

DACOWITS' 2004 Recommendations:

1	The Services should examine in greater detail the reasons for the discrepancy between the reported intentions and actual retention of married officers with children.
2	Future SOF and exit surveys for all constituencies should ask specific questions focused on factors that make balancing military Service and family responsibilities a challenge.
3	Consistent with the intention of DoD Social Compact, the Services should provide for flexibility in addressing work/family balance, such as offering families the option of remaining at the installation of assignment to meet extenuating family commitments.
4	The Services should review existing programs and policies designed to promote career retention, identifying and reporting on opportunities to apply them more broadly, especially to married officers with children.
5	The Services should develop and implement programs designed to address special circumstances that many female officers experience in their fifth to eighth year of service, such as childbirth and child rearing.
6	The Services should develop Leave of Absence/Sabbatical programs as means of increasing retention rates, such as the proposed Navy Surface Warfare Officer Sabbatical and the Coast Guard's existing Care for Newborn Children and Temporary Separation Programs. Support should be given to the legislative authority needed to execute these programs.
7	The Services should reexamine the use of "optional career paths" to accommodate changes in personal goals, particularly for officers.
8	The Services should determine whether new benefit, compensation, and bonus programs could be developed to more effectively retain experienced personnel as they reach midcareer. Possible examples include providing children of Service members greater access to ROTC scholarship programs, expanding transferability of Montgomery GI Bill benefits to dependent children, and allowing additional enrollment opportunities for Montgomery GI Bill benefits.
9	The Services should establish policies requiring sufficient time be incorporated in pre-deployment training schedules allowing members to attend to personal affairs.
10	As in our 2003 report, DACOWITS again recommends that, when possible, greater predictability be integrated into the deployment process.
11	The Services should be encouraged not to deploy both parents of minor children simultaneously.
12	Single custodial parents and one member of a dual military couple with minor children should be exempt, with the approval of their commander, from stop-loss restrictions if their family situation is incompatible with continued military service.
13	New accession training about the effects and stresses of parenthood, and especially single parenthood in military Service, should be evaluated for its effectiveness.
14	Future Status of Forces surveys of the Active duty and Reserve components should include questions to determine the effects of deployment on the children of Service members.
15	A survey similar to the 2000 Survey of Spouses should be conducted in the coming year. It should include questions about the effects of deployment on families, with special emphasis on children.
16	Although efforts have been made to increase the availability of childcare, DACOWITS reiterates its 2003 report recommendations with respect to childcare: that DoD increase its efforts to meet its goals of providing the currently estimated need of childcare spaces as identified by the office of Children and Youth, and that the Services address the need for greater childcare availability during times of increased OPTEMPO/PERSTEMPO.

17	Leadership should strongly support programs that promote family readiness. Letters should be mailed home to the families of all deploying Service members with information about anticipated deployment schedules, support programs, points of contact for legal affairs, financial issues, childcare options, psychological counseling and other available resources.
18	The effectiveness of online sources of communication and information currently in use, such as Military One Source and similar Service programs, should be assessed.
19	The development and use of unit internet resources should be encouraged to promote access to family support services.
20	All Services should continue outreach to family members, especially during deployment. Special consideration should be given to dual military spouses, families of single members and of individuals deploying independent of their unit.
21	Administrative requirements for returning personnel should be kept to a minimum.
22	Reunion and readjustment programs should include adequate time off for family and personal needs. Authorized leave for Guard and Reserve members should not be denied.
23	Services should enforce existing policy that requires mental health screenings for all personnel upon return from contingency deployments.
24	Additional employer incentive programs should be created to encourage hiring and support of Guard and Reserve members. Incentives could include tax benefits.
25	Mobilized Guard and Reserve members whose civilian jobs were eliminated should be given priority to remain on Active status when possible.
26	The Services should address and provide for privacy concerns and uniquely female requirements when possible.
27	As in our 2003 report, DACOWITS again recommends that the Department provide guidance to the Services to maintain relevant standardized data for effective personnel policy. Data collection and analysis should include information on the reasons for non-deployment and evacuation, as well as statistics on non-deployable members and early returnees by rank and gender.
28	DACOWITS recommends that the Secretary of Defense codify the Zero Tolerance policy on sexual assault in a DoD Directive and that the Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs promulgate service-specific Zero Tolerance policies. We find the Army policy dated 7 April 2004 to be an excellent example.
29	Commanders at every level must clearly state and widely disseminate Zero Tolerance policies.
30	That the work in progress as a result of the 2004 DoD Task Force recommendations concerning a clear definition of sexual assault be concluded as soon as possible.
31	That the new definition of sexual assault as promulgated by the Task Force for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response be quickly incorporated into the UCMJ and be used consistently in training, in data collection and by military law enforcement authorities.
32	The Committee urges DoD to implement a comprehensive and consistent data reporting system that preserves the confidentiality of the victim.

33	Commanders must fully enforce Zero Tolerance policies and prosecute sexual assault offenses to the fullest extent of the law.
34	Before proceeding with any potential administrative punishment of the victim for possible wrongdoing in connection with a sexual assault incident, commanders should always consider awaiting the outcome of the sexual assault investigation and prosecution.
35	A protocol should be established whereby the victim is encouraged to seek treatment and to report the crime with the assurance that once the crime is reported to law enforcement, privacy will be protected to the maximum extent possible and the victim kept informed of the progress of the case. A crucial aspect of this protocol is the provision of a victim advocate, independent of the chain of command, who assists the victim throughout the process.
36	Special efforts must be made to reach the junior ranks regarding resources available, e.g. information campaigns directly targeting Service members in their living quarters, as well as work and social environments.
37	Comprehensive training on sexual assault should be an integral and ongoing part of Professional Military Education for all levels, enlisted through General Officers, especially in commander and leadership courses.
38	Training should emphasize that sexual assault is a crime that will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and should be delivered in the context of the core values of military Service and the mission requirements of unit cohesion and readiness.
39	Using the official definition of sexual assault, training should clearly instruct on what sexual assault is and is not. The importance of Service members taking responsibility for their own and each other's safety and well-being should be an integral part of this training. Alcohol use should be emphasized as a serious risk factor.
40	Sexual assault training should not be coerced in order to facilitate forthright discussion and understanding.
41	Sexual assault training should cover the procedures and resources available to victims following a sexual assault, particularly at the junior grades. Service members should be instructed to seek immediate medical attention after an assault for both their own care and to enable authorities to collect the evidence necessary for prosecution. The full range of civilian and military resources should be clearly delineated, so that Service members understand that they can seek help at civilian hospitals and from civilian law enforcement in addition to their options within the military.
42	Educational awareness efforts should include an information campaign utilizing posters, pocket cards, and other media to convey specific programs, agencies, names, addresses and phone numbers offering assistance to victims of sexual assault.
43	Articles 120, 128 and 134, UCMJ, should be revised to clarify and more closely align with the official definition of sexual assault, ensuring that sexual assault has a clear and consistent legal standard, distinct from sexual harassment and other sex-related offenses. DoD should include these revisions in the 2006 legislative proposals.
44	DACOWITS strongly recommends that the standard for consent be reviewed and revised to facilitate successful prosecution of sexual assault cases. These essential revisions should be implemented expeditiously.