefer reported the Space Force would leverage strategies to ensure high representation of women in the Military Service. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger noted her belief Congress authorized the Space Force to explore and pilot new recruitment and retention strategies and suggested the Committee wants to collaborate with the Service to help facilitate its leveraging of these new authorities and the communication of its successful strategies across DoD. Lt Gen (Ret.) Fedder confirmed the primary intent behind this continuing concern was to strengthen the relationship between DACOWITS and the Space Force.

**Vote on Continuing Concern:** The Committee voted to adopt the continuing concern unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

## I. Caregiver Leave

1. *The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to implement flexible (noncontinuous) primary and secondary caregiver leave options, in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, to ensure caregivers have maximum flexibility in making caregiving arrangements best suited to their family and service circumstances.*

Ms. Hughes moved to adopt the recommendation. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn seconded the motion.

### **Discussion:**

No discussion.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to implement flexible (noncontinuous) primary and secondary caregiver leave options, in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, to ensure caregivers have maximum flexibility in making caregiving arrangements best suited to their family and service circumstances.*

2. *The Secretary of Defense should direct the Navy and Marine Corps to authorize their Service members the full 21 days of secondary caregiver leave provided for in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017.*

Ms. Hughes moved to adopt the recommendation. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn seconded the motion.

### **Discussion:**

MG (Ret.) Johnson asked if Military Services other than the Navy and Marine Corps authorize their Service members the full 21 days of secondary caregiver leave provided

for in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger confirmed they did.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should direct the Navy and Marine Corps to authorize their Service members the full 21 days of secondary caregiver leave provided for in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017.*

3. *The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to remove all barriers that prohibit Service members from determining as a family which parent shall be designated the primary caregiver, and which shall be designated the secondary caregiver.*

Ms. Hughes moved to adopt the recommendation. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**

Lt Gen (Ret.) Fedder asked whether the barriers prohibiting Service members from determining—as a family—which parent will be designated as the primary caregiver and which parent will be designated as the secondary caregiver are consistent across the Military Services. Ms. Hughes confirmed each Military Service has different regulations around the designation of primary and secondary caregivers. For example, some Services require their members to be designated as the primary or secondary caregiver between 60 and 90 days before a birth parent’s due date. She noted members of some of the Military Services have a greater capacity to decide as a family which parent should be designated as the primary caregiver.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to remove all barriers that prohibit Service members from determining as a family which parent shall be designated the primary caregiver, and which shall be designated the secondary caregiver.*

4. *The Secretary of Defense should ensure servicewomen in the Reserve Component receive full creditable military service, similar to their Active Component counterparts, so they are not penalized for unavoidable absences resulting from a pregnancy and/or birth event.*

Ms. Hughes moved to adopt the recommendation. MG (Ret.) Alexander seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**

MG (Ret.) Johnson asked if the word “ensure” in the recommendation should be replaced with the word “direct.” Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger noted legislative change is likely required to revise the Military Service Reserve Component policy. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn agreed the Well-Being and Treatment Subcommittee decided to include the word “ensure” as opposed to “direct” in the recommendation because of the Secretary of Defense’s limited ability to enact changes to the Reserve Component.

CAPT (Ret.) Barrett asked for clarification on current legislation around creditable military service in the Reserve Component. He also asked if the phrase “full creditable military service” is too prescriptive and might limit DoD’s options for addressing this concern in the Reserve Component. Ms. Hughes explained the Subcommittee wants the recommendation to portray parity between the Active Component and the Reserve Component. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger confirmed there is currently proposed legislation with similar language to the proposed recommendation, and DoD has not yet established a position on this legislation. CSM (Ret.) Jones also confirmed Service members in the Reserve Component receive credit for their military service in a different way than Service members in the Active Component, so it is important to leave the phrase “creditable military service” in the recommendation.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
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- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should ensure servicewomen in the Reserve Component receive full creditable military service, similar to their Active Component counterparts, so they are not penalized for unavoidable absences resulting from a pregnancy and/or birth event.*

## **J. Caregiver Sabbatical**

- 1. The Secretary of Defense should establish a caregiver sabbatical or extended parental leave alternative with the objective of developing more flexible caregiver leave options that will encourage, promote, and increase female Service member retention by mitigating the stresses, burdens, and pressures associated with balancing service and family obligations.*

Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn moved to adopt the recommendation. FLTCM (Ret.) Whitman seconded the motion.

### **Discussion:**

Lt Gen (Ret.) Fedder asked if the intent of this recommendation is to establish a sabbatical or extended parental leave option only for female Service members or if it was for all Service members. She noted the recommendation as written could be understood as recommending the Secretary of Defense establish caregiver sabbatical options for male Service members as a strategy for improving female retention. Brig Gen (Ret.) replied the intent of the recommendation is clarified in the reasoning, including recommendations on how caregiver sabbatical and extended parental leave options might be designed and a discussion on the importance of allowing both male and female Service members to access these options. She noted gender-neutral parental leave policies are becoming more popular in civilian industry, and encouraging men to take advantage of these leave options could help normalize taking caregiver leave and potentially reduce pregnancy bias and stigmatization in the Military Services.

CAPT (Ret.) Barrett noted during the March 2020 DACOWITS Quarterly Business Meeting, the Military Service briefers reported Service member utilization of the Career Intermission Program (CIP) was extremely low. He asked if the intent of this recommendation is to develop a program separate from CIP or to expand CIP to include caregiving motivations. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn stated suggestions on the design of the recommended caregiver sabbatical and extended parental leave options are provided in the reasoning, including an option to expand or revise the CIP. She noted the low uptake rate of CIP is likely associated with the low rates of pay offered to participating Service members, and this issue is also addressed in the reasoning. She explained CIP allows Service members to take a 1- to 3-year leave from service while receiving 1/30th of their pay rate, which is too low for many Service members to take advantage of the program. CMDCM (Ret.) Harris also suggested another reason few Service members access CIP is because it can result in them falling behind their colleagues professionally. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn agreed, noting one potential enhancement that could be made to CIP is to figure out a way to mitigate the impacts of taking leave on a Service member's professional advancement.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff suggested caregiver leave options should be considered separate from CIP, and asked if the Well-Being and Treatment Subcommittee described the differences between CIP and a caregiver sabbatical leave option in the reasoning. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn confirmed she articulated this in the reasoning by highlighting the different purposes of CIP and potential caregiver leave options but also describing how CIP could be expanded to include options for caregiver leave.



CAPT (Ret.) Barrett suggested if this recommendation is not only targeted at establishing caregiver leave options for female Service members, then the Committee may want to consider removing the word “female” from the recommendation to highlight that male Service member retention could also be improved through these policies. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn stated men and women should share equal responsibility for caregiving, and these proposed policies could improve retention among both male and female Service members; however, she noted DACOWITS’ charter is to address issues related to women in the Military Services, and an inability to balance service and family life has been the primary reason women have left military service for decades. VADM (Ret.) Braun noted by allowing male Service members to take caregiver sabbaticals, they could increase both male and female Service member retention. Gen (Ret.) Wolfenbarger agreed both male and female Service members could benefit from this recommendation, but the Committee is chartered to investigate and make recommendations on issues related to female Service members’ experiences in the Military Services. She noted leaving the word “female” in the recommendation is consistent with the Committee’s charter. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn also noted DACOWITS was asked to examine caregiver sabbaticals because attrition is a disproportionately female issue in the Military Services. She also confirmed the reasoning discusses the potential ways in which male Service members could benefit from the establishment of the recommended programs and policies.

MG (Ret.) Johnson asked if this recommendation will improve only the retention of female Service members who are part of a dual-military couple. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn explained caregiver leave policies are an issue for dual-military couples and couples in which only one partner is part of the Military Service. She noted women disproportionately leave or change jobs in civilian industry as a result of pregnancy and other work-life balance challenges compared with men. She explained work-life balance issues are also a problem for couples in which a male partner works in civilian industry and a female partner is in military service because the female partner is more likely to leave service to help maintain the male partner’s connection to his civilian industry job.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff noted the primary intent of this recommendation is to expand access to caregiver sabbatical and parental leave and agreed with keeping the word “female” in the recommendation to maintain the Committee’s alignment with its charter.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should establish a caregiver sabbatical or extended parental leave alternative with the objective of developing more flexible caregiver leave options that will encourage, promote, and increase female Service member retention by mitigating the stresses, burdens, and pressures associated with balancing service and family obligations.*

## **K. Effect of Grooming Standards on Women's Health**

- 1. The Secretary of Defense should require the Military Services to include precautionary statements in the grooming standards and training regarding potential health issues associated with prolonged use of tightly gathered hairstyles, dyes, and chemical hair products.*

Ms. Mines moved to adopt the recommendation. COL (Ret.) Grinder seconded the motion.

### **Discussion:**

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff confirmed her agreement with the intent of the proposed recommendation, but asked if “other grooming standards” should be added to the recommendation in addition to “tightly gathered hairstyles, dyes, and chemical hair products.” Ms. Mines explained the issues listed in the proposed recommendation were the most credible adverse health effects cited in the literature reviewed by the Well-Being and Treatment Subcommittee, and anecdotally, the issues most frequently raised by servicewomen.

LTG (Ret.) Mangum asked why the Subcommittee decided to recommend the implementation of precautionary statements in grooming standards and training rather than prohibiting the standards that create the adverse health effects. Ms. Mines explained the grooming standards that negatively affect servicewomen's health are not mandatory, and the precautionary statements could advise servicewomen on how to meet grooming standards in ways that mitigate adverse health effects. COL (Ret.) Grinder reported the intent behind the recommendation is to inform servicewomen about the possible health outcomes associated with various grooming standards so they can choose the option with which they are most comfortable.

RADM (Ret.) Thomas referenced the Committee's next proposed recommendation asking the Defense Health Agency (DHA) to conduct a study of the potential health issues associated with tightly gathered hairstyles, dyes, chemical hair products, and prolonged use of certain headgear. She asked why the Subcommittee decided to recommend implementing precautionary statements around grooming standards if it also believed DHA should complete a study on the health impacts of these standards. She suggested the Subcommittee wait to make this recommendation until after a DHA study has been conducted to better inform the precautionary statements. Ms. Mines explained the Subcommittee believes there is significant evidence available on the negative health impacts of tightly gathered hairstyles, dyes, and chemical hair products in peer-reviewed literature, as well as anecdotal evidence from the Subcommittee members' own experiences and discussions with servicewomen. However, she explained, based on written responses received from the Military Services in response to RFI 11 in March 2020, the Subcommittee believes the Services have not studied this issue thoroughly, and doing so is important to better understand Service members' perspectives.

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff explained servicewomen in the Navy and Marine Corps bootcamps are trained and provided examples of how to style their hair into a tightly gathered hairstyle. She noted it is important precautionary statements on the long-term

effects of these hairstyles be communicated to servicewomen if they continue to be told these hairstyles are expected of them.

CSM (Ret.) Jones explained if DHA does establish a plan to conduct a study on the adverse health effects of certain grooming standards, it could take up to 2 years to complete. She agreed with the Subcommittee's decision to propose a recommendation to add precautionary statements to grooming standards and training prior to the DHA study given this potential timeline.

CMDCM (Ret.) Harris reported she is part of a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Advisory Committee and confirmed alopecia is one of the top issues reported by servicewomen when entering the VA health system. Ms. Hayes-Byrd mentioned VA had studied the outcomes of tightly gathered hairstyles and hair dyes. Brig Gen (Ret.) Sanborn asked Ms. Hayes-Byrd to help coordinate a quick RFI to VA on information it has gathered related to this topic.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should require the Military Services to include precautionary statements in the grooming standards and training regarding potential health issues associated with prolonged use of tightly gathered hairstyles, dyes, and chemical hair products.*

2. *The Secretary of Defense should require the Defense Health Agency (DHA) to conduct a study of the potential physical and psychological health issues and treatments associated with tightly gathered hairstyles, dyes, chemical hair products, and prolonged use of certain headgear, and should direct the Military Services to implement DHA recommendations regarding education, prevention, medical risks, and treatment.*

Ms. Mines moved to adopt the recommendation. COL (Ret.) Grinder seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**

FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff referenced the phrase "certain headgear" in the proposed recommendation and asked whether it includes both civilian headgear such as hats, and military headgear such as helmets. Ms. Mines confirmed the intent of this recommendation is to address adverse health impacts caused by the use of any headgear for long periods of time, including hats and helmets. FLTCM (Ret.) Ortloff suggested adding the word "military" before the word "headgear" in the recommendation. Ms.

Mines replied adding the specificity of “military” to the recommendation is unnecessary because it is strongly implied and addressed in the reasoning.

**Vote on Recommendation:** The Committee voted to adopt the recommendation unanimously.

- Favored: 19 (Alexander, Barrett, Braun, Fedder, Grinder, Harris, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Kelleher, Locke, Mangum, Mines, Ortloff, Sanborn, Solomon, Thomas, Whitman, Wolfenbarger)
- Opposed: 0
- Abstained: 0

**Final Recommendation:** *The Secretary of Defense should require the Defense Health Agency (DHA) to conduct a study of the potential physical and psychological health issues and treatments associated with tightly gathered hairstyles, dyes, chemical hair products, and prolonged use of certain headgear, and should direct the Military Services to implement DHA recommendations regarding education, prevention, medical risks, and treatment.*

### **Final Remarks**

COL Freeman, DACOWITS Military Director, stated the next meeting would be held 8–9 December 2020. Details will be published in the Federal Register. She thanked the attendees and concluded the public portion of the meeting.

**Meeting was adjourned.**

RFI 2

**GENDER INTEGRATED MARINE CORPS' RECRUIT TRAINING (E&I)**

In 2019, the Committee repeated its 2018 continuing concern regarding Marine Corps recruit training. Full gender integration across military occupations and positions relies on integration at all levels of training. DACOWITS believes initial training is foundational to Service members' readiness. Although the Committee is encouraged by the Marine Corps' movement toward integration, we stand by the concerns documented in the 2018 and 2019 DACOWITS reports and will continue to monitor efforts to integrate women within Marine Corps recruit training.

RFI 2

In the written response provided in [June 2020](#), the Marine Corps made the following statement: "It will require significant time to create the required amount of female Drill Instructors." The Committee requests an update via a **written response** from the **Marine Corps** on the status of gender integration at recruit training and the plan to achieve the Congressional mandated suspense dates. In addition, the Committee requests the following information on enlisted recruit training Drill Instructor (DI) roles:

- a. What is the desired ratio of female/male DIs?
- b. What is the ratio of recruits per DI?
- c. Provide a gender/rank breakdown of DI assignments for the last 10 years. Of note, the Committee is interested in trends.
- d. What is the process to apply and selection requirements for DI positions?

Provide gender/rank attrition data from DI school/training for the last 10 years.

Organization	Description
Marine Corps	The Marine Corps provided the Committee with attrition data and responses to all the questions in this RFI.

RFI 3

**WOMEN IN AVIATION (E&I)**

In 1991, Congress lifted the ban on women flying in combat aircraft. For the last two decades women’s participation in the field of aviation has increased. Today, women can fly every type of military aircraft, however, only a handful have become high ranking military officers. For example, in the Air Force, women only make up six percent of pilots. In 2019, former Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson told the Senate Armed Services Committee that while the Air Force has no problem finding Airmen who want to learn how to fly, there is a disproportionately low presence of women among those volunteering. For 2020, the Committee has been examining the status of women serving in aviation.

RFI 3

The Committee requests a **written response** from **Military Services (to include the Coast Guard)** on the following:

- a. The total number broken out by gender/rank of Service members selected for pilot training in FY09 through FY19, as well as a breakout by accession source.
- b. Data on the attrition rates during flight training broken out by gender/rank and the top four reasons (if available) for FY09 through FY19.
- c. Data on the total number and percentage of Service members completing initial flight training broken out by gender/rank for FY09 through FY19.

Minimum service obligations for Service members who graduate from initial flight training and any recent or pending changes that have been made.

Organization	Description
Army	The Army provided the Committee with data and responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Navy	The Navy provided the Committee with data and responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Marine Corps	The Marine Corps provided the Committee with data and 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.
Coast Guard	The Coast Guard provided the Committee with responses to the questions in this RFI, indicating it does not collect and track this data.

RFIs 4 and 5

**CAREGIVER SABBATICAL (WB&T)**

The Committee continues to be interested in the enhancement of the Military Services' sabbatical programs to help encourage the retention of servicewomen

RFI 4

In [March 2020](#), the Committee was briefed by the Military Services on the status of their Primary Caregiver Leave policies. During the briefing, the Marine Corps panelist shared that their Service was reviewing and considering the implementation of a one-year sabbatical following the birth or adoption of a child. In [June 2020](#), the Committee requested a written response from the Marine Corps on the status of this initiative and was told the Marine Corps is still in the process of developing options for a Commandant decision no later than July 2020. The Committee requests a **written response** from the **Marine Corps** on the status of this initiative.

Organization	Description
Marine Corps	The Marine Corps provided the Committee with a response on the status of this initiative in this RFI.

RFI 5

In [March 2020](#), the Committee received briefings from the Military Services on the status of the Career Intermission Program (CIP) and Temporary Separation (TEMPSEP) program. As a follow-up, the Committee is requesting a more comprehensive overview of the data that was provided, similar to the Army.

The Committee requests a **written response** from the **Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy** the following:

- a. **Air Force:**
  - i. Female officer and enlisted breakout of the 111 total female participants;
  - ii. Number of women who cited family and/or childcare reasons for their CIP participation; and
  - iii. The length of time taken by female participants. For example: 90 servicewomen took 1-year, 10 servicewomen took 2-years, and 11 servicewomen took 3 years.
- b. **Coast Guard:** Gender breakout for number of women citing family/child care reasons and did all request a one year absence? Also, based on slide 6 from the March briefing, we calculated 45 members returned to active duty and, of those, 31 were female – is that accurate?
- c. **Marine Corps:**
  - i. Female officer and enlisted breakout of the 6 total female participants;
  - ii. Number of women participants and total number of all participants citing family and/or childcare reasons for CIP; and

iii. The time taken by each of the female participants citing family and/or childcare reasons. For example: Three servicewomen took 1-year, 15 servicewomen took 2-years, and one servicewoman took 1-year.

d. **Navy:** Female officer and enlisted breakout of the 124 total female participants.

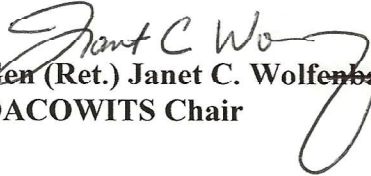
Organization	Description
Navy	The Navy provided the Committee with data and responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Marine Corps	The Marine Corps provided the Committee with data and responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Air Force	The Air Force provided the Committee with data and responses to all the questions in this RFI.
Coast Guard	The Coast Guard provided the Committee with responses to all the questions in this RFI.

**Report Submitted by:**

**Report Certified by:**

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**COL R. Elaine Freeman, USA  
 DACOWITS Military Director &  
 Designated Federal Officer**

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



**Committee Members in Attendance:**

MG (Ret.) George Alexander, ANG  
CAPT (Ret.) Kenneth J. Barrett, USN  
VADM (Ret.) Robin Braun, USN  
Lt Gen (Ret.) Judith A. Fedder, USAF  
COL (Ret.) Many-Bears Grinder, USA  
CMDCM (Ret.) Octavia Harris, USN  
Ms. Therese A. Hughes  
MG (Ret.) Ronald Johnson, USA  
CSM (Ret.) Michele S. Jones, USA  
Ms. Robin Kelleher

MAJ (Ret.) Priscilla W. Locke, USA  
LTG (Ret.) Kevin W. Mangum, USA  
Ms. Janie L. Mines, USN Veteran  
FLTCM (Ret.) JoAnn M. Ortloff, USN  
Brig Gen (Ret.) Jariisse J. Sanborn, USAF  
BG (Ret.) Allyson R. Solomon, ANG  
RADM (Ret.) Cari B. Thomas, USCG  
FLTCM (Ret.) Susan Whitman, USN  
Gen (Ret.) Janet C. Wolfenbarger, USAF

**Ex-Officio in Attendance:**

Ms. Jacquelyn D. Hayes-Byrd, Executive Director, Department of Veterans Affairs' Center for Women Veterans (USAF Retired)