

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) December 2022 – Requests for Information

RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES TO INCREASE WOMEN’S PROPENSITY TO SERVE	
<p>In accordance with DACOWITS’ Terms of Reference, the Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Subcommittee will assess the scale and effectiveness of the Military Services’ recruitment programs with the goal of providing actionable recommendations on how to best increase adolescent women’s propensity to serve. In addition, the R&R Subcommittee will examine existing policies and procedures to determine whether current practices inhibit the recruitment of women, specifically assessing the inclusivity of existing marketing strategies; current recruitment goals for women; improvements in the representation of female recruiters; virtual recruiting capabilities; and potential innovative best practices gleaned from the establishment of the Space Force.</p>	
1	<p>In 2020, the Committee made the following recommendation: <i>“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.”</i></p> <p>The Committee requests a briefing from the Defense Department’s Outreach, Policy & Programs (Civil-Military Programs) Office on all steps taken or planned to address the above DACOWITS recommendation from 2020, as well as whether the Department has assessed the effectiveness of outreach programs to positively influence young women’s propensity for military service? If so, what were the findings of the assessment? If not, what is the plan to assess outreach programs for effectiveness, adequacy and scale?</p>
2	<p>In September 2022, the Committee received a briefing from the Air Force, which mentioned that the Air Force Recruiting Service (AFRS) Detachment (Det) 1’s mission is to <i>“inform, influence, and inspire tomorrow’s leader through innovative outreach opportunities.”</i> The Committee is interested in identifying best practices to increase young women’s propensity to serve in the military and how AFRS Det 1’s innovative approaches might be applied in a broader context.</p> <p>The Committee requests a written response from the Air Force on the methods and effectiveness of AFRS Det 1 in increasing propensity to serve among America’s youth, particularly among adolescent women, to pursue careers in aerospace and the Air Force.</p>
3	<p>The Committee remains interested in the recruiting and accessions enterprise related to identifying, assessing and recruiting qualified candidates.</p> <p>The Committee requests a written response from the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, and National Guard on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide accession targets/goals and actual accession numbers, separated by gender, for the last five years (FY18-22). b. Provide data related to whether female recruiters, compared to male recruiters, are more successful at accessing women into the military. c. What innovative methods or approaches (other than engagement with current affinity groups) are recruiters using to attract women into the military (to include racially and ethnically diverse women)? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Provide plans for partnering with unofficial & non-traditional partners (i.e. trade associations, etc.). ii. How do you measure the effectiveness of these partnerships?

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GENDER INTEGRATION

In accordance with DACOWITS' Terms of Reference, the Employment and Integration (E&I) Subcommittee will examine current efforts to fully integrate women into previously closed combat positions, determine whether barriers are inhibiting full integration, and identify actionable solutions. In addition, the E&I Subcommittee examined recent modifications to women's uniforms, as well as combat gear and equipment, to identify solutions, as required.

4 For three consecutive years, between 2018-2020, the Committee classified gender integration efforts at Marine Corps Recruit Training as a continuing concern, because the Marine Corps was the only Military Service operating without fully gender-integrated recruit training. In [September 2020](#), the Marine Corps provided an update on the status of gender integrated Recruit Training and provided insight of short and long term plans to integrate recruit training and meet the intent of the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The Committee requests a **briefing** from the **Marine Corps** on the following:

- a. Provide an overview of the Marine Corps gender integration efforts at Recruit Training since September 2020.
- b. How did the Marine Corps interpret the 2020 NDAA language directing that training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) "*may not be segregated by gender*" by FY25 for MCRD Parris Island and FY28 for MCRD San Diego? Is the Marine Corps on track to meet these deadlines? If so, please provide the projected timeline and outline of your plan. If not, please explain why.
- c. How is the Marine Corps building capacity for training female recruits at MCRD San Diego? What challenges, if any, has the Marine Corps encountered in this process?
- d. In 2020, the Marine Corps commissioned an independent study from the University of Pittsburgh on gender integration at recruit training and stated it planned to incorporate findings and recommendations produced from this study. As a result:
 - i. What were major findings from this study about Marine Corps gender integration at recruit training?
 - ii. What alternate models and recommendations were proposed for increasing gender integration? What rationale was provided for these models and recommendations?
 - iii. How does the Marine Corps plan to address or incorporate the findings, alternate models, and recommendations made by this study?
 - iv. Please provide a copy of the full report for the Committee's review.
- e. What are the Marine Corps future plans for gender integration at recruit training?
- f. Have platoons at recruit training been fully integrated, to include recruits and drill instructors? If so, please provide the projected timeline and outline of your plan. If not, are there plans to do so in the future?

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5 In [2018](#), the Committee recommended that, “*The Secretary of Defense should require all Military Services, including the Reserve/Guard, provide servicewomen with gender appropriate and properly fitting personal protective equipment (PPE) and gear for both training and operational use.*” Though the Military Services have made strides in improving PPE and combat gear for women, the Committee remains interested in the development, procurement, and timelines servicewomen must navigate to obtain gender appropriate and properly fitting PPE, combat gear, and uniforms.

The Committee requests a **briefing** from the **Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, National Guard, and Coast Guard** on the following:

- a. What process is currently being applied to evaluate the effectiveness of PPE and combat gear for women?
 - i. Provide date of last anthropometric study used to develop PPE and combat gear for women.
 - ii. Provide any additional technology/studies utilized to improve PPE and combat gear for women.
- b. What is the current timeline and process to procure equipment via existing supply channels?
- c. What is the current timeline and process to procure alternative equipment (e.g., unique fit) not obtainable via existing supply channels?
- d. Provide an update on modifications to or the development of gender specific PPE, combat gear, and uniforms since June 2018, to include:
 - i. Updates/modifications to maternity uniforms.
 - ii. Updates/modifications to grooming standards.
 - iii. Information related to studies conducted to improve female flight suits.
- e. Provide an onsite visual display that depicts new gender specific PPE and combat gear developed for women.
- f. **Army:** In NDAA FY17, the Army was directed to develop combat boots for female Soldiers. Did the Army ever conduct this study? If so, please provide findings from the study. If not, please provide an update on the status of this study.

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WOMEN IN AVIATION

In accordance with DACOWITS' Terms of Reference, the E&I Subcommittee will assess the number and percentage of female aviators, as well as factors and policies that may influence female aviator retention and promotion potential, such as recruiting, aircraft/duty assignments, mentoring, pregnancy, healthcare, operations tempo, aircraft design, and flight equipment. In addition, the E&I Subcommittee will examine trends in, and policies related to female aviation accession and identify actionable solutions, as required.

- 6** For over 45 years, the Committee has studied and provided recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding women in aviation. The Committee remains concerned that overall percentage of women in aviation remains low, despite the opening of many aviation career fields to women in the 1970s and combat aircraft in the 1990s.
- The Committee requests a **written response** from the **Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard** on the following:
- a. In [September 2020](#), DACOWITS RFI 3, asked the Military Services for the total number of Service members selected for pilot training annually from FY09-19, separated by gender and accession source. The Committee requests an update to this 2020 RFI, which includes FY20-22 data.
 - b. In [September 2020](#), DACOWITS RFI 3, asked the Military Services to provide data on student attrition during undergraduate pilot training separated by gender, along with reasons for attrition. The Committee requests an update to this 2020 RFI, which includes FY20-22 data. In addition, has your Service identified any attrition trends? If so, what are they and how are they being addressed?
 - c. Does your Service have a mentoring program to help retain female aviators? If so, please describe.
 - d. Does your Service provide exit interviews to aviators separating from Active Duty? If yes, the Committee is interested in the top five reasons aviators leave the military, over the last five years (FY18-22), separated by gender. In addition, please provide separation trends and courses of action the Service has or will be implementing to help retain female aviators.
 - e. What number and percentage of pilots depart Active Duty and transition to the Reserves or Guard? Provide data for the last five years (FY18-22), separated by gender, depicting these transition rates. Additionally, provide retention data for pilots, separated by gender, serving in the Reserves or Guard over the last five years (FY18-22).

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PHYSICAL FITNESS STANDARDS

In accordance with DACOWITS' Terms of Reference, the E&I Subcommittee will examine the components of the Military Services' physical fitness tests, to include body fat specifications, height/weight measurements and scales, and physical ability requirements deemed necessary for adequate occupational performance. In addition, the E&I Subcommittee will assess whether the Military Services' physical fitness standards disproportionately affect women's career progression and identify solutions, as required.

7 In [2016](#), the Committee recommended that the “*Secretary of Defense should require a complete review and update of the 2002 DoD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs Procedures (DoDI 1308.3) with the recent opening of more than 200,000 positions to servicewomen.*” Following up in [2019](#), the Committee recommended that the “*Secretary of Defense should conduct a comprehensive, scientific review of height and weight standards as well as body fat measurement techniques and use the findings as a baseline for setting a Department-wide standard for measurement and acceptable levels.*” In March 2022, the Defense Department published a revised DoDI 1308.3.

The Committee requests a **briefing** from the **Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, and Coast Guard** on the following:

- a. In [March 2019](#), DACOWITS RFI 6, asked the Military Services to provide update to physical fitness training programs. The Committee requests an update to this 2019 RFI. Provide all changes and modifications to your Service's physical fitness instructions since March 2019, to include any updates to body composition measurements (e.g., height, weight, and body fat). In addition, provide the justification for each change/modification that has been implemented since March 2019.
- b. Based on the newly revised DoDI 1308.3, what changes or modifications to your Service's physical fitness instruction have been or will be updated in the future? Include revisions to body composition measurements. In addition, provide projected implementation timelines for each change or modification.

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PREGNANCY IN THE MILITARY

In accordance with DACOWITS' Terms of Reference, the Well-Being and Treatment (WB&T) Subcommittee will determine if there are gaps in institutional policies and procedures that obstruct pregnant servicewomen from progressing in their military career and recommend policy changes.

8 In 2020, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs in coordination with Defense Health Agency sponsored a [Women's Reproductive Health Survey \(WRHS\)](#). The purpose of the study was to assess the reproductive health of servicewomen. Survey findings indicate that 15 percent of active duty servicewomen and 11 percent of Coast Guard active duty servicewomen were unable to conceive after 12 months of trying, a common definition of self-reported infertility. In addition, 12 percent of active-duty service women (and 8 percent of Coast Guard active duty service women) reported an unmet need for fertility services since joining the military.

The Committee requests a **written response** from the **Defense Health Agency (DHA)** on the following:

- a. What directives regulate the utilization of Assisted Reproductive Services?
- b. How many MTFs provide Assisted Reproductive Services?
- c. Who is authorized to utilize Assisted Reproductive Services (e.g., married couples, non-traditional families, single members, etc.)?
- d. What outreach or marketing strategies have been implemented to ensure Service members are aware that Assisted Reproductive Services exist?
- e. During annual well-women exams, are servicewomen made aware that Assisted Reproductive Services are available (e.g., egg freezing)?
- f. With the merger of DoD/DHA:
 - i. Have Assisted Reproductive Services been standardized?
 - ii. Will Assisted Reproductive Services continue to be provided? If so, where (e.g., MTFs, civilian providers, etc.)?
- g. What accommodations are afforded to servicewomen receiving Assisted Reproductive Services (e.g., suspension of fitness testing)?
- h. Does any data exist that suggests the servicewomen's career progression (retention and advancement) is positively impacted by having access to Assisted Reproductive Services?
- i. Over the last five years, how many servicewomen and servicemen have utilized Assisted Reproductive Services?
- j. At what point in their careers are servicewomen and servicemen using these Assisted Reproductive Services?

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GENDER DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with DACOWITS' Terms of Reference, the WB&T Subcommittee will examine existing Defense Department and Military Services' institutional policies and procedures to identify gaps that enable gender discrimination to occur unconstrained and recommended necessary policy changes.

- 9** Since the 1960s, the Committee has examined and identified barriers to women's career progression in the military, which included gender discrimination or gender bias that affected servicewomen's promotion opportunities. Most recently in 2019, the Committee recommended that, "*The Secretary of Defense should establish a DoD policy that defines and provides guidance to eliminate conscious and unconscious gender bias.*" The Committee remains dedicated to the elimination of gender discrimination, to include within the promotion board process by ensuring that performance is the lone criterion considered for selection.
- The Committee requests a **briefing** from the **Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, and Coast Guard** on the following:
- a. What policies and procedures are in place to prevent conscious and unconscious gender bias within the promotion process (e.g., performance evaluations, board screenings, etc.)?
 - b. What gender specific demographic information has been removed from promotion packages (e.g., first and last names, gender pronouns, photographs, etc.)? Specifically, state whether any gender specific demographic information is still being included. If so, are there plans to remove gender specific demographic information? Provide projected timeline for each demographic modification.
 - c. What other actions have been taken to prevent conscious and unconscious gender bias from factoring in promotion reviews/scoring?
 - d. Since these actions were taken to reduce conscious and unconscious gender bias, provide trends that have emerged and data on the impact of these policies, instructions, or guidance on selection results.
 - e. Provide copies of policies, instructions, or written guidance delivered to selection boards, nomination boards, or promotion boards intended to mitigate conscious and unconscious gender bias.