



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

**UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

**DEC - 7 2023**

**MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIR, DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES**

**SUBJECT: Terms of Reference – Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services**

As the Sponsor of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), I direct DACOWITS to study six topics in 2024, which are outlined in the attached Terms of Reference. Each study topic is assigned to one of the three previously established subcommittees. These study topics are in line with the Committee's charter to provide advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to recruitment, retention, employment, integration, well-being, and treatment of women in the Armed Forces.

The Committee and subcommittees' work will be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C., Appendix). All advice and recommendations developed from examining these study topics will be provided to the entire DACOWITS for its thorough discussion and deliberation at a properly noticed and open meeting, unless it can be closed in accordance with one or more of the exemptions found in the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. § 552b). The DACOWITS' Designated Federal Officer will ensure compliance with applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and DoD policy and procedures.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashish S. Vazirani".

Ashish S. Vazirani  
Acting

Attachments:  
As stated

cc:  
Advisory Committee Management Officer

## **Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee**

These Terms of Reference (ToR) establish the 2024 study topics for the Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee (“the Subcommittee”), a subcommittee of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

**Mission Statement:** The Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee will ensure that the Secretary of Defense (SecDef), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) receive independent advice on opportunities for improvements in the recruitment and retention of women into the Armed Forces.

The subcommittee will conduct research, develop conclusions, and make proposals to the full DACOWITS for its thorough deliberations and discussion at a properly noticed and public meeting, unless the meeting must be closed in accordance with one or more of the exemptions found in the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. § 552b). Any Subcommittee work adopted by DACOWITS will become the independent advice and recommendations of DACOWITS for it to provide to the SecDef through the USD(P&R).

**Issue Statement:** In accordance with the ToR that established the Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee, this Subcommittee will examine current military recruitment and retention programs to determine whether existing policies and procedures inhibit the recruitment and retention of servicewomen. In addition, the Subcommittee will identify innovative and actionable solutions to increase women’s propensity to serve and further expand opportunities for women to continue serving.

**Objectives and Scope:** The Subcommittee shall analyze DoD and the Military Services policies and procedures pertaining to the recruitment and retention of servicewomen to assess the impact on the readiness of the Total Force. Below are two specific areas of study, which DACOWITS should submit for my consideration by the end of January 2025.

1. **Recruitment Barriers:** Assess potential recruitment barriers which inhibit the accession of women into the Military Services. In addition, examine existing policies and procedures to determine whether current practices inhibit the recruitment of women, specifically assessing medical accession standards and the application of these standards.
2. **Retention Initiatives:** Identify opportunities and innovative initiatives to retain servicewomen more effectively, utilizing retention incentives such as bonuses, special schools, retraining, and choice duty assignments. In addition, retention initiatives could also include policies and procedures related to Inter-Service transfers (e.g., Active Component to Reserve Component; Blue to Green Program), enlisted to officer commissioning programs, geographic stability programs, and dual-military co-location policies.

In support of this ToR and the work conducted in response to it, the Subcommittee and DACOWITS have my full support to meet with Department leaders. DACOWITS staff, on

behalf of DACOWITS and the Subcommittee, may request the Office of the Secretary of Defense and DoD Component heads to timely furnish any requested information, assistance, or access to personnel to DACOWITS or the Subcommittee. All requests shall be consistent with applicable laws; applicable security classifications; Department of Defense Instruction 5105.04, "Department of Defense Federal Advisory Committee Management Program;" and this ToR. As special Government employee members of a DoD Federal advisory committee, DACOWITS and the Subcommittee members will not be given any access to DoD networks, to include DoD email systems.

Once material is provided to DACOWITS and the Subcommittee, it becomes a permanent part of DACOWITS' records. All data/information provided is subject to public inspection unless the originating Component office properly marks the data/information with the appropriate classification and Freedom of Information Act exemption categories before the data/information is released to DACOWITS or its Subcommittee. DACOWITS has physical storage capability and electronic storage and communications capability on unclassified networks and cannot support receipt of classified material.

DACOWITS and the Subcommittee will operate in conformity with and pursuant to DACOWITS' charter; the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C., Appendix); the Government in the Sunshine Act; and other applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and policy. Individual members of DACOWITS and the Subcommittee, as well as the Subcommittee as a whole, do not have the authority to make decisions or provide recommendations on behalf of DACOWITS nor report directly to any Federal representative. The members of the Subcommittee and DACOWITS are subject to certain Federal ethics laws, including 18 U.S.C. § 208, governing conflicts of interest, and the Standards of Ethical Conduct regulations in 5 CFR Part 2635.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support of this critical undertaking to inform subsequent decisions on how DoD addresses the recruitment and retention of women in the Armed Forces.

## **Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services Employment and Integration Subcommittee**

These Terms of Reference (ToR) establish the 2024 study topics for the Employment and Integration Subcommittee (“the Subcommittee”), a subcommittee of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

**Mission Statement:** The Employment and Integration Subcommittee will ensure that the Secretary of Defense (SecDef), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) receive independent advice on opportunities for improvements in the employment and integration of women in the Services.

The Subcommittee will conduct research, develop conclusions, and make proposals to the full DACOWITS for its thorough deliberations and discussion at a properly noticed and public meeting, unless the meeting must be closed in accordance with one or more of the exemptions found in the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. § 552b). Any Subcommittee work adopted by DACOWITS will become the independent advice and recommendations of DACOWITS for it to provide to the SecDef through the USD(P&R).

**Issue Statement:** In accordance with the ToR that established the Employment and Integration Subcommittee, this Subcommittee will examine the Military Services’ gender integration efforts to determine whether existing policies and programs inhibit the full integration of servicewomen into all military career fields and identify innovative and actionable solutions as necessary. In addition, the Subcommittee will review policies and programs that may limit servicewomen’s career progression.

**Objectives and Scope:** The Subcommittee shall analyze DoD and the Military Services policies and procedures pertaining to the employment and integration of servicewomen to assess the impact on the readiness of the Total Force. Below are two specific areas of study, which DACOWITS should submit for my consideration by the end of January 2025.

1. **Implementation of DoD Women, Peace, and Security Requirements:** Examine the Military Services’ efforts to fulfill requirements of the three Defense Objectives to support the DoD Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Strategy’s Lines of Effort (LOEs): (1) modeling and employing women’s meaningful participation in the Joint Force; (2) promoting partner nation women’s participation in all occupations in the defense and security sectors; and (3) ensuring partner nations protect women and girls, especially during conflict and crisis. In addition, examine DoD WPS long-term defense objectives to assess women’s meaningful participation within the Joint Force, as well as women’s representation across all ranks and all occupations.
2. **Impact of Key Influencers on Servicewomen’s Career Paths:** Examine female officer experiences with key influencers while at the Military Service Academies, Reserve Officers’ Training Corps, or Officer Candidate School that impact career selection into previously closed positions, such as special operations forces. In addition, examine

female enlisted experiences with key influencers that impact career selection into previously closed occupations and positions, such as special operations forces.

In support of this ToR and the work conducted in response to it, the Subcommittee and DACOWITS have my full support to meet with Department leaders. DACOWITS staff, on behalf of DACOWITS and the Subcommittee, may request the Office of the Secretary of Defense and DoD Component heads to timely furnish any requested information, assistance, or access to personnel to DACOWITS or the Subcommittee. All requests shall be consistent with applicable laws; applicable security classifications; Department of Defense Instruction 5105.04, "Department of Defense Federal Advisory Committee Management Program;" and this ToR. As special Government employee members of a DoD Federal advisory committee, DACOWITS and the Subcommittee members will not be given any access to DoD networks, to include DoD email systems.

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Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support of this critical undertaking to inform subsequent decisions on how DoD addresses the employment and integration of women in the Armed Forces.

## **Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services Well-Being and Treatment Subcommittee**

This Terms of Reference (ToR) establishes the 2024 study topics for the Well-Being and Treatment Subcommittee (“the Subcommittee”), a subcommittee of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

**Mission Statement:** The Well-Being and Treatment Subcommittee will ensure that the Secretary of Defense (SecDef), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) receive independent advice on opportunities for improvements in the well-being and treatment of women serving in the Armed Forces.

The Subcommittee will conduct research, develop conclusions, and make proposals to the full DACOWITS for thorough deliberations and discussion at a properly noticed and public meeting, unless the meeting must be closed in accordance with one or more of the exemptions found in the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. § 552b). Any Subcommittee work adopted by DACOWITS will become the independent advice and recommendations of DACOWITS for it to provide to the SecDef through the USD(P&R).

**Issue Statement:** In accordance with the ToR that established the Well-Being and Treatment Subcommittee, this Subcommittee will examine whether existing DoD and Military Services’ institutional policies and procedures safeguard the well-being and treatment of servicewomen and provide recommended policy changes as gaps are identified.

**Objectives and Scope:** The Subcommittee shall analyze DoD and the Military Services policies and procedures pertaining to the well-being and treatment of servicewomen to assess the impact on the readiness of the Total Force. Below are two specific areas of study, which DACOWITS should submit for my consideration by the end of January 2025.

1. Intimate Partner Violence and Domestic Abuse: Assess updates to the Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6400.06, “Domestic Abuse Involving DoD Military and Certain Affiliated Personnel,” December 15, 2021, as amended. In addition, examine the status, increase, or decrease in domestic abuse incidents and the effectiveness of current DoD and Military Services’ policies, and determine whether there are policy inconsistencies that need to be remedied (e.g., definition of intimate partner).
2. Family Planning: Examine existing DoD and Military Services’ institutional policies and procedures to identify gaps that potentially inhibit family planning, to include eligibility for fertility services. In addition, assess the demand for expanded fertility access within a constrained supply of resources, and identify obstacles and challenges to obtain access to care.

In support of this ToR and the work conducted in response to it, the Subcommittee and DACOWITS have my full support to meet with Department leaders. DACOWITS staff, on behalf of DACOWITS and the Subcommittee, may request the Office of the Secretary of Defense and DoD Component Heads to timely furnish any requested information, assistance,

or access to personnel to DACOWITS or the Subcommittee. All requests shall be consistent with applicable laws; applicable security classifications; DoDI 5105.04, "Department of Defense Federal Advisory Committee Management Program;" and this ToR. As special Government employee members of a DoD Federal advisory committee, DACOWITS and the Subcommittee members will not be given any access to DoD networks, to include DoD email systems.

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DACOWITS and the Subcommittee will operate in conformity with and pursuant to the DACOWITS' charter; the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C., Appendix); the Government in the Sunshine Act; and other applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and policy. Individual members of DACOWITS and the Subcommittee, as well as the Subcommittee as a whole, do not have the authority to make decisions or provide recommendations on behalf of DACOWITS nor report directly to any Federal representative. The members of the Subcommittee and DACOWITS are subject to certain Federal ethics laws, including 18 U.S.C. § 208, governing conflicts of interest, and the Standards of Ethical Conduct regulations in 5 CFR Part 2635.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support of this critical undertaking to inform subsequent decisions on how DoD addresses the well-being and treatment of women in the Armed Forces.