

# DACOWITS

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



1951-2011: 60 Years of DACOWITS



2011  
REPORT

**Defense Advisory Committee on  
Women in the Services (DACOWITS)**  
4000 Defense Pentagon, Room 2C548A  
Washington, District of Columbia 20301-4000

We, the appointed members of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), do hereby submit the results of our findings and offer our recommendations to improve the policies, procedures, and climate within the Department of Defense.



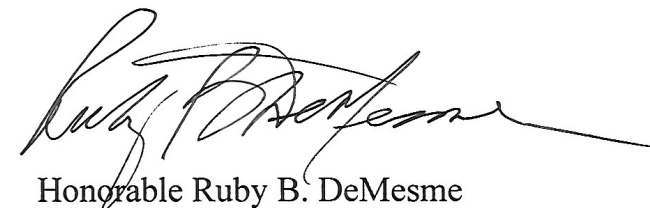
Nancy Duff Campbell  
DACOWITS Vice-Chair



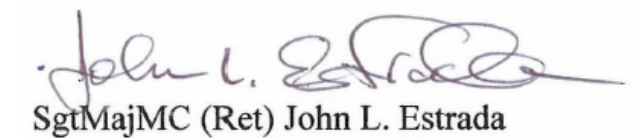
COL(Ret) Margarethe Cammermeyer



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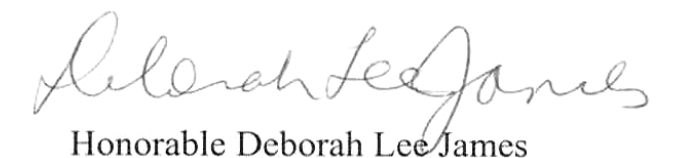
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Honorable Deborah Lee James



BG(Ret) Maureen K. LeBoeuf

LTG (Ret) Claudia J. Kennedy, who chaired the Committee until September 30, also contributed to the work and recommendations of the Committee in 2011.

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# Executive Summary

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) was established in 1951. Its mandate is to provide the Secretary of Defense with advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the women in the Armed Forces of the United States. The individuals who comprise the Committee are appointed by the Secretary of Defense to serve in a voluntary capacity for three-year terms.

As in the previous year, in 2011 DACOWITS divided its work into two general areas, Wellness and Assignments, with subcommittees formed for each. The subcommittees selected specific topics for study, as described below.

To undertake its work on the selected topics, the Committee gathered both primary and secondary sources of information, including briefings from military representatives and subject matter experts; data collected during installation visits from focus groups and surveys; and literature reviews, other survey data and available research and resources. These sources of information formed the basis for the Committee's reasoning and recommendations.

The Committee agreed on recommendations at its September 2011 meeting. The Committee approved this report at its December 2011 meeting.

## Wellness Recommendations and Continuing Concerns

DACOWITS has addressed the issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment several times in past years. Most recently, in 2010 the Committee received briefings from the Department of Defense's (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) and reviewed relevant literature. The Committee observed that DoD and the Services have necessarily placed a great deal of emphasis on data collection and on response efforts once an assault has occurred, including improvements in reporting procedures for sexual assaults and in services to sexual assault victims. They have also emphasized and refined training programs

as an important prevention tool. The Committee determined in 2011 to focus its work on further efforts that might be made to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment in the first instance, with a view to reducing their incidence within the military community and thereby promoting the wellness of female Service members.

As explained in more detail in the full 2011 report, DACOWITS made the following recommendations, based on the reasoning set forth below, and also identified some continuing concerns.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** This recommendation is three-fold and addresses the Committee's view that publicizing the outcomes of sexual assault cases more broadly within the military, and on an installation level, would be helpful in reducing sexual assaults.

### Recommendation

- DoD should publicize reports of sexual assault and their dispositions in a simple format accessible to a wide military audience, to be used in required training and other venues.
- DoD should consider requiring local commanders to publicize, in a timely manner, this same information, including information on reports and dispositions at their specific installations.
- Sexual assault information to be publicized should include the number of reports and type of disciplinary actions taken as a result of sexual assault investigations. Because there may be valid reasons why disciplinary action is not taken in some cases, reasons should be provided for cases where no action is taken. All such information should be in aggregate form, as necessary to conform to any applicable privacy or other legal requirements, taking into account the needs of the victim as appropriate.



### Reasoning

Focus group participants stated that Service members are generally unaware of the extent to which there has been follow-up on reported sexual assaults and the disciplinary or other action that has been taken. This lack of awareness makes it hard for Service members to assess whether sexual assaults are actually taken seriously and may contribute to the perception that an individual's rank affects the outcome. This lack of awareness may also lead perpetrators to believe that they are at little risk of being held to account. Finally, lack of awareness may lead to lack of confidence in the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response process and to a consequent unwillingness to report assaults. Publicizing information on case dispositions should demonstrate that the military as a whole, as well as individual units, do not tolerate sexual assault and will discipline fairly. Including information on why disciplinary action is not taken in some cases should also foster increased confidence in the system, potentially leading both to fewer assaults and greater reporting of assaults that do occur. This recommendation is consistent not only with focus group participant recommendations but also with research that shows that publicizing enforcement activities and disciplinary outcomes may deter crimes by making clear the cost to the offender.

Although this recommendation pertains to sexual assault, many of the same considerations could apply to sexual harassment cases. The Committee has identified as a continuing concern for possible further consideration whether DoD and the Services should give more attention to the prevention of sexual harassment (as distinct from sexual assault) and the ways in which this might be accomplished. A report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office on preventing sexual harassment in the military, which was released after DACOWITS voted on its 2011 recommendations, may be especially relevant to any further examination of sexual harassment issues.

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**Recommendation 2:** DoD should include measures of sexual assault and sexual harassment in command climate assessments.

### Reasoning

Focus group research and DoD surveys reveal widespread agreement among Service members that sexual assault and sexual harassment have negative effects on military readiness. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated with respect to sexual assault, "This type of act in the military not only does unconscionable harm to the victim; it destabilizes the workplace and threatens national security." Both focus group and other research reveal that a positive command climate can help prevent sexual assault and harassment. Yet measures of sexual assault and sexual harassment are not consistently and expressly taken into account in command climate assessments. Including these measures in command climate assessments could help ensure that prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment is a command priority.

Although this recommendation pertains to command climate assessments, many of the same considerations could apply to including sexual assault and sexual harassment measures in individual performance evaluations of commanders, and the Committee has identified this as a continuing concern for possible further consideration.

### Continuing Concerns

In the course of examining sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention, the Committee identified several continuing concerns for possible further consideration.

- Whether DoD and the Services should place greater attention on prevention of sexual harassment as distinct from sexual assault.
- Whether effectiveness in combating sexual assault and sexual harassment should be made a part of individual performance evaluations of installation commanders and other leaders.
- Whether additional specialized training should be required for investigators, counselors and victim advocates in sexual assault matters.
- Whether there are special problems of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the recruiting process and, if so, how they should be addressed.

## Assignments Recommendations and Best Practices

In 2010, DACOWITS recommended that DoD eliminate its 1994 combat exclusion policy, thereby ending gender-based restrictions on military assignments and opening all career fields/specialties, schooling and training opportunities that have been closed to women. As a follow-up to this recommendation, in 2011 DACOWITS decided to examine ways to effectively and fully integrate women into ground combat units, including any potential barriers to such integration. In addition, based on reports gathered by the Committee in 2010, in 2011 DACOWITS decided to examine the adequacy of the weapons training female Service members receive in preparation for deployment to combat zones.

As explained in more detail in the full 2011 report, DACOWITS made the following recommendations, based on the reasoning set forth below, and also suggested some best practices:

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**Recommendation 1:** DoD should eliminate the 1994 combat exclusion policy and direct the Services to eliminate their respective assignment rules, thereby ending the gender-based restrictions on military assignments. Concurrently, DoD and the Services should open all related career fields/specialties, schooling and training opportunities that have been closed to women as a result of the DoD combat exclusion policy and service assignment policies.

### Reasoning

This recommendation repeats the recommendation made by DACOWITS in 2010. As described in DACOWITS' 2010 Report, that recommendation was grounded in focus group and other research gathered by the Committee in 2009 and additional research supporting the expansion of roles of women gathered by the Committee in 2010. Because DoD is, at this time, reviewing the 1994 combat exclusion policy in response to a congressional directive to do so, DACOWITS believes it is important to repeat and re-emphasize this recommendation. Moreover, the Committee continued to find strong support for this recommendation in its focus group and other research conducted this

year, including in the final report of the Military Leadership Diversity Commission and the statements of high-ranking DoD personnel. Equally important, the Committee found no insurmountable obstacles to integrating women into currently closed positions.

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**Recommendation 2:** The Services should develop appropriate physical standards by MOS, relevant to the job to be performed.

### Reasoning

The Committee's 2010 recommendation, repeated above in 2011, would end gender-based restrictions on military assignments. This would mean opening to women combat arms career fields and MOSs that are currently closed and allowing women to compete for all assignments for which they are qualified. However, the Committee is concerned that DoD and the Services, in the review that they are currently undertaking of assignment policies for women, may be evaluating women on an "average" rather than an individual basis and may be using or establishing standards to judge women's qualifications that have not been validated, even for men. Instead, the selection of military personnel for assignment should be based on individual qualifications, not on gender or other stereotyped concepts of women's or men's capabilities. The qualifications should be those necessary to perform the actual duties of a specific military job. Any standards for the job, especially physical standards, should be validated to ensure that they accurately predict job performance.

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**Recommendation 3:** In addition to a general increase in quality of pre-deployment weapons training, the Services should ensure that deployed Service members receive appropriate in-country weapons training on the weapons used by the units in which they are serving in theatre.

### Reasoning

Focus group participants, both men and women, described their pre-deployment weapons training as inadequate in some respects. Some reported receiving a bare minimum of training, and some complained

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

about the quality and consistency of the training. Additionally, some women focus group participants reported that, once in theatre, they were issued new weapons on which they had not been previously trained and that weapons training while deployed was inadequate. The Committee believes that weapons training both pre- and post-deployment should be improved for both women and men Service members.

### Best Practices

In the course of examining ways to effectively integrate women into combat units, DACOWITS identified, and wishes to suggest, several best practices.

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**Best Practice 1:** Leaders should adopt practices similar to those that were implemented during the process of the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell, in which they visibly support the integration of women into currently closed positions.

#### Comment

Leadership is key to the successful implementation of new policies and programs. It is very apparent that the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines get on board with new programs when the leaders at all levels of the organization support the new policies and programs and actively demonstrate their support, including during briefings and training.

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**Best Practice 2:** The Services should employ a phased approach for a full integration of women into all currently closed combat assignments. At a minimum, several women should be integrated into units at a time. The integration should occur in the combat engineers, artillery, and armor followed by the infantry.

#### Comment

The integration of women into combat units will require that some facilities be modified, training be

reviewed, and testing be conducted to ensure that job-related standards are employed in selecting Service members for particular assignments. Navy experience in bringing women onto warships supports the practice of integrating women into currently closed units several at a time. Further, since women are already present in some MOSs and various levels in the combat engineers and artillery, the transition of women into these units should be relatively easy. The transition into armor and infantry could require more time and effort.

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**Best Practice 3:** DoD and the Services should have more of an emphasis on mentorship, both formal and informal. However, leadership needs to encourage and support informal mentorship.

#### Comment

During focus group sessions the importance of mentorship was discussed. Although mentoring is important to all Service members, it will be especially important for the women who are integrated into combat units. Informal mentoring, because it is not done to meet a requirement, can be more appealing because all involved have chosen to be in a mentoring relationship.

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**Best Practice 4:** The Services should assure their recruitment policies fully support the successful integration of women into the combat arms.

#### Comment

If restrictions on the assignment of women are lifted as DACOWITS has recommended, it will be important for all Services to attract and recruit both men and women to serve in the combat arms. Some current policies may unnecessarily discourage potential recruits from considering such service – and possibly service in the military itself. For example, the Marines tell recruits that they may be put into the infantry involuntarily, even though such involuntary assignments seldom occur. The Marine Corps should review its policy of involuntarily assigning recruits to infantry.

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) was established in 1951. Its mandate is to provide the Secretary of Defense with advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the women in the Armed Forces of the United States. (See *Appendix A* for the DACOWITS charter.) The individuals who comprise the Committee are appointed by the Secretary of Defense to serve in a voluntary capacity for three-year terms. (See *Appendix B* for biographies of the 2011 DACOWITS Committee members.)

As in the previous year, in 2011 DACOWITS divided its work into two general areas, Wellness and Assignments, with subcommittees formed for each. For Wellness, the Committee examined prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military. For Assignments, the Committee, following up on its 2010 recommendation to eliminate DoD's 1994 combat exclusion policy – which would open all military assignments to women – examined ways to effectively and fully integrate women into ground combat units and the adequacy of weapons training received by military women in preparation for deployment.

To undertake this examination, the Committee gathered both primary and secondary sources of information, including briefings from military representatives and subject matter experts; data collected during installation visits from focus groups and surveys; and literature reviews, including other survey

data and available research and resources. As a primary source of information, DACOWITS collected data from site visits to eight military installations during June and July 2011. (See *Appendix C* for installations visited.) Committee members facilitated focus group discussions at each site in order to assess the views, attitudes and experiences of Service members on the identified topics. Mini-surveys were also distributed to participants to determine the demographic composition of the groups and to assess their basic attitudes towards the topics at hand. In all, DACOWITS conducted 44 focus groups – 23 on Wellness topics and 21 on Assignments topics – with 425 participants. Consistent with past years, staff from an independent research firm (ICF International) recorded written transcripts of the discussions and compiled and analyzed the resulting data in collaboration with the Committee. Focus group methodology and results are described further in relevant parts of Chapters II and III.

Chapter II covers the Committee's research and recommendations on the Wellness topic. Chapter III covers the Committee's research and recommendations on the Assignment topics. Appendices are also provided, including: DACOWITS charter, biographies of DACOWITS members, list of installations visited, focus group protocols, mini-surveys, mini-survey results, focus group findings, literature reviews, list of briefings presented to DACOWITS, and acronyms used in the report.



# Chapter 2

## Wellness Research and Recommendations

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



DACOWITS has addressed the issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment several times in past years. Most recently, in 2010 the Committee received briefings from the Department of Defense's (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) and reviewed relevant literature. The Committee observed that DoD and the Services have necessarily placed a great deal of emphasis on data collection and response efforts once an assault has occurred, including improvements in reporting procedures for sexual assaults and in services to sexual assault victims. They have also emphasized and refined training programs as an important prevention tool. The Committee determined in 2011 to focus its work on further efforts that might be made to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment in the first instance, with a view to reducing their incidence within the military community and thereby promoting the wellness of female Service members.

To undertake this examination, the Committee gathered data directly from Service members in focus groups, received briefings from knowledgeable DoD and Services personnel, as well as an outside expert, and researched current literature and other resources. This chapter summarizes DACOWITS' findings, recommendations, the reasoning behind these recommendations, and some continuing concerns on these topics. The chapter is organized into the following sections:

- Summary of Select Briefings Presented to DACOWITS
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources
- Recommendations
- Continuing Concerns

### Summary of Select Briefings Presented to DACOWITS

DACOWITS' research on sexual assault and sexual harassment in the U.S. military included briefings on efforts being undertaken to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment on college campuses and their application to the U.S. military; current efforts by DoD to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment, including by implementing recent congressional directives; and the effectiveness of DoD preventative policies as reflected in the 2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey by the Defense Manpower Data Center. This section presents highlights from these briefings; for a full list of briefings presented to DACOWITS in 2011, see *Appendix I*.

### Sexual Assault Prevention in the Military, March 2011

Dr. Connie Best, Professor and Director of Adult Services, National Crime Victims Research & Treatment Center, Medical University of South Carolina

As one of the first briefings received by DACOWITS in 2011, Dr. Connie Best presented an overview of prevention efforts in educational settings and their potential application to the military. She began by reviewing the widespread negative impact of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military on the victim, other Service members, families, readiness, and DoD's overall image. Drawing on the data in the 2009 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military of DoD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), she noted that there had been an 11% increase in the number of unrestricted reports of sexual assault in the military, but that the change may be attributable to the establishment of both restricted and unrestricted reporting. In restricted reporting, a victim



may receive support and treatment without triggering a criminal investigation or being personally identified. Dr. Best stressed the importance of prevention efforts to decrease rates of assault within the military population. She reviewed current national survey research by her colleague, Dr. Dean Kilpatrick, on the prevalence of drug-facilitated, incapacitated and forcible rape of college women, noting that the vast majority of these rapes go unreported.

Dr. Best recommended the Committee consider best practices in the civilian sector for application within the military, particularly practices on college campuses. College students share many similarities with military members including:

- Demographics (e.g., age, living away from home and support systems)
- Potentially seeing the offender on a daily basis
- Engaging in similar leisure activities (e.g., involving alcohol consumption)
- Sharing many of the same barriers to reporting

She then described interventions that have been found to be successful in engaging this population (e.g., interactive videos, group exercises). In addition, she highlighted the particular benefit of bystander involvement training, which encourages each individual to consider his or her role and obligation in preventing sexual assault and harassment. She also emphasized the role of leadership and the importance of taking action against perpetrators in preventing assault and harassment. She stated that giving high visibility to punishment of offenders is helpful.

### Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) 2010 Annual Report Results, June 2011

Dr. Suzanne Holroyd, SAPRO, and SAPRO Update, September 2011 — Major General Mary Kay Hertog, Director, SAPRO

Dr. Suzanne Holroyd and Maj Gen Mary Kay Hertog provided updates on SAPRO's efforts to address sexual assault in the military, including prevention efforts.

In a June 2011 briefing, Dr. Holroyd reviewed the findings of SAPRO's mandated 2010 annual report and related data from the Defense Manpower Data Center

(DMDC) *2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members*. She discussed SAPRO's efforts to increase Service members' confidence to report and to improve training on reporting options, recognizing that SAPRO still saw room for improvement in this area. Dr. Holroyd stated that there has been a 105% increase in reporting in the past six years, indicating to SAPRO that there has been progress in confronting underreporting problems. The main barriers to making a report include the desire to protect privacy, concerns about lack of confidentiality in the report, and the belief that the incident was not serious enough to report.

Specifically with respect to prevention, Dr. Holroyd noted that SAPRO has been focusing on bystander intervention training and that the 2010 DMDC survey showed a 35% drop in the number of women Service members and a 50% drop in the number of men Service members experiencing "unwanted sexual contact"<sup>1</sup> since 2006. She also stated that 52% of command actions against perpetrators in 2010, as compared to 30% in 2007, resulted in courts martial. Dr. Holroyd stated that the most important aspects in prevention include being in a supportive environment and raising the level of dialogue to improve prevention. In response to a question about DoD's efforts to confront command climates that may contribute to assault, Dr. Holroyd said that a new assessment on the command climate is forthcoming.

In a September 2011 briefing, Maj Gen Hertog, the new Director of SAPRO, presented her goals for SAPRO moving forward, which include balancing collaboration and responsiveness across agencies with the current budget realities of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Maj Gen Hertog reviewed pending policy revisions, which include the establishment of a Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database at the DoD level, expedited transfer options, enhanced training requirements for commanders and military responders (law enforcement, counsel, medics and chaplains), nationally credentialed Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) or victim advocates to help survivors, and the possibility of retaining sexual assault evidence and documents for a longer period of time. She stated that there are Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) challenges at joint bases. SAPR services exist at these bases, but each Service seems to operate independently.

SAPRO is leading a working group to determine what is and is not working at joint bases.

Specifically with respect to prevention, Maj Gen Hertog stated that she believes the right command climate is critical to prevention, reporting, and prosecution of sexual assault, and noted that an increased number of reports may indicate a command climate in which victims feel comfortable coming forward. She also reported on current efforts to evaluate command climate. SAPRO is working with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) to draft sexual assault questions to be introduced to the Organizational Climate Survey in January 2012. In response to the Committee's Request for Information about policies on publicizing the results of sexual assault reports, Maj Gen Hertog stated that SAPRO summarizes case outcomes in its annual report. She also stated that there is no policy preventing leaders from publicizing case outcomes on their installations, but added that leaders ought to consider any unintended consequences, such as compromising victims' privacy concerns, before publicizing case outcomes.

### Fiscal Year 2011 Defense Authorization Act Requirements for Improved Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, June 2011

Diana Rangoussis, Esq. Senior Policy Advisor, SAPRO

Ms. Diana Rangoussis reported on DoD's efforts, to date, to implement the requirements of the FY 2011 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) designed to improve sexual assault prevention and response. Under Title XVI, section 1602 of NDAA, DoD must develop a comprehensive policy on sexual assault prevention and response in the Armed Forces by 30 March 2012 that includes certain elements set forth in the new law. She reported on DoD's progress in implementing several of these elements, including consistent terminology definitions, staffing upgrades, and expanded victim services. She also described some proposed FY 2012 NDAA provisions on sexual assault and DoD's view of them. With respect to both the FY 2011 and FY 2012 provisions, most relate to reporting, staffing, and victim services rather than particularly to prevention efforts.

### DoD Sexual Harassment Policy Overview, September 2011

Mr. Jimmy Love, Acting Director, Military Equal Opportunity/Equal Employment Opportunity & Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Liaison, Office of Diversity Management & Equal Opportunity

Mr. Jimmy Love reviewed the current sexual harassment policy within DoD and stated that DoD is currently in the process of re-issuing Directive 1350.2 as a DoD instruction to update policy, assign responsibilities and implement policy and procedures for the DoD Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Program, which will occur by the end of October 2011. DoD Directive 1350.2:

- Prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex, including sexual harassment
- Defines roles for each DoD component in addressing unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment
- Identifies specific roles of senior leaders in the Services
- Clarifies the procedures for processing and resolving unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment complaints

The MEO Program is also collaborating with the Service Military Equal Opportunity offices to implement Service best practices, with an emphasis on long-term goals, objectives, and milestones, as well as institutionalizing leadership accountability.

Specifically with respect to prevention, Mr. Love addressed DACOWITS' Request for Information on publicizing the outcomes of sexual assault and harassment complaints. He stated that installation commanding officers have publicized summaries of formal complaints in base newspapers and town hall sessions and can do so in other ways as long as privacy is not violated. He said this has usually been done as general information similar to that provided in police blotters. Mr. Love knew of no DoD policy pertaining to this, which suggests it is at the discretion of the Service branch or installation command whether to publicize the outcomes (e.g., offender punishment and dismissal) of sexual assault investigations.

**Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC)  
2010 Workplace and Gender Relations  
Survey of Active Duty Members, June 2010**

Dr. Lindsay Rock & Dr. Rachel Lipari, DMDC

Dr. Rachel Lipari and Dr. Lindsay Rock provided a briefing on the results and implications from DMDC’s most recent survey of active duty members on gender issues, including sexual harassment and assault. These surveys provide some basis for assessing the effectiveness of DoD efforts to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment. This is the first such survey since 2006. Dr. Lipari said that incidence rates for unwanted sexual contact (USC)<sup>2</sup> declined for both women (6.8 to 4.7%) and men (1.8 to 0.9%) from 2006 to 2010. She said that the Army and Marine Corps have higher incidence rates of USC for women than the other Services, and junior enlisted personnel are most likely to experience this behavior. The majority of women who experienced USC did not report it, commonly citing that they did not want anyone to know, they felt uncomfortable making a report, they did not think their report would be kept confidential, and/or they were afraid of retaliation/reprisals. More women in 2010 believed that their performance evaluation/chance for promotion would suffer if they reported, compared with 2006.

Dr. Lipari reported that the incidence rate for sexual harassment also declined for women, from 33% in 2006 to 21% in 2010. The rate for men declined from 6% to 3% over the same period. The highest incidences, for both women and men, were of crude/offensive behavior, then unwanted sexual attention, then sexual coercion. Despite these data, Dr. Lipari reported that surveys also reveal the percentage of Service members with at least four years of service who believe that sexual assault is more of a problem in the military than it was four years ago has increased (32% of women and 21% of men in 2010 versus 25% of women and 15% of men in 2006), as has the percentage who think sexual harassment is more of a problem in the military than it was four years ago (29% of women and 20% of men in 2010 versus 23% of women and 15% of men in 2006). Dr. Lipari believes the differential between incidence and perception of incidence is attributable to the fact that SAPRO’s efforts are increasing

awareness among Service members of both sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Dr. Lipari also presented various data on the characteristics of incidents, victims’ reasons for not reporting an incident, and the training provided to try to prevent incidents and encourage reporting of incidents, stating that the majority of those Service members who received training reported it was moderately or very effective in reducing/preventing sexual assault.

**Summary of Focus Group Findings**

During the summer of 2011, DACOWITS conducted a total of 23 focus groups at eight locations to inform its work on the prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment. A total of 226 participants attended the focus groups, with an average of 10 participants per session. Groups were held with personnel from all Active Component (AC) Services and some elements of the Reserve Component (RC).

Slightly more than half of participants were women (56%). Almost half of the participants were non-Hispanic White (48%), just over a quarter were non-Hispanic Black (28%), and just over ten percent were Hispanic (11%). The Army was the most represented Service, with just under a quarter of participants (22%), and the Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard were more or less equally represented, each comprising between 16% and 20% of the participants. The Marines, Reserves and Army National Guard were also represented, each comprising slightly fewer than 10% of the participants. Half of participants were junior or senior Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs; E5-E9; 50%), and almost a third were officers (O1-O6 including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers; 32%). Over half of participants had served more than 10 years in the military (54%). The majority of participants were married (62%). For a complete summary of the demographic characteristics of these focus group participants, see *Appendix F-1*.

The methodology used to identify salient themes was consistent with the approach the Committee has employed previously. Specifically, the Committee, in partnership with social scientists from the Committee’s research contractor ICF, first developed focus group and survey instruments tailored

to address the research questions of interest to DACOWITS. Contractor staff also served as scribes, accompanying the Committee members who served as facilitators for each focus group, and generating a written transcript from the session. Each individual focus group transcript was then content-analyzed by ICF to identify major themes and sub-themes. The purpose of the sample-wide analysis was to determine the most salient comments throughout the focus group sessions, i.e., themes that appear most frequently within and across focus group sessions.

The questions posed to the focus groups were intended to gain insight on Service members’ perceptions of the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military, their understanding of the procedures in place for the reporting of and response to incidents, their awareness of and views on the effectiveness of military prevention programs, and their views on what could be done to enhance prevention efforts. For purposes of the focus groups, the DoD definitions of the terms sexual assault (a crime) and sexual harassment (a form of unlawful sex discrimination) were expressly provided, in order to distinguish the two. The definitions may be found in the Focus Group Protocols for Wellness at *Appendices D-1* and *D-2*.

**Prevalence of Sexual Assault  
Today and Over Time**

DACOWITS asked focus group participants a series of questions about their perception of the prevalence of sexual assault in the military. Opinions were mixed, with some participants stating sexual assault is a frequent or common occurrence, and others stating it happens only occasionally or rarely. Some participants noted that their perception of the frequency of sexual assault was based not on direct knowledge of sexual assault incidents, but rather on media accounts or statistics provided in sexual assault prevention and response training. Participants also provided divergent opinions on whether the frequency of sexual assault in the military had changed over time. Several participants believed assaults are occurring with greater frequency now than before and a nearly equal number believed the opposite to be true, with some participants unsure about the matter. Of note, a few participants believed that more victims are now reporting sexual assault than before;

with some participants believing that this could be attributed to heightened awareness of reporting procedures and greater willingness among victims to come forward and report sexual assault incidents.

**Prevalence of Sexual Harassment  
Today and Over Time**

DACOWITS also asked participants to comment on their perception of the prevalence of sexual harassment in the military. Although opinions were mixed, most focus group participants stated that sexual harassment is prevalent in the military today, and most stated that its prevalence had not changed much over time. Several female focus group participants expressed difficulty discerning what constitutes sexual harassment, and a small number of male Service members expressed a belief that sexual harassment was not prevalent in the military and is instead a form of hazing. In some instances, junior women Service members expressed a degree of tolerance of behaviors that senior women Service members said they would not tolerate. Among those who believed harassment had declined, some participants attributed the decline to increased prevention training, while others attributed it to a shift toward a climate less tolerant of sexual harassment. Among Service members who believed harassment has persisted or increased, some attributed the cause to leadership not taking a strong enough stance to prevent it. Some participants saw a difference between junior and senior Service members in that junior members may see sexual harassment as “coming with the job” and so may not understand how to deal with it.

**Awareness & Effectiveness  
of Sexual Assault and Sexual  
Harassment Prevention Training**

Most focus group participants reported that they have received some form of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention training. Some participants said that prevention training is part of a larger culture shift, and believed that this training will contribute to an eventual decline in both sexual assault and sexual harassment. DACOWITS asked Service members what methods lead to effective program delivery. Most often, focus group participants thought that in-person presentations, small group discussions, and role-plays were the most effective forms of sexual assault and harassment prevention programming.



Overall, participants considered prevention trainings to be effective for both sexual assault and sexual harassment. With regards to sexual assault prevention specifically, several participants noted the effectiveness of bystander intervention training. Participants in one focus group reported that training that specifically addressed the relationship between alcohol and sexual assault was also an effective prevention strategy.

Participants in several groups noted they had received regular training on sexual harassment. Most of these participants felt the training was effective in at least one of two ways: providing effective and informative definitions and examples of acceptable behavior and harassment and educating Service members on how to effectively respond to and report sexual harassment. In a few instances, members made specific references to the Sexual Harassment and Response Prevention training (SHARP) and the Prevention of Sexual Harassment training (POSH) in Army as effective sexual harassment training programs.

### Role of Leadership in Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention

Focus group participants frequently discussed the important role leadership plays in preventing both sexual assault and sexual harassment by assuring an appropriate command climate. Service members expressed a desire for leaders to serve as role models by treating sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention seriously – both in their daily lives and by participating in prevention trainings.

### Awareness and Effectiveness of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Reporting Procedures

Focus group participants discussed a wide variety of reporting options available to victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Specific resources identified by Service members for reporting sexual assault included: SAPRO, the chaplain, a SARC, a victim advocate, and one’s supervisor. For sexual harassment specifically, a few Service members identified the Equal Opportunity office as the appropriate resource. On occasion, junior female Service members expressed uncertainty about

the resources available to them to report an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment.

Service members reported, in general, that instances of both sexual assault and sexual harassment are underreported. Service members expressed mixed views on the topic of reporting procedure effectiveness. Overall, several participants expressed that the current sexual assault and sexual harassment reporting procedures are effective, sharing that as reporting options have increased, victims have felt more comfortable submitting reports. The majority of participants, however, believed barriers to reporting sexual assault and sexual harassment still remain.

The most commonly expressed barrier leading to underreporting of sexual assault incidents was a lack of trust in both the unrestricted and restricted reporting systems, which may lead victims to utilize resources off-base. Additionally, a small number of participants thought that those who have experienced a sexual assault may often tell the wrong person and receive incorrect direction on how to manage the situation. Participants also commonly expressed the view that victims may be unwilling to report sexual assaults in cases where alcohol was involved out of fear of being reprimanded for underage drinking.

Many Service members thought that sexual harassment, specifically, was underreported because individuals either were not aware it was occurring, or they did not feel it was serious enough to report it and felt compelled to “suck it up” and manage the situation on their own. Service members also reported sexual harassment complaints in particular often get “swept under the rug” and are not taken seriously.

Less frequently, Service members discussed fear of the stigma associated with reporting sexual misconduct – including both sexual assault and sexual harassment – although several focus group members thought that the fear of stigma had declined over time. Several participants noted that the stigma of reporting is stronger for male than female victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

### Perceived Justice

Service members frequently expressed frustration about the lack of clear punishments for offenders of both sexual assault and sexual harassment, reporting that they could not tell whether measures in place to punish offenders were being enforced and that, to the extent they were, it appeared that punishments vary widely. Several male Service members provided suggestions for how to use offender punishment as a tool to prevent future sexual assault and sexual harassment. Suggestions included clearly publicizing what happens to offenders and using offender experiences and punishments as examples during prevention training.

### Perceptions of Punishment Differences by Rank

Participants were asked about their views on the role rank plays when an individual is accused of sexual assault or sexual harassment. Opinions on this issue varied by the rank of participants. Frequently, junior Service members stated that their peers were likely to be punished more severely than senior Service members when accused of either sexual assault or sexual harassment, and that senior Service members were more likely than junior Service members to be encouraged to retire without severe punishment. In contrast, senior Service members stated that their peers were likely to receive stricter punishment than junior Service members. Rarely, focus group participants thought that both junior and senior Service member offenders are punished equally. Occasionally, Service members discussed the impact of the “good old boys” club on sexual assault and sexual harassment offenders, stating that those who are in the club are much more likely to receive preferential treatment when accused of sexual assault or sexual harassment than those who are not.

### Impact of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment on Unit Readiness

Most Service members thought that sexual assault has a negative impact on a unit’s readiness and ability to perform its mission by distracting Service members from their ultimate charge and negatively impacting trust within the unit. One Service member also mentioned the impact of high profile sexual assault cases on unit pride.

The responses were similar on sexual harassment. Overall, most Service members thought that sexual harassment creates an environment of distrust that negatively affects unit readiness and the mission as a whole. Some Service members additionally stated that it is difficult to perform one’s duties in a harassing and hostile work environment.

### Relevant Literature and Other Resources

The following review of literature and other resources focuses on prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Additional resources are summarized in *Appendix H-1*.

Focus group participants told DACOWITS that command climate is important for success of prevention programs. Academic literature confirms this. Research has shown that an institutional culture of male dominance and stereotypical gendered beliefs fosters an environment conducive to sexual assault and sexual harassment.<sup>3,4,5</sup> Although this research has mainly been done in educational institutions, as Dr. Connie Best stated in her briefing to the Committee, it is reasonable to apply educational research on sexual assault and sexual harassment to the military given the similarities between the higher education and military populations in several respects.

Focus group participants also told DACOWITS that they were unaware of the results of sexual assault investigations and suggested that publicizing the results of such investigations would be helpful in preventing sexual assaults because perpetrators would see there are consequences for their actions. Research has similarly shown that the decision to commit sexual assault is influenced by the perpetrator’s calculation of possible “costs” such as legal consequences, social retaliation, and harm to one’s reputation/career.<sup>6</sup> In addition, research has shown that publicly reporting rates of sexual assaults on university/college campuses can be beneficial in creating an environment of transparency and holding the institution accountable for incidents that occur within the student body.<sup>7</sup>

A recent study by the Department of Transportation provides some additional evidence for the deterrent effect of publicizing the potential consequences of law-breaking.<sup>8</sup> This study found that a high visibility media campaign that communicated that



the enforcement of driving laws (in this case, cell phone bans while driving), in conjunction with actual increased enforcement of the laws, led to lower incidence of the law-breaking behavior. The media campaign was conducted through television, radio and billboards. Law enforcement in the affected communities simultaneously assigned officers dedicated to enforcing the cell phone driving ban, increasing roving patrols and police spotters. Surveys indicated that motorists in the communities with the media/law enforcement campaign, compared to motorists in a control group, reported significantly lower rates of cell phone use while driving during the campaign.

With respect to the prevention of sexual harassment, a recent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that DoD needs greater leadership and oversight of sexual harassment programs.<sup>9</sup> The GAO report stated that DoD has a long-standing policy aimed at providing an environment free of sexual harassment, but some aspects of its programs and policies need improvement. For example, commanders have not been held accountable for completing required assessments of equal opportunity climate, not all commands report sexual harassment complaint data to higher-level offices, and DoD has exercised little oversight of its programs. GAO made five recommendations for DoD:

1. Develop a strategy for holding individuals in leadership accountable for promoting, supporting, and enforcing sexual harassment policies and programs,
2. Track military commanders' compliance with existing requirements to periodically assess equal opportunity climate through "command climate" assessments,
3. Develop guidance on how incidents of sexual harassment should be handled in joint operation environments,
4. Take steps to ensure that complaint data are complete and accurate with uniform data elements, and
5. Develop and aggressively implement an oversight framework with goals, strategies and criteria for measuring progress.

## Recommendations

This section provides the 2011 DACOWITS recommendations on Wellness and summarizes the reasoning in support of these recommendations. The recommendations and reasonings are based on the research and resources summarized in previous sections within this chapter.

**Recommendation 1:** This recommendation is three-fold and addresses the Committee's view that publicizing the outcomes of sexual assault cases more broadly within the military and on an installation level would be helpful in reducing sexual assaults.

### Recommendation

- DoD should publicize reports of sexual assault and their dispositions in a simple format accessible to a wide military audience, to be used in required training and other venues.
- DoD should consider requiring local commanders to publicize, in a timely manner, this same information, including information on reports and dispositions at their specific installations.
- Sexual assault information to be publicized should include the number of reports and type of disciplinary actions taken as a result of sexual assault investigations. Because there may be valid reasons why disciplinary action is not taken in some cases, reasons should be provided for cases where no action is taken. All such information should be in aggregate form, as necessary to conform to any applicable privacy or other legal requirements, taking into account the needs of the victim as appropriate.

### Reasoning

Focus group participants stated that Service members are generally unaware of the extent to which there has been follow-up on reported sexual assaults and the disciplinary or other action that has been taken. This lack of awareness makes it hard for Service members to assess whether sexual assaults are actually taken seriously and may be part of the basis for the perception

that rank affects the outcome. This lack of awareness may also lead perpetrators to believe that they are at little risk of being held to account. Finally, lack of awareness may lead to lack of confidence in the SAPR process and to a consequent unwillingness to report assaults. Publicizing information on case dispositions should demonstrate that the military as a whole, as well as individual units, does not tolerate sexual assault and will discipline fairly. Including information on why disciplinary action is not taken in some cases should also foster increased confidence in the system, potentially leading both to fewer assaults and greater reporting of assaults that do occur. This recommendation is consistent not only with focus group participant recommendations but also with research that shows that publicizing enforcement activities and disciplinary outcomes may deter crimes by making clear the cost to the offender.

Although this recommendation pertains to sexual assault, many of the same considerations could apply to sexual harassment cases. The Committee has identified as a continuing concern for possible further consideration whether DoD and the Services should give more attention to the prevention of sexual harassment (as distinct from sexual assault) and the ways in which this might be accomplished. The GAO report on preventing sexual harassment in the military described in the previous section, which was released after DACOWITS voted on its 2011 recommendations, may be especially relevant to any further examination of sexual harassment issues.

**Recommendation 2:** DoD should include measures of sexual assault and sexual harassment in command climate assessments.

### Reasoning

Focus group research and DoD surveys reveal widespread agreement among Service members that sexual assault and sexual harassment have negative effects on military readiness. As Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated with respect to sexual assault in the military, "This type of act not only does unconscionable harm to the victim; it destabilizes the workplace and threatens national security."<sup>10</sup> Both focus group and other research reveal that a positive command climate can help prevent sexual assault and harassment. Yet

measures of sexual assault and sexual harassment are not consistently and expressly taken into account in command climate assessments. Including these measures in command climate assessments would help ensure that prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment is a command priority.

Although this recommendation pertains to command climate assessments, many of the same considerations could apply to including sexual assault and sexual harassment measures in individual performance evaluations of commanders. The Committee has identified this as a continuing concern for possible further consideration.

## Continuing Concerns

In the course of examining sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention, the Committee identified several continuing concerns for possible further consideration.

- Whether DoD and the Services should place greater attention on prevention of sexual harassment as distinct from sexual assault.
- Whether effectiveness in combating sexual assault and sexual harassment should be made a part of individual performance evaluations of installation commanders and other leaders.
- Whether additional specialized training should be required for investigators, counselors and victim advocates in sexual assault matters.
- Whether there are special problems of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the recruiting process and, if so, how they should be addressed.

# Chapter 3

## Assignments Research and Recommendations

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



In 2010, DACOWITS recommended that DoD eliminate its 1994 combat exclusion policy, thereby ending gender-based restrictions on military assignments and opening all career fields/specialties, schooling and training opportunities that have been closed to women. As a follow-up to this recommendation, in 2011 DACOWITS decided to examine ways to effectively and fully integrate women into ground combat units, including any potential barriers to such integration. In addition, based on reports gathered by the Committee in 2010, in 2011 DACOWITS decided to examine the adequacy of the weapons training female Service members receive in preparation for deployment to combat zones.

To undertake these examinations, the Committee gathered data directly from Service members in focus groups, received briefings from knowledgeable DoD and Services personnel, and researched current literature and other resources. This chapter summarizes DACOWITS' 2011 findings, recommendations, the reasoning behind the recommendations, and some suggested best practices on these topics. The chapter is organized into the following sections:

- Summary of Select Briefings Presented to DACOWITS
- Summary of Focus Group Findings
- Relevant Literature and Other Resources
- Recommendations
- Best Practices

### Summary of Select Briefings Presented to DACOWITS

DACOWITS' research on assignments included briefings from the congressionally established Military Leadership Diversity Commission on the Commission's own 2010 recommendation on the assignment of military women, which was similar to DACOWITS' 2010 recommendation; from DoD on the Women in the Services Restrictions (WISR) review of assignment

policies for women that DoD is undertaking to respond to a FY 2011 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) mandate to report to Congress on the results of such a review; from the Marine Corps on the WISR review as it relates specifically to the Corps; and from the Navy on the status of its integration of women into submarine service. This section presents highlights from these briefings on the issues particularly relevant to DACOWITS' 2011 assignment topics; for a full list of briefings presented to DACOWITS in 2011, see *Appendix I*.

### Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC) Report Summary, June 2011

Gen, USAF (Ret) Lester Lyles and LTG, Army (Ret) Julius Becton, Jr.

Gen Lester (Ret) Lyles, MLDC Chairman, and LTG (Ret) Julius Becton, Jr., an MLDC member, presented highlights of the 2011 MLDC Report particularly relevant to women in the Services, including MLDC's recommendation that the 1994 DoD policy excluding women from direct ground combat be eliminated. Gen (Ret) Lyles explained that MLDC was created by Congress to evaluate and assess opportunities for the promotion and advancement of minority members of the Armed Forces, including minority members who are senior officers. He noted that Congress charged MLDC with 16 tasks that formed the basis of MLDC's research, analysis, and recommendations. Gen (Ret) Lyles stated that MLDC recommended elimination of the ground combat exclusion primarily because women are currently serving in ground combat but are attached and not assigned to these units, which has prevented these women from receiving due promotional consideration. He also stated that MLDC has had the opportunity to brief all of the Service Chiefs on its recommendations, and confirmed that they were all very supportive of the MLDC recommendations. The Vice Chiefs were present for the MLDC briefings, as were the senior enlisted leaders on most occasions.



### Women in the Service Restrictions (WISR) Review, June 2011

Mr. Doug Johnson, Office of Military Personnel Policy

Mr. Doug Johnson, Office of Military Personnel Policy (MPP), provided a briefing on the responsibilities and plans of a new MPP Work Group that is reviewing assignment policies for women: the Women in the Service Restrictions (WISR) Review. He explained the two reasons for the creation of the WISR Review: FY 2011 NDAA, Section 535, which requires a DoD review of, and report to Congress on, restrictions on the service of female Service members, and the Military Leadership Diversity Commission Report Recommendation #9, which urges DoD and the Services to end the policy restricting assignments of women, using a time-phased approach to opening all career fields/specialties to women. Mr. Johnson stated that the primary members of this Work Group are the Service representatives to DACOWITS, but there is also a Senior Leadership Steering Committee. Mr. Johnson stated that the Office of the Secretary of Defense submitted an interim report to Congress in May 2011 that identified the laws, policies and regulations being reviewed. The 1994 combat exclusion policy is the primary policy being examined and is open to revision. Mr. Johnson stated that none of the Work Group's decisions may be disclosed in a public forum at this time, but that the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is personally very committed to the process and has stated that the final report will be presented to Congress by October 2011.

### USMC Women in the Service Restrictions (WISR) Review, September, 2011

Col John Nettles, USMC

Col John Nettles provided a briefing on the Women in the Service Restrictions Review as it is being undertaken specifically by the Marine Corps. He stated that the Marine Corps will likely lift the restriction in its assignment policy that women cannot be assigned to units that physically "collocate" with ground combat units, acknowledging that this restriction no longer makes sense in today's battlefield environment. As part of the Marine Corps' review of whether its ground combat units should be opened to women, the Corps

is examining more closely the physical tasks generally required of Ground Combat Equivalent (GCE) units and combat arms military occupational specialties (MOSs). In particular, he said, the job-related physical requirements and physical capabilities of female Marines are being analyzed to determine which specific positions are suitable for female Marines. As part of this effort, the continuing applicability to men of the physical requirements will also be analyzed. For example, current GCE standards include the ability to undergo a march of 20 kilometers in 5 hours under a load of 83 pounds and the ability to engage in a "casualty move" of 20 meters under a load of 248 pounds.

As part of this review, Col Nettles said that the Marine Corps has examined Army studies for information on physiology comparisons by gender, which documented lower average aerobic, muscle strength, lifting strength, and road march speeds for women.<sup>11</sup> Also, the Marine Corps has examined the injury/attrition rates for women Marines in Entry Level Training. In addition to physical capabilities, the Marine Corps is examining possible recruiting and retention concerns if, as is the case for male Marines now, female Marines were to face the possibility of involuntarily being assigned to infantry positions. Col Nettles cited a 2010 Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies (JAMRS) survey of 16-24 year olds in which 29% of women said they would be less likely to join the military if women could serve in combat roles, compared to 12% of women who said they would be more likely to join. Interestingly, most women (58%) said it would not change the likelihood of their joining the military.<sup>12</sup> The Marine Corps is also evaluating the potential impact on social and unit cohesion of the integration of women in ground combat units. Finally, the Marine Corps is looking at the experience of other countries. For example, Col Nettles said that the Australian Defense Force is about five years ahead of the U.S. military with regards to gender integration and may be a model for ways in which the U.S. Armed Forces could successfully open currently closed MOSs to women.

Col Nettles also noted the increased opportunity for women in today's Marine Corps: there are double the number of women pilots since 1991; counter and human intelligence fields were opened to women recently; there are additional women in military police; there are

newly created Female Engagement Teams (FETs) and Cultural Support Teams (CSTs). Additionally, the majority of promotion rates are similar across genders, though there is a difference in promotion rates for men and women at the E9 and O7 levels, which the Marine Corps is analyzing to determine the reasons for this gap.

### Status of Integration of Women into Submarine Service, June 2011

LCDR Jean Sullivan, U.S. Navy

LCDR Jean Sullivan presented a briefing on the status of the integration of women into service on submarines. She stated that 20 women were commissioned and selected in FY 2010 for submarine service, and the first group of these women will be integrated into this service in November of 2011. These are highly qualified women, all of whom volunteered for these positions, and the majority of whom have engineering degrees. Eight crews will be integrated and each crew will have two, nuclear-trained, women division officers and one woman warfare-qualified supply corps officer. The decision to integrate each crew in this manner draws on the lessons learned from integrating women onto surface warships by ensuring that more than one woman is on each vessel and that the women submariners have female mentors. LCDR Sullivan stated that, as part of the Navy's preparation of the existing submariner community for this integration, the Navy has focused on ensuring a culture of inclusion and made it clear that hazing and other such behaviors will not be tolerated. LCDR Sullivan also said that, as required by law, the Navy has notified Congress of its intent to expend funds to design the Ohio class replacement SSBN (Ballistic Missile Submarine), and to reconfigure existing submarines, to accommodate female crew members. The integration of female enlisted women into submarine service is part of a deliberate process, informed by the lessons learned from integrating female officers.

### Summary of Focus Group Findings

During summer 2011, DACOWITS conducted a total of 21 focus group sessions, at seven locations, to inform its work on both the assignment of military women and the weapons training received by deploying military women. A total of 199 participants attended the focus groups, with a range of

three to 12 and an average of 10 participants per session, representing the entire Active component (AC) Services and some elements of the Reserve component (RC). Each focus group session included Service members who had deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and/or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), including junior and senior, enlisted and officer, women and men.<sup>13</sup>

The majority of focus group participants were female (70%). Almost half of participants were non-Hispanic White (48%), just over a quarter were non-Hispanic Black (26%), and almost a fifth were Hispanic (19%). The Army was the most represented Service, with over a quarter (28%) of participants, followed by the Marine Corps (21%), Navy (17%), Air Force (14%), Army National Guard (13%), and Reserves<sup>14</sup> (8%).<sup>15</sup> Nearly half of participants were junior or senior Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs – E5-E9; 45%), and roughly a third were officers (33%; O1-O6, and including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers), and almost half of participants had served more than ten years in the military (42%). Half of participants were married (50%). For a complete summary of the demographic characteristics of these focus group participants, see *Appendix F-2*.

The methodology used by DACOWITS to identify salient themes related to the assignment of military women and the weapons training of deployed women in the 2011 focus groups is the same approach used to identify salient themes related to the Wellness sexual assault and sexual harassment topics, described in Chapter II.

### Weapons Training

To explore whether women are receiving adequate weapons training in preparation for deployment, DACOWITS asked women and men focus group participants a series of questions about their weapons training. The vast majority of participants said that they have received weapons training. Although the majority of participants – both women and men – reported on the mini-survey that accompanied each focus group that the weapons training they have received is adequate, as this topic was explored in more detail during the focus group discussions, most participants subsequently described their weapons training as inadequate in some respects. Some reported that they had a bare minimum



amount of training. The most commonly cited inadequacies included: inconsistencies among Services, installations and MOSs; poor quality training, and not enough training; and trainers not taking training seriously enough.

Some participants stated that they thought the reason, at least in part, for the pre-deployment weapons training inadequacies is lack of sufficient funding. With respect to whether the training varied between the genders, the majority of focus group participants stated that the pre-deployment training did not vary by gender. However, some women focus group participants reported that they or others they knew of were issued new types of weapons once they arrived in theatre, ones on which they had not previously been trained. Some said they received training on these weapons then, but others reported that their training in theatre on these weapons was inadequate.

### Full Integration of Women into Combat Units

To explore ways to effectively integrate women into ground combat units, and any barriers to such integration, DACOWITS asked women and men focus group participants a series of questions. These included questions about lessons learned from the previous integration of women onto combat ships and aircraft, impact on unit readiness if women were to be fully integrated, potential challenges that may arise to women's full integration into combat units, and the degree to which mentoring might aid women's integration.

### Views on Eliminating the Assignment Policy

Although DACOWITS did not explicitly ask focus group participants their opinions on whether the current assignment policy for military women should be eliminated, this question arose during several of the focus group discussions. Of those who shared their views, most were in support of changing the policy to open all specialties, including ground combat positions, to women, although a few participants expressed opposition to women serving in ground combat. Some participants expressed the view that women will be able to successfully serve in ground combat as long as the

standards are the same for both men and women. A few expressed concern that women who have served in ground combat unofficially are currently not receiving due recognition.

### Ways to Effectively Integrate Women into Combat Units

DACOWITS asked women focus group participants who have served in combat ships or aircraft, as well as men who have served alongside women in combat ships and aircraft, to share their experiences and lessons learned from these experiences, and to assess whether the military might apply these lessons to the full integration of women into ground combat units. These discussions led to several suggestions on the ways to make full integration a success, including having consistent and equal performance metrics and qualification criteria for both men and women, having strong leadership support for this transition, integrating women in large numbers rather than one or two at a time, and having appropriate training and mentoring.

Specifically with respect to mentoring, most focus group participants stated that mentoring would be helpful, to both women and men, to successfully integrate women into ground combat units. Several also noted that any mentoring program needs to be gender-neutral, so as not to single out women as the only ones needing mentoring. When asked about what forms of mentoring would be helpful, some participants said that same-gender mentors are preferable, while others believed that mentors of both genders would be helpful. A few also said that informal mentoring is better than a "check-the-box" formal mentoring program.

### Possible Impact on Readiness

DACOWITS asked focus group participants to share their thoughts on the potential impact on military readiness of women's full integration into combat units. Most focus group participants said that they thought it would either have a positive or no impact on military readiness, but a few thought it would have a negative impact (e.g., the perceived lack of strength or emotionality of women). Some participants also said that there might be short-term impact during the transition of women into combat units, but that any negative effect would disappear over time.

### Possible Challenges

DACOWITS asked focus group participants to consider, if women were fully integrated into combat units, the challenges that might arise. Specifically, participants were asked about whether there would be challenges related to: the success of the unit and its mission, the careers of individual women, and the well-being of women. Although most focus group participants were in support of fully integrating women into combat units, many noted several barriers to integration, such as the need to address cultural issues in a male-dominated environment and the possible increased potential for sexual harassment and assault, as well as inappropriate fraternization and logistical issues (e.g., facilities, hygiene, and access to health care).

### Relevant Literature and Other Resources

The following review of literature and other resources focuses on the Committee's Assignment topics. Additional resources are summarized in *Appendix H-2*.

### Additional Support for Full Integration of Women into Combat Units

In its 2010 report, DACOWITS reviewed the sources beyond briefings and focus group research in support of its recommendation to eliminate the 1994 DoD combat exclusion policy. This section summarizes sources of support that were not noted in the 2010 recommendations or previous DACOWITS reports, as well as sources of support that originated in the past year.

As described in DACOWITS' 2010 report, and earlier in this report, in December of 2010, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC) recommended the elimination of the 1994 combat exclusion policy.<sup>16</sup> In March of 2010, MLDC issued a report further elaborating on its reasoning in support of this recommendation. That report states that an increased need for diverse military leadership informed the Commission's recommendation, and that MLDC concluded the combat exclusion policy prevents women from entering tactical career fields that lead to "career-enhancing assignments" and that are associated with significantly higher promotion opportunities. With MLDC's

recommendation to eliminate the combat exclusion policy for women, however, came the caveat that qualification standards for combat arms positions should not be lowered because of a change in assignment policy. The Commission also considered the potential impact on military readiness brought about by women in combat and concluded that any negative impact on readiness would be negligible, noting that similar arguments were made against racial integration but never borne out. In fact, the Commission cited DACOWITS' 2009 finding that a majority of focus group participants thought that women serving in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan had a positive effect on mission accomplishment. The Commission also cited testimony that commanders in theatre should be able to pick the most capable person for the job. The Commission further found that women are engaging in combat, given the current operational environment. Finally, many Commissioners consider the current policy fundamentally unfair and discriminatory since it requires assignments based on gender without regard to capabilities or qualifications.

As noted in the 2010 DACOWITS Report, numerous high-ranking military commanders have expressed general support for eliminating restrictions on the assignment of military women as well.<sup>17</sup> Since that report, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta expressed his commitment to equal opportunity for all women and men in uniform upon the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell:

*This is a historic day for the Pentagon and for the nation. As Secretary of Defense, I'm committed to removing all the barriers that would prevent Americans from serving their country and from rising to the highest level of responsibility that their talents and capabilities warrant. These are men and women that put their lives on the line in the defense of this country—that's what should matter the most.*<sup>18</sup>

President Obama similarly stated on that day, "It is time to recognize that sacrifice, valor and integrity are no more defined by sexual orientation than they are by race or gender, religion or creed."<sup>19</sup>

More directly, in commenting on the DoD WISR review of assignment restrictions for women, Army Chief of Staff GEN Raymond T. Odierno publicly stated his support for expanding the roles of women in the military: "We need them there. We need their talent.... This is about managing talent.

We have incredibly talented females who should be in those [combat] positions. We have work to do within the [Defense Department] to get them to recognize and change.”<sup>20</sup>

Public support for allowing women to serve in direct combat roles is substantial as well. For example, on March 16, 2011, the Washington Post and ABC News released a poll showing that 73% of Americans support allowing military women to serve in ground units engaging in close combat. Majority support for women in ground combat was widespread: 73% of women and 72% of men, 80% of Democrats and 62% of Republicans, 79% of those with college degrees and 66% of those with less than a high school education, and 86% of individuals under the age of 31 and 57% of senior citizens expressed support for women in direct ground combat.<sup>21</sup>

### Potential Obstacles Facing Integration of Women into Combat Units

Col Nettles’ briefing on the Marine Corps’ WISR review revealed that a significant consideration in deciding whether to open ground combat positions to women is whether women are physically able to meet the demands of ground combat. In a similar vein, DACOWITS’ focus group research elicited comments from some participants that all military positions should be opened to women if they can meet the same standards applied to men, presumably referring primarily to physical standards. MLDC, in its recommendation to open all military positions to women, also cautioned that implementation of its recommendation should not result in a lowering of the qualification standards for these positions.

A recent article by Maia B. Goodell, an attorney and former Surface Warfare Officer in the U.S. Navy, draws on studies of vocational testing, athletics, and military fitness to examine in some detail what she terms the “physical-strength rationale” for excluding women from military combat positions.<sup>22</sup> She identifies four problems with the physical-strength argument: stereotyping, differential training, trait selection, and task definition. She concludes that “[w]hat appears to be a biological truth is actually better understood as a normative belief that the military’s job is in some way

peculiarly suited to men. It is not that women’s bodies do not measure up against an objective standard, but that the standard is defined so women do not fit it.”<sup>23</sup>

The first difficulty with the physical strength rationale, Ms. Goodell asserts, is that it is based in part on the gender stereotype that because some women cannot pass the physical tests to serve in particular positions, no woman should be permitted to serve. That the exclusion is based on a gender stereotype is clear from the fact that the same principle is not applied to men. Ms. Goodell also summarizes Supreme Court and other case law holding that governmental policies cannot differentiate between men and women based on such gender stereotypes, including *Owens v. Brown* (a district court case),<sup>24</sup> which declared unconstitutional an act of Congress that prevented women’s assignment to most Navy vessels. The appropriate substitute for determinations based on gender stereotyping, she states, is determinations based on individual evaluation and qualifications.

The second difficulty with the physical-strength rationale, in Ms. Goodell’s view, is that it “leap[s] to the conclusion that the observed differences in physical strength [between men and women] must be entirely inherent.”<sup>25</sup> To refute this conclusion, she cites several studies, including those involving military women, demonstrating that the differences are not solely inherent and that appropriate training can reduce them significantly. A study not cited by Ms. Goodell, conducted by the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine in November 1997, found that only 24% of women volunteers were initially found capable of performing tasks normally conducted by men in the military. However, after 24 weeks of training, this figure rose significantly—to 78%.<sup>26</sup> Evidence supporting the impact of training can also be drawn from a 2002 U.K. Ministry of Defence study, which reviewed over 100 works comparing the physicality of men and women. The study noted that proper training greatly increased women’s physical ability, and to some extent this ability rose in greater proportion in women compared to men, particularly in aerobic conditioning.<sup>27</sup>

The third difficulty with the physical-strength rationale, in Ms. Goodell’s analysis, is its trait selection, by which she means that women are too often measured

against physical standards that may not have been validated, even for men. In the civilian world, to pass muster under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits sex and other forms of discrimination in employment, an employment standard that has a differential impact on women and men must be shown to validly predict job performance.<sup>28</sup> She notes that there were several challenges to physical-strength standards under this standard when women first competed for jobs as police and firefighters and that the military itself does not “hold [its] general physical-fitness requirements to map onto job-specific requirements. In fact, the military has different requirements based on age group and sex.”<sup>29</sup> After reviewing the studies on trait selection, including those involving military women, as well as actual performance in “real life examples,”<sup>30</sup> Ms. Goodell concludes that too often it is “the strategic selection of the measures, not the job requirements,” that leads to the gap between women and men’s physical abilities, when one exists.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, with regard to task definition, Ms. Goodell argues that it would not be a burden for the military, an organization that is constantly redefining and improving itself to maintain its competitive advantage, to redefine some tasks to address women’s differing physical abilities. It may even be a benefit. For example, based on empirical study of some of women’s so-far unmeasured physical characteristics, such as their smaller stature or greater endurance, some military tasks could be redesigned in ways that advantage everyone.<sup>32</sup>

Ms. Goodell concludes that the physical strength rationale sacrifices military readiness based on “inaccurate views about women’s and men’s ability.... [and] leads to excluding available personnel who not only would be capable of doing the job, but also might do it better.”<sup>33</sup>

### Other Sources of Information on Ways to Achieve Full Integration of Women into Combat Units

Should the U.S. open ground combat positions to women in the military as DACOWITS has recommended, it would not be the first country to do so. Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Austria and Ireland all have women serving in combat arms positions.<sup>34</sup> Australia recently opened combat jobs to women.<sup>35</sup>

While little doubt remains that women are performing to the standards of their male colleagues, they have faced significant challenges—many of them cultural in nature—integrating into a male-defined and male-dominated workforce.<sup>36</sup> Canada offers the U.S. a particularly useful historical precedent for gender integration in the military. In 1989, the Canadian forces decided to fully integrate women into all positions, including combat arms, over a 10-year period, after a long, deliberative process that considered the roles of women military members dating to a 1970 report from the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.<sup>37</sup>

A study of the experience of other countries was beyond the scope of this report, but DACOWITS may wish to examine this in greater depth in the future.

## Recommendations

This section provides the 2011 DACOWITS recommendations on Assignments and summarizes the reasoning in support of these recommendations. The recommendations and reasonings are based on the research and resources summarized in previous sections within this chapter.

**Recommendation 1:** DoD should eliminate the 1994 combat exclusion policy and direct the Services to eliminate their respective assignment rules, thereby ending the gender-based restrictions on military assignments. Concurrently, DoD and the Services should open all related career fields/specialties, schooling and training opportunities that have been closed to women as a result of the DoD combat exclusion policy and service assignment policies.

### Reasoning

This recommendation repeats the recommendation made by DACOWITS in 2010. As described in DACOWITS’ 2010 Report, that recommendation was grounded in focus group and other research gathered by the Committee in 2009 and additional research supporting the expansion of roles of women gathered by the Committee in 2010. Because DoD is at this time reviewing the 1994 combat exclusion policy in response to a congressional directive to do so, DACOWITS believes it is important to repeat and re-emphasize this recommendation. Moreover,



the Committee continued to find strong support for this recommendation in its focus group and other research conducted this year, including in the final report of the Military Leadership Diversity Commission and the statements of high-ranking DoD personnel. Equally important, the Committee found no insurmountable obstacles to integrating women into currently closed positions.

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**Recommendation 2:** The Services should develop appropriate physical standards by MOS, relevant to the job to be performed.

### Reasoning

The Committee’s 2010 recommendation, repeated above in 2011, would end gender-based restrictions on military assignments. This would mean opening to women combat arms career fields and MOSs that are currently closed, allowing women to compete for all assignments for which they are qualified. The Committee is concerned, however that DoD and the Services, in the review that they are currently undertaking of assignment policies for women, may be evaluating women on an “average” rather than an individual basis and may be using or establishing standards to judge women’s qualifications that have not been validated, even for men. Instead, the selection of military personnel for assignment should be based on individual qualifications, not on gender or other stereotyped concepts of women’s or men’s capabilities. The qualifications should be those necessary to perform the actual duties of a specific military job and any standards for the job, especially physical standards, should be validated to ensure that they accurately predict job performance.

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**Recommendation 3:** In addition to a general increase in quality of pre-deployment weapons training, the Services should ensure that deployed Service members receive appropriate in-country weapons training on the weapons used by the units in which they are serving in theatre.

### Reasoning

Focus group participants, both men and women, described their pre-deployment weapons training as inadequate in some respects. Some reported receiving a bare minimum of training, and some complained about the quality and consistency of the training. Additionally, some women focus group participants reported that, once in theatre, they were issued new weapons on which they had not been previously trained and that weapons training while deployed was inadequate. The Committee believes that weapons training both pre- and post-deployment should be improved for both women and men Service members.

### Best Practices

In the course of examining ways to effectively integrate women into combat units, DACOWITS identified, and wished to suggest, several best practices.

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**Best Practice 1:** Leaders should adopt practices similar to those that were implemented during the process of the repeal of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell, in which they visibly support the integration of women into currently closed positions.

### Comment

Leadership is key to the successful implementation of new policies and programs. It is very apparent that the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines get on board with new programs when the leaders at all levels of the organization support the new policies and programs and actively demonstrate their support, including during briefings and training.

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**Best Practice 2:** The Services should employ a phased approach for a full integration of women into all currently closed combat assignments. At a minimum, several women should be integrated into units at a time. The integration should occur in the combat engineers, artillery, and armor followed by the infantry.

### Comment

The integration of women into combat units will require that some facilities be modified, training be reviewed, and testing be conducted to ensure that job-related standards are employed in selecting Service members for particular assignments. Navy experience in bringing women onto warships supports the practice of integrating women into currently closed units several at a time. The Committee believes that, since women are already present in some MOSs and various levels in the combat engineers and artillery, the transition of women into these units should be relatively easy. The transition into armor and infantry could require more time and effort.

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**Best Practice 3:** DoD and the Services should have more of an emphasis on mentorship, both formal and informal. However, leadership needs to encourage and support informal mentorship.

### Comment

During focus group sessions the importance of mentorship was discussed. Although mentoring is important to all Service members, it will be especially important for the women who are integrated into combat units. Informal mentoring, because it is not done to meet a requirement, can be more appealing because all involved have chosen to be in a mentoring relationship.

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**Best Practice 4:** The Services should assure their recruitment policies fully support the successful integration of women into the combat arms.

### Comment

If restrictions on the assignment of women are lifted as DACOWITS has recommended, it will be important for all Services to attract and recruit both men and women to serve in the combat arms. Some current policies may unnecessarily discourage potential recruits from considering such service – and possibly service in the military itself. For example, the Marines tell recruits that they may be put into the infantry involuntarily, even though such involuntary assignments seldom occur. The Marine Corps should review its policy of involuntarily assigning recruits to infantry.



# Endnotes

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



1. Dr. Rachel Lipari, in her briefing to DACOWITS on the DMDC survey, explained that the survey purposely uses the terms “unwanted sexual contact,” which it defines to include the behaviors prohibited as sexual assault in Article 20 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, instead of “sexual assault,” because sexual assault to some people only means rape and in some respects the military definition of sexual assault is broader than the civilian definition.
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13. For this study, DACOWITS defined junior Service members as those in ranks E1 through E6, and senior Service members as those in ranks E7 through E9 and all officers.
14. Reserves include Army Reserves and Navy Reserves.
15. DACOWITS visited a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) installation in 2011; however, no Assignments topic focus groups were conducted (Wellness topic focus groups were conducted).
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28. For relevant Title VII cases, see *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.*, 401 U.S. 424 (1971); *Albemarle Paper Co. v. Moody*, 422 U.S. 405 (1974); 29 C.F.R. Section 1607 (2009).
29. Goodell (2010), p. 41.
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## Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



# Appendix A DACOWITS Charter

1. **Official Designation:** The Committee shall be known as the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (hereafter referred to as “the Committee”).
2. **Authority:** The Secretary of Defense, under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), and 41 CFR Â§ 102-3.50(d), established the Committee.
3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities:** The Committee shall examine and advise on matters relating to women in the Armed Forces of the United States.
4. **Description of Duties:** The Committee, through the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, shall provide independent advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on matters and policies relating to women in the Armed Forces of the United States.
5. **Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports:** The Committee reports to the Secretary of Defense. Pursuant to DoD policy, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness may act upon the Committee’s advice and recommendations.
6. **Support:** The Department of Defense, through the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, shall provide support necessary for the performance of the Committee’s functions and shall ensure compliance with the requirements of 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2.
7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years:** It is estimated that the annual operating costs, to include travel costs and contract support, for this Committee is \$700,000.00. The estimated annual personnel costs to the Department of Defense are 9.0 full-time equivalents (FTEs).
8. **Designated Federal Officer:** The Designated Federal Officer, pursuant to DoD policy, shall be a full-time or permanent part-time DoD employee, and shall be appointed in accordance with established DoD policies and procedures.  
  
In addition, the Designated Federal Officer is required to be in attendance at all meetings; however, in the absence of the Designated Federal Officer, the Alternate Designated Federal Officer shall attend the meeting.
9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings:** The Committee shall meet at the call of the Designated Federal Officer, in consultation with the Chairperson, and the estimated number of Committee meetings is seven per year.
10. **Duration:** The need for this advisory function is on a continuing basis; however this charter is subject to renewal every two years.
11. **Termination:** The Committee shall terminate upon completion of its mission or two years from the date this charter is filed, whichever, is sooner, unless extended by the Secretary of Defense.



12. **Membership and Designation:** The Committee shall be composed of not more than 35 members who have experience with the military or with women's workforce issues.

Committee members shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense, and their appointments will be renewed on an annual basis. Those members, who are not full-time or permanent part-time federal officers or employees, shall be appointed as experts and consultants under the authority of 5 U.S.C. Â§ 3109, and serve as special government employees.

Generally, Board members will be approved by the appointing authority to serve on the Board for a term of three years with approximately one-third of the membership rotating annually, to the extent possible. With the exception of travel and per diem for official travel, Board members shall serve without compensation.

The Secretary of Defense shall designate the Committee's Chairperson.

Pursuant to DoD rules and regulations, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness may appoint additional experts and consultants to advise the Committee. These experts and consultants, appointed under the authority of 5 U.S.C. Â§ 3109, shall have no voting rights whatsoever on the Committee or any of its subcommittees, and they shall not count toward the Committee's total membership.

13. **Subcommittees:** With DoD approval, the Committee is authorized to establish subcommittees, as necessary and consistent with its mission. These subcommittees or working groups shall operate under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976 (5 U.S.C. Â§ 552b), and other appropriate Federal regulations.

Such subcommittees or workgroups shall not work independently of the chartered Committee, and shall report all their recommendations and advice to the Committee for full deliberation and discussion. Subcommittees or workgroups have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the chartered Council; nor can they report directly to the any Federal officers or employees who are not Committee members.

14. **Recordkeeping:** The records of the Committee and its subcommittees shall be handled according to section 2, General Record Schedule 26 and appropriate Department of Defense policies and procedures. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act of 1966 (5 U.S.C. Â§ 552, as amended).

15. **Filing Date:** 17 April 2010

## Appendix B

# Biographies of DACOWITS Members

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



### **Nancy Duff Campbell** **Washington, D.C.**

Ms. Nancy Duff Campbell is a founder and Co-President of the National Women's Law Center, where she has participated in the development and implementation of key legislative initiatives and litigation protecting women's rights for over 35 years. She was named one of the top 25 heroines whose actions over the last 25 years have advanced women in the workplace by Working Woman magazine, the Woman Lawyer of the Year by the District of Columbia Women's Bar Association, and a Woman of Genius by Trinity College. She received the William J. Brennan Award from the District of Columbia Bar and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and was appointed by Congress to the U.S. Commission on Child and Family Welfare. She is a member of the Princeton University Center for Research on Child Wellbeing Advisory Board, Low-Income Investment Fund Board of Directors, Alliance for National Defense Board of Advisors, among others. She received her A.B. from Barnard College of Columbia University and her J.D. from New York University.

### **COL (Ret) Margarethe Cammermeyer** **USA/USAR/ANG Retired** **Langley, Washington**

Col (Ret) Margarethe Cammermeyer earned her BS from the University of Maryland, her Master of Arts and Ph.D. from the University of Washington. She joined the Army Student Nurse program, ultimately serving 31 years in U.S. Army, Reserve/National Guard. She was stationed in Texas, Georgia, Germany, Virginia, Vietnam and Washington. Military awards and honors include the Bronze Star for Meritorious Service during the Vietnam War, the Meritorious Service Medal, "A" proficiency

designator by Surgeon General. She was named Woman of the Year by the Woman's Army Corps Veterans, and Nurse of the Year by the Veterans Affairs Department in 1985, and Who's Who (various editions since 1991). Following her challenge of the military antigay policy she was awarded the Woman of Power Award, NOW, 1992, Distinguished Alumni Award University of Washington, School of Nursing 1995, Woman Who Dared Award, National Council of Jewish Women 1999, to name a few. She currently runs an Adult Family Home, is the Hospital Commissioner at Whidbey General Hospital, and guest lectures around the country on issues of gay/lesbian social justice.

### **Brigadier General (Ret)** **Julia J. Cleckley, ARNG, Retired** **Fredericksburg, Virginia**

BG (Ret) Julia Cleckley began her military career in the Women's Army Corps (WAC). She resumed her military career and spent 28 years in the active Army National Guard (AGR). She was the first African American female to be promoted to a Brigadier General of the line in the Army National Guard and became the first woman to be assigned as the Chief, Human Resources Officer (G-1) for Army National Guard. She served as a Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee member, and was charged with providing advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on administration of benefits and services for minority veterans. She is the former chair of the Army National Guard Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Committee. General Cleckley is the recipient of many honors to include the Distinguished Service Medal and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Roy Wilkins Renowned Service Award, identified in Cambridge Who's Who Honors Edition 2007 and is a member of the Hunter College Hall of Fame. She received her BA degree in



Psychology and Education from Hunter College and her Masters in Human Resources Management from Golden Gate University. She is currently an inspirational and keynote speaker for Cleckley Enterprises.

**The Honorable Ruby DeMesme  
Oakton, Virginia**

The Honorable Ruby DeMesme has more than 36 years of public service, which includes 22 years of executive level and supervisory experience in the defense industry and 18 months on Capitol Hill with the U. S. Senate. She has served in several Presidential appointed positions in the Department of Defense, the last being Senate confirmed as Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower, Reserve Affairs, Installations and Environment. In addition to co-developing and overseeing myriad DoD Quality of Life Policies and Programs, Hon DeMesme is recognized as an expert in family support, health care and child development programs. She also managed the military appellate review process as well as EEO and Diversity programs and policies. She has served in numerous positions for the U.S Air Force and U.S. Army both stateside and abroad. Hon DeMesme currently works for Deloitte Federal Consulting Solution as Director for Human Capital Innovation Strategy. She received a BA from Saint Augustine College, and M.S.W. from the University of North Carolina. Her major awards and honors include, House of Representatives, Congressional Tribute, Exceptional Civilian Service Award, Tuskegee Airmen Inc. Distinguished Service Award, Vice President Gore’s Hammer Award for Reinventing Government, Meritorious Civilian Service Award, University of North Carolina Distinguished Alumni Award, Air Force Association, Distinguished Leader Award, Superior Civilian Service Award, Exceptional Performance Awards, and the U.S. Army, Commanders Award for Exceptional Service. She is an accomplished author and mentor.

**SgtMajMC John L. Estrada, USMC Retired  
Orlando, Florida**

SgtMaj John L. Estrada is a highly decorated veteran, having served over 34 years in the United States Marine Corps. SgtMaj Estrada started his career as a

recruit at Parris Island, South Carolina in September of 1973. He served in many assignments throughout his career to include serving with all four Marine Aircraft Wings, Drill Instructor duty, Recruiting Duty, Light Armored Reconnaissance Company 1st Sergeant, Infantry Battalion Sergeant Major, Recruit Training Regimental Sergeant Major, and 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Sergeant Major. His long and distinguished career culminated in the assumption of duties as the 15th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps from June 2003 to April 2007 His deployments include the Western Pacific and Arabian Gulf, Operation Southern Watch, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. His personal awards include the Distinguished Service Medal (Navy), Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with three gold stars, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and numerous other awards. He is a Presidential Appointee on the American Battle Monuments Commission, a member on the National Board of Directors for Operation Homefront, a member on the USO National Board of governors executive committee, and Executive Advisory Council member for Mission Readiness. SgtMaj Estrada is currently the Senior Program Manager for Training Solution Inc. (TSI), a wholly owned subsidiary company of Lockheed Martin Corporation in Orlando, FL. In this capacity, John manages 1100 employees employed across the U.S. performing training and logistics missions.

**Holly Hemphill  
Washington, D.C.**

Holly Hemphill began her career as a civilian Management Intern with the Department of Army in the Pentagon. She later served in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs as Staff Assistant for Civilian Personnel Policy and Equal Opportunity and Director of the Office of Employment Policy and Grievance Review. She entered private law practice after working in Paris, France, where she advised an international organization, and after serving as Counsel at the Federal Labor Relations Authority. She was appointed by Secretary of Defense William Perry to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services and named by him to Chair the Committee in 1996. For her contributions, she was

awarded the Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service. She was appointed by the City Council of Alexandria, Virginia to the City’s Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee where she served for nine years and held positions of Vice Chair and Co-Chair. She is a member of the National Advisory Council of the Alliance for National Defense and a Trustee of the Trudeau Institute. She retired as a tax partner with an international law firm at the end of 2008. She now serves as Senior Counsel at the National Women’s Law Center where she advises on tax policy matters and on issues relating to women in the military. She is a member of the District of Columbia Bar, the Virginia State Bar, the California State Bar, and the United States Tax Court Bar. She is a graduate of the Georgetown University Law Center and received her undergraduate degree from University of Oklahoma.

**Honorable Deborah Lee James  
Vienna, VA**

The Honorable Debbie James has served in senior homeland and national security management, policy and program positions in government and the private sector for more than 25 years. She worked for a decade as a professional staff member on the House Armed Services Committee. Ms. James was then appointed by the President and confirmed by the US Senate as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, a position she held for five years. Her awards for government service include the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service (1997 and 1998), Meritorious Civilian Services Medals awarded by Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard (1998). She earned an A.B. in Comparative Studies at Duke University, and a Masters in International Affairs from Columbia University. She was recently appointed SAIC Executive Vice President for Communications and Government Affairs after serving as the SAIC Business Unit General Manager of the C4IT Business Unit, a team of 3000 employees specializing in C4 (command, control, communications and computers) as well as aviation support services for the US Military. She currently serves as the National Advisory Board Chair of the Pentagon Federal Credit Union Foundation (2009-present) and was a member of the USO World Board of Governors (1998-2008).

**Lieutenant General (Ret)  
Claudia J. Kennedy, USA Retired  
Hilton Head Island, SC**

LTG (Ret) Claudia J. Kennedy is the first woman to achieve the rank of three-star general in the United States Army, taking her from the Women’s Army Corps in the late 1960’s to the position of Deputy Chief of Staff for Army Intelligence from 1997-2000. She oversaw policies and operations affecting 45,000 people stationed worldwide with a budget of nearly \$1 billion. During her military career, General Kennedy received honors and awards, including the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal, the Army Distinguished Service Medal, and four Legions of Merits. She served abused and neglected children by chairing First Star, a non-profit corporation. Her book, Generally Speaking, was published in September 2001. She was associated with The White House Project, Population Action International, The Third Way, NeuralStem, Inc., Volunteers of America, the International Spy Museum, Neighborhood Outreach Connection, and was a trustee for Rhodes College. She has consulted for Essex Corporation and for Walmart, Inc. She has appeared as a military consultant for NBC and CNN and as a guest on Larry King Live, Aaron Brown, Wolf Blitzer and ABC’s Good Morning America among others. Claudia remains associated with the American Security Project, Human Rights First, Hilton Head Humane Association and with Opportunity International. She is a commissioner for the White House Fellows Program. General Kennedy has a BA degree in Philosophy from Rhodes College.

**Brigadier General (Ret)  
Maureen K. LeBoeuf, USA Retired  
Cary, North Carolina**

BG (Ret) Maureen LeBoeuf served 28 years in the U.S. Army. She held various staff and leadership positions as well as flying UH-1 helicopters in the continental United States and Europe. She was the Professor and Head of the Department of Physical Education at the United States Military Academy at West Point from 1997 until her retirement in 2004. She was the first woman department head at the United States Military Academy since it was founded in 1802. Maureen graduated from

St. Bonaventure University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education and she holds a Masters and Doctorate of Education, Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Georgia as well as an Executive Diploma in Strategic Leadership, U.S. Army War College and an Executive Diploma in Management and Leadership, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Currently she is the Executive Director of the Feagin Scholars Leadership Program at Duke Sports Medicine and a consultant engaged in executive leadership development.





## Appendix C Installations Visited

Site	Members	Dates
USCG Norfolk, Virginia	LTG (Ret) Claudia Kennedy and BG (Ret) Maureen K. LeBoeuf	8 June 2011
Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia	BG (Ret) Julia J. Cleckley and Ms. Nancy Duff Campbell	9-10 June 2011
Fort Stewart, Georgia	BG (Ret) Julia J. Cleckley and The Honorable Ruby DeMesme	15-16 June 2011
Fort Bragg, North Carolina	The Honorable Deborah Lee James and Ms. Nancy Duff Campbell	22-23 June 2011
Belle Chasse Joint Reserve Base, Louisiana	BG (Ret) Maureen K. LeBoeuf and The Honorable Deborah Lee James	25 June 2011
Army National Guard, St. Petersburg, Florida	SgtMajMC (Ret) John L. Estrada	16-17 July 2011
MacDill AFB, Tampa, Florida	COL (Ret) Margarethe Cammermeyer	18-19 July 2011
Camp Lejeune, North Carolina	BG (Ret) Julia J. Cleckley and Ms. Holly Hemphill	21-22 July 2011

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

## Appendix D **Focus Group Protocols**





# Appendix D-1

## DACOWITS 2011 Wellness Focus Group Protocol – Enlisted Service Members

### Session Information

Location:

Date:

Time:

Facilitator:

Recorder:

# of Participants present for entire session:

# of Participants excused/reasons:

### Focus Group Kick-Off: Key Points to Cover

- Welcome attendees
  - Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion today.
  - I am \_\_\_ (insert name) and I am a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), and this is \_\_\_ (introduce partner), also a member of DACOWITS.
  - Our scribe, \_\_\_ (insert name), is with ICF International, a research firm hired to record these sessions, and s/he is a part of the DACOWITS research team.
- Introduce DACOWITS and its purpose
  - DACOWITS stands for the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services
  - DACOWITS is responsible for advising the Department of Defense on issues relating to integration of women in the Armed Forces
  - Every year, with input from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, DACOWITS selects specific topics on which to prepare a report for the Secretary of Defense.
  - Specific topics that we'll discuss today are your views about:
    - » Sexual assault prevention and services to victims
    - » Sexual harassment prevention and services to victims
- Describe how focus group session will work
  - A focus group is basically just a guided discussion. As the facilitator, I have a set of scripted questions that I'd like to cover today. Our scribe serves as recorder. S/he will generate a transcript of our discussion but will not take down anyone's name.
  - The session will last approximately 90 minutes, and we will not take a formal break. (Restrooms are located xxxxxx)
  - We consider you the experts on this topic; your opinions and attitudes are important to us. While we would like to hear from everyone; feel free to answer as many or as few questions as you prefer.

- Explain ground rules
  - Please speak clearly and one at a time.
  - There are no right or wrong answers.
  - We want to hear the good and the bad.
  - We respect and value differences of opinion.
  - Please avoid sidebar conversations.
  - If I feel we've covered a topic, I'll move us along.
- Emphasize that participation is voluntary and that privacy and confidentiality will be maintained
  - Your participation in this session is voluntary.
  - If you would prefer to excuse yourself from the focus group at this time, you are free to do so.
  - We treat the information you share as confidential. That means we will protect your confidentiality to the extent allowable by law. We will not reveal the names of study participants and no information will be reported that can identify you or your family. In fact, all members of the DACOWITS research team (members and staff) have signed confidentiality agreements pledging to safeguard the confidentiality of the information we gather in these sessions.
  - Your name will not be linked to your answers or to any comments you make during the discussion.
  - There are some behaviors that we are required to report. If we learn that you are being hurt or planning on hurting yourself or others, or others are being hurt or planning on hurting themselves or others, the law requires that we share this information with someone who can help and the appropriate authority.
  - If you would like to speak with your installation's Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, s/he is available to speak with you during or after our focus group session.
  - Also, because this is a group meeting, it is important that each of you agree to respect and protect each other's privacy. We expect you to keep any information you hear today in the strictest of confidence, and not discuss it with anyone outside of this group.
  - We will begin by passing out a couple of short forms.
    - » The first is a participant rights form for you to read. If you do not agree to the terms in the form, we will not be able to include you in the group today. If you stay in the group, this will indicate your consent.
    - » The second is a short mini-survey which we ask you to complete anonymously. Please do not include your name. This mini-survey allows us to compile data on the number and kinds of participants who we spoke to during our site visits.

## Warm-Up/Introductions

Before we get started with our discussion of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military, let's go around the room and please tell us:

1. Your branch of Service (e.g., AC Marine Corps, Army Reserve).
2. How many years you've served in the military.
3. Your career field or MOS.

## Prevalence of SA/SH in Military

So we are all talking about the same thing and can distinguish the two, I'd like to read you the DoD definitions of sexual assault and sexual harassment:

Here is the definition of sexual assault:

*Sexual assault is a crime. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Consent should not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Additionally, consent is not given when a person uses force, threat of force, coercion or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious. Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual sodomy (oral or anal sex), indecent assault (e.g., unwanted and inappropriate sexual contact or fondling), or attempts to commit these acts. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender, spousal relationship, or age of victim.*

Sexual harassment is:

*A form of sexual discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, career, or Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.*

---

**NOTE TO MODERATOR:** If a participant asks for clarification, please note that one can be sexually assaulted by someone they've had sex with before or since willingly; one can be sexually assaulted by a woman as well as a man; and it counts as sexual assault even if you didn't resist or even if you had an orgasm.

Please consider these definitions as we talk about sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military. Let me know if you need me to re-read them at any point during our discussion.

4. Do you think sexual assault is common in the military these days? In your opinion, does it happen frequently, occasionally, or rarely?
5. Since you've been in the service, have you seen any change in how frequently sexual assault takes place?
6. Do you think sexual harassment is common in today's military? In your opinion, does it happen frequently, occasionally, or rarely?
7. Since you've been in the service, have you seen any change in how frequently sexual harassment takes place?
8. Considering what you've told us about the frequency of both sexual assault and sexual harassment, what do you think may account for the changes you describe? If things haven't improved, what are the main barriers to reducing sexual assault and sexual harassment?

## Impact of SA/SH on Performance/Readiness

9. Do you think sexual assault has an impact on a unit's readiness and its ability to perform its mission? If so, how?
10. Do you think sexual harassment has an impact on a unit's readiness and its ability to perform its mission? If so, how?



## Reporting of and Response to SA/SH Incidents

Next, I have some questions about reporting sexual assault and sexual harassment incidents.

11. If a friend experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment, where would you refer that individual to get help and assistance?
12. Do barriers exist that might prevent your friend from being willing to report the incident or get help? If so, describe them.
13. Are you aware of any safeguards or protections that exist to protect an individual who complains of sexual assault or sexual harassment from retaliation for making such a complaint? If so, do you think they are working well?
14. Do you think most victims seek assistance with problems of sexual harassment or sexual assault on or off the base?
15. How do you think reporting an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment has an impact on promotions, assignments or approved training for those who make such reports?
16. Do you think incidences of sexual assault or sexual harassment are under reported? If so, why?
17. What grade (e.g., A, B, C) would you give DoD on current policies and programs to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to punish offenders in the case of both sexual assault and sexual harassment?

---

**Probe:** What grade would you give DoD for addressing the needs of victims of both sexual assault and sexual harassment?

**Probe:** What can DoD do better in these areas?

## Awareness and Effectiveness of Prevention Programs

Now let's talk about the sexual assault and sexual harassment programs that DoD and your service have. All services are required to conduct training programs to help prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault.

18. Based on the training or educational programs designed to help prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment in which you have participated, what aspects of these programs did you find most effective?

---

**Probe:** What programs or services are you referring to, specifically?

19. Did these programs increase your awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual assault? In what ways?
20. Specifically, did these programs equip you with the knowledge and ability to protect yourself from becoming a victim of sexual harassment or assault or to assist someone else to avoid being harassed or sexually assaulted? If so, what type of training was most helpful in this regard?
21. What is the military *not* doing that would help prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment?

## Leadership

22. Can you give some specific examples of what a good leader does to create a no tolerance environment for sexual harassment and sexual assault?
23. How do you think rank and/or position of an individual accused of sexual harassment or sexual assault makes a difference in the action taken in response to that accusation?

## Policies

24. Will the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" have an impact on sexual assault and/or sexual harassment in the military?
25. How would having women serve in ground combat units impact sexual assault and/or sexual harassment in the military?

## Wrap-Up

We have just two final questions.

26. What more would you like to say regarding sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military that we have not yet covered?
27. We're also interested in hearing anything else you'd like to share with us about women in the military. Is there anything else you'd like to talk about with us? We may use your ideas as future topics of DACOWITS research.

---

**MODERATOR:** Pass out resources sheet and reinforce confidentiality.

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking the time to share your knowledge with us. Your thoughts are valuable to our efforts to inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense on these matters.

**Once again, thank you very much!**

# Appendix D-2

## DACOWITS 2011 Wellness Focus Group Protocol – Officers

### Session Information

Location:

Date:

Time:

Facilitator:

Recorder:

# of Participants present for entire session:

# of Participants excused/reasons:

### Focus Group Kick-Off: Key Points to Cover

- Welcome attendees
  - Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion today.
  - I am \_\_\_ (insert name) and I am a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), and this is \_\_\_ (introduce partner), also a member of DACOWITS.
  - Our scribe, \_\_\_ (insert name), is with ICF International, a research firm hired to record these sessions, and s/he is a part of the DACOWITS research team.
- Introduce DACOWITS and its purpose
  - DACOWITS stands for the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services
  - DACOWITS is responsible for advising the Department of Defense on issues relating to integration of women in the Armed Forces
  - Every year, with input from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, DACOWITS selects specific topics on which to prepare a report for the Secretary of Defense.
  - Specific topics that we'll discuss today are your views about:
    - » Sexual assault prevention and services to victims
    - » Sexual harassment prevention and services to victims
- Describe how focus group session will work
  - A focus group is basically just a guided discussion. As the facilitator, I have a set of scripted questions that I'd like to cover today. Our scribe serves as recorder. S/he will generate a transcript of our discussion but will not take down anyone's name.
  - The session will last approximately 90 minutes, and we will not take a formal break. (Restrooms are located xxxxxx)
  - We consider you the experts on this topic; your opinions and attitudes are important to us. While we would like to hear from everyone; feel free to answer as many or as few questions as you prefer.



- Explain ground rules
  - Please speak clearly and one at a time.
  - There are no right or wrong answers.
  - We want to hear the good and the bad.
  - We respect and value differences of opinion.
  - Please avoid sidebar conversations.
  - If I feel we've covered a topic, I'll move us along.
- Emphasize that participation is voluntary and that privacy and confidentiality will be maintained
  - Your participation in this session is voluntary.
  - If you would prefer to excuse yourself from the focus group at this time, you are free to do so.
  - We treat the information you share as confidential. That means we will protect your confidentiality to the extent allowable by law. We will not reveal the names of study participants and no information will be reported that can identify you or your family. In fact, all members of the DACOWITS research team (members and staff) have signed confidentiality agreements pledging to safeguard the confidentiality of the information we gather in these sessions.
  - Your name will not be linked to your answers or to any comments you make during the discussion.
  - There are some behaviors that we are required to report. If we learn that you are being hurt or planning on hurting yourself or others, or others are being hurt or planning on hurting themselves or others, the law requires that we share this information with someone who can help and the appropriate authority.
  - If you would like to speak with your installation's Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, s/he is available to speak with you during or after our focus group session.
  - Also, because this is a group meeting, it is important that each of you agree to respect and protect each other's privacy. We expect you to keep any information you hear today in the strictest of confidence, and not discuss it with anyone outside of this group.
  - We will begin by passing out a couple of short forms.
    - » The first is a participant rights form for you to read. If you do not agree to the terms in the form, we will not be able to include you in the group today. If you stay in the group, this will indicate your consent.
    - » The second is a short mini-survey which we ask you to complete anonymously. Please do not include your name. This mini-survey allows us to compile data on the number and kinds of participants who we spoke to during our site visits.

## Warm-Up/Introductions

Before we get started with our discussion of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military, let's go around the room and please tell us:

1. Your branch of Service (e.g., AC Marine Corps, Army Reserve).
2. How many years you've served in the military.
3. Your career field or MOS.

## Prevalence of SA/SH in Military

So we are all talking about the same thing and can distinguish the two, I'd like to read you the DoD definitions of sexual assault and sexual harassment:

Here is the definition of sexual assault:

*Sexual assault is a crime. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Consent should not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Additionally, consent is not given when a person uses force, threat of force, coercion or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious. Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual sodomy (oral or anal sex), indecent assault (e.g., unwanted and inappropriate sexual contact or fondling), or attempts to commit these acts. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender, spousal relationship, or age of victim.*

Sexual harassment is:

*A form of sexual discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, career, or Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.*

---

**NOTE TO MODERATOR:** If a participant asks for clarification, please note that one can be sexually assaulted by someone they've had sex with before or since willingly; one can be sexually assaulted by a woman as well as a man; and it counts as sexual assault even if you didn't resist or even if you had an orgasm.

Please consider these definitions as we talk about sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military. Let me know if you need me to re-read them at any point during our discussion.

4. What is your general sense of how well the military and your Service are doing in preventing sexual harassment and sexual assault? Is the problem getting better or worse?
5. Do you think current policies and training, and treatment programs are effective in helping both service members and their leaders understand what is and is not sexual harassment and sexual assault?

---

**Probe:** in other words, do these programs help service members understand when and how they might be at risk of being either a victim or a perpetrator of sexual harassment or sexual assault?

6. Do you think these training programs have been effective in creating a climate in which sexual harassment is not tolerated?
7. Do you think these programs have been helpful in helping service members stand up for themselves in a situation that might lead to sexual harassment or sexual assault, or to help others to do so?
8. Are training delivery methods effective for reaching multi-generational service members?
9. How could these training programs be improved?
10. Are there other actions beyond training programs that you recommend be taken to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault? If so, what? Are there obstacles to your engaging in such efforts?

## Reporting of and Response to SA/SH Incidents

**MODERATOR:** Try to ask this next question in a way that is relevant to your audience – i.e., drop reference to types of duty that may not be relevant to your specific participants.

11. How easy or difficult is it for active duty, National Guard, or Reserve member to report a sexual assault or sexual harassment incident 24/7 regardless of location (stateside, deployed, or combat environment)?

**Probe:** If it is hard, what can be done to make reporting easier?

12. Are the safeguards the Services have in place to protect members who report sexual harassment or sexual assault effective in preventing retaliation against those who complain of sexual harassment or sexual assault?
13. Are incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault are underreported? Why or why not?
14. Does reporting an incident of sexual harassment or sexual assault has an impact on the promotion, assignment and/or training of the individual who reports such an incident? In what ways?
15. Does having a claim of sexual harassment or sexual assault made against an individual have an impact on the promotion, assignment, and/or training of that individual? In what way?
16. Does rank or position of an individual accused of sexual harassment or sexual assault makes a difference in the action that is taken with respect to that accusation? In what way?
17. Are sexual harassment and sexual assault being taken seriously in the military, including taking appropriate action against those are accused of sexual harassment or sexual assault? Why or why not?

**Probe:** Considering your answer, what effect does this have on prevention of sexual harassment and sexual assault?

## Metrics

18. How would you rate the adequacy of the current policies in decreasing incidences of sexual assault and sexual harassment?

**Probe:** To what extent do you think they can be adjusted to address changing trends when needed?

## Policies

19. Will the repeal of “Don’t ask, don’t tell policy” have an impact on sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military? In what ways?
20. If women were allowed to serve in ground combat assignments, would this have an impact on sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military? In what ways?

## Leadership

21. What role should leaders play in sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention? Please give specific examples.
22. In relation to leaders being accountable and responsible for the well-being of their troops; should prevention and response to sexual harassment or sexual assault be a performance factor in evaluations?

## Wrap-Up

23. Is there more you would like to add regarding sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military?
24. We’re also interested in hearing anything else you’d like to share with us about issues affecting women in the military. Is there anything else you’d like to talk about with us? We may use your ideas as future topics of DACOWITS study.

**MODERATOR:** Pass out resources sheet and reinforce confidentiality.

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking the time to share your knowledge with us. Your thoughts are valuable to our efforts to inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense on these matters.

**Once again, thank you very much!**



# Appendix D-3

## DACOWITS 2011 Assignments Focus Group Protocol

### Session Information

Location:

Date:

Time:

Facilitator:

Recorder:

# of Participants present for entire session:

# of Participants excused/reasons:

### Focus Group Kick-Off: Key Points to Cover

- Welcome attendees
  - Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion today.
  - I am \_\_\_ (insert name) and I am a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), and this is \_\_\_ (introduce partner), also a member of DACOWITS.
  - Our scribe, \_\_\_ (insert name), is with ICF International, a research firm hired to record these sessions, and s/he is a part of the DACOWITS research team.
- Introduce DACOWITS and its purpose
  - DACOWITS stands for the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services
  - DACOWITS is responsible for advising the Department of Defense on issues relating to integration of women in the Armed Forces
  - Every year, with input from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, DACOWITS selects specific topics on which to prepare a report for the Secretary of Defense.
  - Specific topics that we'll discuss today are your views about:
    - » Assignment of women to combat units
    - » Weapons training provided to women
- Describe how focus group session will work
  - A focus group is basically just a guided discussion. As the facilitator, I have a set of scripted questions that I'd like to cover today. Our scribe serves as recorder. S/he will generate a transcript of our discussion but will not take down anyone's name.
  - The session will last approximately 90 minutes, and we will not take a formal break. (Restrooms are located xxxxxx)
  - We consider you the experts on this topic; your opinions and attitudes are important to us. While we would like to hear from everyone; feel free to answer as many or as few questions as you prefer.

- Explain ground rules
  - Please speak clearly and one at a time.
  - There are no right or wrong answers.
  - We want to hear the good and the bad.
  - We respect and value differences of opinion.
  - Please avoid sidebar conversations.
  - If I feel we've covered a topic, I'll move us along.
- Emphasize that participation is voluntary and that privacy and confidentiality will be maintained
  - Your participation in this session is voluntary.
  - If you would prefer to excuse yourself from the focus group at this time, you are free to do so.
  - You may also excuse yourself at any point during the focus group and, if you wish, to return.
  - We treat the information you share as confidential. That means we will protect your confidentiality to the extent allowable by law. We will not reveal the names of study participants and no information will be reported that can identify you or your family. In fact, all members of the DACOWITS research team (members and staff) have signed confidentiality agreements pledging to safeguard the confidentiality of the information we gather in these sessions.
  - Your name will not be linked to your answers or to any comments you make during the discussion.
  - There are some behaviors that we are required to report. If we learn that you are being hurt or planning on hurting yourself or others, or others are being hurt or planning on hurting themselves or others, the law requires that we share this information with someone who can help.
  - Also, because this is a group meeting, it is important that each of you agree to respect and protect each other's privacy. We expect you to keep any information you hear today in the strictest of confidence, and not discuss it with anyone outside of this group.
  - We will begin by passing out two short forms.
    - » The first is a participant rights form for you to read. If you do not agree to the terms in the form, we will not be able to include you in the group today. If you stay in the group, this will indicate your consent.
    - » The second is a short mini-survey which we ask you to complete anonymously. Please do not include your name. This mini-survey allows us to compile data on the number and kinds of participants who we spoke to during our site visits.

## Warm-Up/Introductions

We are here today to hear about your experiences and thoughts relating to the assignment of women to combat units and about the weapons training provided to women. Before we get started, let's go around the room and please tell us:

1. Your branch of Service (e.g., AC Marine Corps, Army Reserve).
2. How many years you've served in the military.
3. Your career field or MOS.

## Weapons Training

We'll begin with a discussion of your experiences relating to the weapons training women receive, and then we'll move onto a discussion of assigning women to combat units.

4. Tell me a little bit about the weapons training you've received in the past.
  - a. What weapons have you been trained on? How recently?
  - b. What weapons are used in *the unit that you're currently assigned to*? To what extent have you been trained on each of these weapons?
  - c. Thinking about your most recent deployment, what weapons were used in *the unit that you were attached to*? To what extent have you been trained on each of these weapons?
5. Generally speaking, to what extent do you believe that women are receiving adequate weapons training on all weapons used in *the unit they're assigned to*?
  - a. In your experience, do you believe women are being qualified with the *individual weapons* used in the unit they're assigned to?
6. And how adequate do you think the weapons training is that women receive on the weapons organic to the *units they are attached to while deployed*?
  - a. Do you think women are being qualified with the *individual weapons* used in the unit they're attached to while deployed?
7. In what ways, if any, do you think there are differences in the adequacy of the weapons training between men and women?

---

**MODERATOR:** Ask these next questions (12-14) to leader focus groups, with commanding and/or training officers.

8. In your experience, to what extent are men and women who are in MOSs other than combat arms, such as postal clerk, personnel, finance, and supply, qualified or familiar with other weapons organic to the unit to which they are assigned?
9. What steps, if any, do you think need to be taken to ensure that women and men who are not in combat MOSs receive adequate weapons training?
10. What regulations are you aware of in your service that determine what weapons training is available to both women and men?

## Lessons Learned: Integration of Women in Combat Ships and Aircraft

Next I have a few questions for you about your experiences involving the integration of women onto combat ships and aircraft.

11. **ASK WOMEN:** Have you served on a combat ship and/or aircraft? If so, tell me a little bit about it. **If no one in group says yes, then move onto Q13**
  - a. How large was the unit in which you served?
  - b. Roughly how many other women did you serve with?
  - c. What challenges, if any, did you or other women you served with encounter that you think may be related to being a women serving on a combat ship/aircraft?



- d. To what extent do you think these challenges were overcome?
  - e. What measures, if any, were taken to overcome these challenges?
  - f. Did you have a mentor or serve as a mentor to other women while serving on a combat ship or aircraft? If so, to what extent do you think this mentorship helped overcome any challenges related to the integration of women on combat ships or aircraft?
  - g. What lessons do you think were learned from the integration of women onto combat ships and aircraft that may apply to the integration of women into direct ground combat assignments?
12. **ASK MEN:** Have you served on a combat ship and/or aircraft alongside women? If so, tell me a little bit about it. **If no one in group says yes, then move onto Q17**
- a. How large was the unit in which you served?
  - b. Roughly how many women did you serve with?
  - c. What challenges, if any, do you think there were with the integration of women onto combat ships and aircraft?
  - d. To what extent do you think these challenges were overcome?
  - e. What measures, if any, were taken to overcome these challenges?
  - f. To what extent do you think mentorship of men and/or women helped overcome any challenges related to the integration of women on combat ships or aircraft?
  - g. What lessons do you think were learned from the integration of women onto combat ships and aircraft that may apply to the integration of women into direct ground combat assignments?

## Integration of Women in Combat Units

For these next few questions, I want you to imagine for a moment that the current combat exclusion policy were lifted for women in the military, and that women could be assigned to any MOS, including ground combat and special forces. In other words, answer these questions as if women were fully integrated into all combat units.

- 13. What, if any, challenges do you think there would be if women were fully integrated into all combat units?
  - a. Related to the success of the unit and its mission?
  - b. Related to the careers of individual women?
  - c. Related to the well-being of women?
- 14. In what ways do you think mentoring would be useful or helpful if women were fully integrated into combat units?
- 15. What forms of mentoring do you think would be helpful to the successful integration of women into combat units? In other words, what would mentorships “look like” in terms of assisting in the successful integration of women into combat units?
- 16. What do you think would be the overall impact on military readiness if women were to be fully integrated into combat units?

## Wrap-Up

We have just a few final questions before we are done with our discussion.

- 17. What more would you like to say regarding potential challenges to the full integration of women in combat units or regarding the adequacy of weapons training women receive that we have not yet covered?
- 18. We’re also interested in hearing anything else you’d like to share with us about women in the military. Is there anything else you’d like to talk about with us? We may use your ideas as future topics of DACOWITS research.

### *Reinforce confidentiality.*

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions and experiences with us. Your thoughts are valuable to our efforts to inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense on these matters.

**Once again, thank you very much!**

## Appendix E Mini-Surveys





# Appendix E-1 Wellness Mini-Survey

1. What is your branch of Service?
  - Air Force
  - Army
  - Coast Guard
  - Marine Corps
  - Navy
  - Navy Reserve
  - Army Reserve
  - Air Force Reserve
  - Army National Guard
  - Air Guard
  - Marine Corps Reserve
  
2. How long, in total, have you served in the military? PLEASE ROUND TO THE NEAREST YEAR.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Years
  
3. What is your gender?
  - Female
  - Male
  
4. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
  - No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
  - Yes, Mexican/Mexican-American/Chicano
  - Yes, Puerto Rican
  - Yes, Cuban
  - Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
  
5. What is your race? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
  - White
  - Black or African American
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
  - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro)
  
6. What is your marital status?
  - Single, with no significant other
  - Single, but with a significant other (e.g., girlfriend/boyfriend, fiancé)
  - Married
  - Divorced or legally separated
  - Widowed
  
7. What is your pay grade?
  - E1
  - E2
  - E3
  - E4
  - E5
  - E6
  - E7
  - E8
  - E9
  - WO1
  - CW2
  - CW3
  - CW4
  - CW5
  - O1
  - O2
  - O3
  - O4
  - O5
  - O6
  
8. How many times have you deployed in support of OIF/OEF?
  - Once
  - Twice
  - Three times
  - Four times or more
  - Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF
  
9. While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you...
 

	No	Yes Irregularly	Yes Regularly
Physically in a combat theatre of operations?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exposed to the possibility of hostile action from a threat to yourself or your unit?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a situation where you fired your weapon?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a situation where you received hostile fire (e.g., gunfire, rockets/mortars, IEDs, suicide bomber, ambush)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

  - Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF

Thank you for providing this information.

# Appendix E-2

## Assignments Mini-Survey

1. What is your branch of Service?
  - Air Force
  - Army
  - Coast Guard
  - Marine Corps
  - Navy
  - Navy Reserve
  - Army Reserve
  - Air Force Reserve
  - Army National Guard
  - Air Guard
  - Marine Corps Reserve
2. How long, in total, have you served in the military? PLEASE ROUND TO THE NEAREST YEAR.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Years
3. What is your gender?
  - Female
  - Male
4. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
  - No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
  - Yes, Mexican/Mexican-American/Chicano
  - Yes, Puerto Rican
  - Yes, Cuban
  - Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
5. What is your race? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
  - White
  - Black or African American
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
  - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro)
6. What is your marital status?
  - Single, with no significant other
  - Single, but with a significant other (e.g., girlfriend/boyfriend, fiancé)
  - Married
  - Divorced or legally separated
  - Widowed
7. What is your pay grade?
  - E1
  - E2
  - E3
  - E4
  - E5
  - E6
  - E7
  - E8
  - E9
  - WO1
  - CW2
  - CW3
  - CW4
  - CW5
  - O1
  - O2
  - O3
  - O4
  - O5
  - O6
8. How many times have you deployed in support of OIF/OEF?
  - Once
  - Twice
  - Three times
  - Four times or more
  - Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF
9. While in theatre, did you work outside your MOS?
  - Yes, occasionally
  - Yes, frequently
  - Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF
10. While in theatre, did you perform the job assignment that you received prior to deployment?
  - Yes
  - No, my assignment changed after I deployed
  - Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF
11. While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you...
 

	No	Yes Irregularly	Yes Regularly
Physically in a combat theatre of operations?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exposed to the possibility of hostile action from a threat to yourself or your unit?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a situation where you fired your weapon?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a situation where you received hostile fire (e.g., gunfire, rockets/mortars, IEDs, suicide bomber, ambush)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

  - Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF

12. Please rate the adequacy of the weapons training you received prior to your most recent deployment in preparing you for combat. PLEASE SELECT ONE.
- Very adequate
  - Somewhat adequate
  - Neither adequate nor inadequate
  - Somewhat inadequate
  - Very inadequate
  - I did not receive any combat-related training prior to my most recent deployment
  - Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF

Thank you for providing this information.



# Appendix F **Mini-Survey Results**



# Appendix F-1 Wellness Mini-Survey Results

Demographic Profile of Focus Group Participants (N=226)		
Variable	N	Percent*
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	127	56%
Male	99	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Service</b>		
Army	50	22%
Navy	44	20%
Air Force	42	19%
Coast Guard	37	16%
Marine Corps	20	9%
Army National Guard	16	7%
Army Reserve	16	7%
Air Force Reserve	1	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Pay Grade</b>		
E1-E4	42	19%
E5-E6	61	27%
E7-E9	51	23%
O1-O3 (including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers)	39	17%
O4-O6	33	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>		
Non-Hispanic White	104	46%
Non-Hispanic Black	64	28%
Hispanic	26	11%
Other (Non-Hispanic)	26	11%
Missing	6	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	139	62%
Single, but with a significant other	32	14%
Single, with no significant other	28	12%
Divorced or legally separated	25	11%
Widowed	2	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Length of Military Service</b>		
Under 3 years	21	9%
3-5 years	35	15%
6-10 years	47	21%
11-15 years	46	20%
16-20 years	41	18%
More than 20 years	36	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

How many times have you deployed in support of OIF/OEF?		
Response	N	Percent*
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	74	33%
Once	62	28%
Twice	48	21%
Three times	24	11%
Four times or more	16	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you physically in a combat theatre of operations?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	46	30%
Yes, irregularly	37	25%
Yes, regularly	68	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not deployed in support of OIF/OEF	74	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you exposed to the possibility of hostile action from a threat to yourself or your unit?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	43	29%
Yes, irregularly	51	34%
Yes, regularly	55	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not deployed in support of OIF/OEF	74	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you in a situation where you fired your weapon?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	125	84%
Yes, irregularly	12	8%
Yes, regularly	11	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not deployed in support of OIF/OEF	74	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you in a situation where you received hostile fire?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	75	50%
Yes, irregularly	35	23%
Yes, regularly	40	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not deployed in support of OIF/OEF	74	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



## Appendix F-2

# Assignments Mini-Survey Results

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

Demographic Profile of Focus Group Participants (N=199)		
Variable	N	Percent*
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	139	70%
Male	60	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Service</b>		
Army	55	28%
Marine Corps	41	21%
Navy	33	17%
Air Force	28	14%
Army National Guard	26	13%
Army Reserve	15	7%
Navy Reserve	1	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Pay Grade</b>		
E1-E4	45	23%
E5-E6	70	35%
E7-E9	19	10%
O1-O3 (including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers)	45	23%
O4-O6	20	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>		
Non-Hispanic White	96	48%
Non-Hispanic Black	51	26%
Hispanic	38	19%
Other (Non-Hispanic)	14	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	100	50%
Single, with no significant other	42	21%
Single, but with a significant other	35	18%
Divorced or legally separated	22	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic Profile of Focus Group Participants (N=199)		
Variable	N	Percent*
<b>Length of Military Service</b>		
Under 3 years	11	6%
3-5 years	46	23%
6-10 years	60	30%
11-15 years	42	21%
16-20 years	25	13%
More than 20 years	15	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

How many times have you deployed in support of OIF/OEF?		
Response	N	Percent*
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	17	9%
Once	92	46%
Twice	51	26%
Three times	26	13%
Four times or more	13	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you physically in a combat theatre of operations?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	42	23%
Yes, irregularly	32	18%
Yes, regularly	108	59%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	17	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you exposed to the possibility of hostile action from a threat to yourself or your unit?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	45	25%
Yes, irregularly	60	33%
Yes, regularly	77	42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	17	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you in a situation where you fired your weapon?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	150	83%
Yes, irregularly	9	5%
Yes, regularly	22	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	17	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While deployed in support of OIF/OEF, were you in a situation where you received hostile fire?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	83	46%
Yes, irregularly	42	23%
Yes, regularly	57	31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	17	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While in theatre, did you work outside your MOS?		
Response	N	Percent*
No	73	40%
Yes, occasionally	44	24%
Yes, frequently	66	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	16	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While in theatre, did you perform the job assignment that you received prior to deployment?		
Response	N	Percent*
Yes	129	71%
No, my assignment changed after I deployed	53	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	16	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Please rate the adequacy of the training you received prior to your most recent deployment in preparing you for combat.		
Response	N	Percent*
Very adequate	81	44%
Somewhat adequate	57	31%
Neither adequate nor inadequate	15	8%
Somewhat inadequate	13	7%
Very inadequate	12	7%
I did not receive any combat-related training prior to my most recent deployment	5	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>100%</b>
Does not apply; I have not been deployed in support of OIF/OEF	14	-

\*Not every participant answered each question. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

# Appendix G Focus Group Findings





# Appendix G-1

## Wellness Focus Group Findings

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

For 2011, DACOWITS sought to gain insight into the perceptions that Service members hold regarding the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment of women in uniform, DoD's progress in addressing the issue since the 2004 DACOWITS report was released, and the effectiveness of current prevention programs and reporting systems. To gather and analyze the experiences and implications of sexual assault and harassment of women in the military, the Committee and its research contractor, ICF International, developed two focus group protocols – one for enlisted members and one for officers – to capture the views of men and women Service members on these important topics. Consistent with previous DACOWITS reports, DACOWITS also examined existing DoD survey data and other relevant literature and studies on sexual assault and sexual harassment. This chapter highlights the findings from the mini-survey and focus group data collected by DACOWITS during its site visits in 2011.

The chapter begins with a description of the 2011 focus group participants and the qualitative analysis methodology used in the report. The remainder of the chapter highlights specific findings concerning the following domains:

- Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Harassment in the Military
- Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Programs
- Reporting Procedures for Victims of Sexual Assault and Harassment
- Impact of Sexual Assault and Harassment on Unit Readiness

### Characteristics of Focus Group Participants

Understanding the demographic and background characteristics of the focus group participants provides context for the overall themes and individual comments that emerged during the sessions. During summer 2011, DACOWITS conducted a total of 23 focus group sessions on the topic of sexual assault and harassment of women in the military. Focus groups were held at eight locations. A total of 226 participants attended the focus groups, with an average of 10 participants per session, representing the entire Active component (AC) Services and some elements of the Reserve component (RC). The overall demographic characteristics of the focus group participants are presented in Exhibit G1-1.

As Exhibit G1-1 shows, slightly more than half of participants were women (56%). Almost half of study participants were non-Hispanic White (48%), just over a quarter were non-Hispanic Black (28%), and just over ten percent were Hispanic (11%). The Army was the most represented Service, with just under a quarter of participants (22%), and the Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard were more or less equally represented, each comprising between 16 and 20 percent of the study participants. The Marine Corps, Reserves and Army National Guard were also represented, each comprising slightly fewer than ten percent of the study participants. Half of participants were junior or senior Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) (E5-E9) (50%), and almost a third were officers (O1-O6, and including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers) (32%), and over half of study participants had served more than 10 years in the military (54%). The majority of participants were married (62%). For a complete summary of the demographic characteristics of these focus group participants, see *Appendix F-1*.

Exhibit G1-1: Demographic Profile of Wellness Focus Group Participants (N=226)		
Variable	N	Percent*
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	127	56%
Male	99	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Service</b>		
Army	50	22%
Navy	44	20%
Air Force	42	19%
Coast Guard	37	16%
Marine Corps	20	9%
Reserve (Army and Air Force)	17	8%
Army National Guard	16	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Pay Grade</b>		
E1-E4	42	19%
E5-E6	61	27%
E7-E9	51	23%
O1-O3 (including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers)	39	17%
O4-O6	33	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>		
Non-Hispanic White	104	46%
Non-Hispanic Black	64	28%
Hispanic	26	11%
Other (Non-Hispanic)	26	11%
Missing	6	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	139	62%
Single, but with a significant other	32	14%
Single, with no significant other	28	12%
Divorced or legally separated	25	11%
Widowed	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Length of Military Service</b>		
Under 3 years	21	9%
3-5 years	35	15%
6-10 years	47	21%
11-15 years	46	20%
16-20 years	41	18%
More than 20 years	36	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

## Qualitative Analysis Methodology

The methodology used to identify salient themes was consistent with the approach the Committee has employed in the nine previous years under its revised charter. Specifically, the Committee, in partnership with ICF social scientists, first develop focus group and survey instruments tailored to address the research questions of interest to DACOWITS. ICF staff also serves as scribes, accompanying the Committee members/facilitators to each focus group and generating a written transcript from the session. Each individual focus group transcript is then content-analyzed to identify major themes and sub-themes. The purpose of the sample-wide analysis is to determine the most salient comments throughout the focus group sessions, i.e., themes that appear most frequently within and across focus group sessions. These themes are presented in the relevant sections of this chapter, and participant ideas or comments that emerge too infrequently to be regarded as themes, but which are nevertheless noteworthy, are also presented.

## Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Harassment in the Military

In 2004, when DACOWITS last studied the topic of sexual assault and harassment, the Committee found that Service members were generally aware of the extent of the problem of sexual assault, with the large majority of focus groups containing participants who were aware of incidents of sexual assault that had occurred at the unit, on the installation, or on deployment. In 2011, the Committee again sought to understand Service members' perception of the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment, but also explored their views about if and how the prevalence of assault and harassment had changed over time and the impact of DoD policies designed to address these problems. Additional questions addressed their views about the impact future military policy changes (e.g., the repeal of *Don't Ask, Don't Tell*) may have. This section presents focus group findings on the following sub-topics:

- Prevalence of Sexual Assault in the Military
- Prevalence of Sexual Harassment in the Military
- Changes in Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Harassment Over Time

- Effectiveness of DoD Policies on Sexual Assault and Harassment
- Looking to the Future: Potential Impact of Military Policy on Sexual Assault and Harassment

### Prevalence of Sexual Assault in the Military

DACOWITS asked focus group participants, "Do you think that sexual assault is common in the military these days? In your opinion, does it happen frequently, occasionally, or rarely?" Regularly, focus group participants from each branch, rank group, and gender expressed that sexual assault is common.

*"It (i.e., sexual assault) does happen a lot in the combat area."*

— Junior Female Service Member

*"I think it happens frequently, and you hear about it all the time."*

— Junior Female Service Member

*"It happens more than we know. A soldier [assaulted] his spouse just a few weeks ago."*

— Senior Male Service Member

Less frequently, participants reported that sexual assault is not common in the military today.

*"All the years I've been in [the military], I've never run into sexual assault or harassment."*

— Junior Female Service Member

*"I don't think that it is common in the working environment. In the day-to-day work it is frowned upon. In private times outside of working hours there is potential for it, yeah. But in uniform? No."*

— Junior Male Service Member

### Role of Alcohol on Sexual Assault

Occasionally, senior Service members reported that alcohol plays a role in increasing the prevalence of sexual assault.

*"Saturday night people get together, start drinking. Doesn't get reported but it happens. You introduce alcohol and things happen."*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“In my last deployment... I was exposed to at least three cases with sexual harassment/assault and there was alcohol involved.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“It’s alcohol and young girls and old guys who take advantage of (i.e., sexually harass) the weak... and I guess innocent too.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

### Prevalence of Sexual Harassment in the Military

DACOWITS also asked focus group participants “Do you think that sexual harassment is common in the military these days? In your opinion, does it happen frequently, occasionally, or rarely?” Many focus group participants expressed that sexual harassment occurs regularly in the military.

*“I think that we are prepared to have higher tolerance levels. I came in; all these grunts and junior and senior NCOs are making these comments all day, and that tolerance level gets to a certain point, and you kind of become numb on [sexual harassment].”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“In the work center a lot of people tell jokes, and some of them are off-color. Some people do get offended by that, and you gotta say ‘Cool it.’”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“I had [sexual harassment] happen in Afghanistan. This one guy told me that he will come at me, and I was like, ‘You are crazy.’ I’m like, ‘Dude, step off,’ and every day he would follow me, and I’m like, ‘Are you serious?’”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“When you’re working with certain people and your personalities mesh, you don’t think about it, but when a new person comes in, you have to tone it down because they may take it differently.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“[It happens] frequently (several participants agree). I always joke that it is part of your billet description.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

Occasionally, women participants discussed struggles with clearly identifying what constitutes sexual harassment.

*“Harassment is... what it is to one person is not the same [thing] to another person. There is [sic]...gray areas in between...”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“When I came in, I didn’t even know what would be considered harassment. I look back and I’m like, ‘Damn, that was harassment. She didn’t just not like him, she was uncomfortable around him.’”*

— Junior Female Service Member

Less frequently, men Service members expressed that sexual harassment is not prevalent in the military.

*“What I’ve seen over the years, it’s mostly a lot of flirting [; not sexual harassment].”*

— Junior Male Service Member

A few men focus group participants stated that sexual harassment wasn’t an issue in the military and was instead a form of hazing.

*“..there’s hazing involved... to some extent. It’s taken on as a joke, but there’s always a group that doesn’t want to be involved...”*

— Junior Male Service Member

### Changes in Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military over Time

#### Changes in Sexual Assault Prevalence

In most of the focus groups, there were participants who believed the prevalence of sexual assault in the military has stayed the same over time.

*“It is hard to say because a lot of people don’t report it. I would say that [the prevalence of sexual assault] is about the same.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“As we increase the awareness and training the reporting has gone up which would say that crime has gone up, but I don’t think that’s true...as we train more, the reporting goes up. On the other side of the coin, the prosecution of the crime has been woeful – it’s a ‘he said-she said’ in a court of law. So I think the occurrence may not have changed over time, but the reporting over time has.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“We had this training this one month, and then we still had an incident later that month. I don’t see the numbers going down or up because we’re talking about it more often. It is an action that people take because of alcohol or depression and you can’t just change those things.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“I think that it depends on where you are stationed. You see different things from base to base.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

A few groups contained senior men Service members who stated that sexual assaults have increased over time due to a change in the “type” of men joining the military today.

*“I think it has risen up based on the quality of soldiers that are coming into the military. With respect to that, it used to be harder to get into the military. Nowadays, you get infantry soldiers. They work around men a lot. Then they come and work around women. And they don’t know how to communicate.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“After 9/11, you have all walks of life coming in.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

Less frequently but of note, some senior women Service members explained that sexual assault was a reason for junior women Service members wanting to leave the military.

*“I had one who was sexually assaulted...and [the perpetrator] did not get kicked out, and she just wants to get out now.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

#### Changes in Sexual Harassment Prevalence

With respect to harassment, Service members frequently stated that sexual harassment persists in the military, and there has been no change in its prevalence over time.

*“I can’t say if it’s gotten better or worse. It’s never been directed towards me, and if they are just talking and it’s not including me I won’t take offense to it.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“Yeah, [sexual harassment] is still there. It was more prevalent earlier, but maybe as I’ve gotten more senior I’ve stopped [seeing it]. I felt it coming up in rank.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

Less common was the opinion that the prevalence of sexual harassment has increased over time. Some participants who held this view attributed the increase to today’s longer deployments, and others felt it was due to a flagging commitment of leadership to prevent harassment.

*“Before we had good leadership, and now people just forget and say things they shouldn’t.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“I think it has [increased] – especially the 15 month deployments. Because you separate the soldiers (pause)... the males from their families. Some soldiers tend to get complacent and they will say or do things that they know they aren’t supposed to.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

There were some men Service members in the focus groups who expressed that the climate has become less tolerant of sexual harassment of women in the military.

*“I think based on 30 years ago; we’ve come a long way. Back then there weren’t many women... The overall climate has changed in regards to education and enforcement compared to 30 years ago.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

### Sexual Assault and Harassment and Junior Service Members

Occasionally, focus group participants discussed the role rank plays in sexual assault and harassment, sharing that junior Service members are more likely to be sexually harassed or assaulted than senior Service members.

*“It happens between the lower pay ranks (all participants agree with this), O3 on down, and E5 on down. Maybe the supervisors need a different sort of training to look out for those things.”*

— Junior Male Service Member



*“You’ll see – as a junior Marine – oh yeah. You’ll see it a lot – the higher ones harassing the lower ones.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

A few senior women attributed this disparity to issues of low self-esteem among today’s junior women Service members. They voiced the possibility that today’s junior women Service members enter the service with lower self-esteem than previous generations of women and that a lack of confidence may play a role in sexual assault and harassment of younger women personnel.

*“And it (i.e., issues that may lead to increased sexual assault or harassment) also has to do with self-esteem as well. There isn’t a woman in this room who had low self-esteem when they came in, but these women who come in now do have low self-esteem, and when you see a guy giving them a little bit of attention, they don’t know what to do with that, and when he takes it a little too far...”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“I don’t know if we need to instill more confidence in our younger members. Confidence is a huge part of prevention; they might not feel there’s anybody they can go to. There’s guys showing them attention and that might not be the guy that they want. There might need to be a separate training for younger members.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

### Effectiveness of DoD Policies on Sexual Assault and Harassment

Focus group participants discussed the effectiveness of DoD policies and programs in addressing the needs of victims and ensuring offenders are appropriately punished.

#### Meeting the Needs of Victims

DACOWITS members first covered the needs of victims, asking “What grade would you give DoD for addressing the needs of victims of both sexual assault and sexual harassment?” Frequently, men Service members gave DoD high marks for providing ample resources to victims, while women Service members were divided on the effectiveness of DoD policies.

*“A’ for effort. But implementation depends on the ranks... it’s all waivers and favors. Everything in the military is that way.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

*“A.’ [Sexual assault and harassment victims] have so many resources – it’s good.”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

*“A’. The support structure is there.”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

*“It’s changing everyday as we do training. I think we are doing good things. I’d have a hard time giving a grade. Could we do better? Probably.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

In contrast to men Service members’ generally positive impression of the effectiveness of DoD policies, women study participants occasionally gave DoD low marks for the resources and support provided to victims of sexual harassment and assault.

*“Yeah, we have the programs, but past the company levels, getting to exercise our rights... execution - yeah I’d give them an ‘F.’”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“To be honest, I’m not too sure. I’d go with ‘C.’”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

Less frequently, women focus group participants expressed that the DoD policies were effective in assisting victims of sexual assault.

*“I would go with an ‘A.’ As far as (the local hospital), they stay with these cases a lot; they get them the counseling they need and they do have some good programs for them.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“As far as victims, a ‘B,’ only because I know all the programs and service that are out there for the victims.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

### Ensuring Offenders are Appropriately Punished

DACOWITS members next asked focus group participants to discuss the effectiveness of DoD policies and programs in ensuring offenders are appropriately punished. DACOWITS members asked, “What grade (e.g., A, B, C) would you give DoD on current policies and programs to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to punish offenders in the case of both sexual assault and sexual harassment?”

Men Service members gave varying marks to the DoD for effectively punishing offenders.

*“I think that I’ll give it an ‘A’ because [sexual assault and harassment reporting] goes right up [to the necessary supervisor].”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

*“I think to make a better grade, the punishment needs to be more severe [so] that it can screw up their lives.”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

Some women Service members gave the DoD relatively low marks for ensuring that offenders are appropriately prosecuted.

*“I give the DoD an ‘A’ for doing what they need to do. As far as prosecuting, I give them a ‘Z’.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“In my personal opinion, as far as offenders go, [I’d give DoD] a ‘C.’”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“My personal experience, with my command, I would give it an ‘A.’ They did all the steps, but if you look at the stats overall, I would give it a ‘C.’”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

### Looking to the Future: Potential Impact of Military Policy on Sexual Assault and Harassment

#### Impact of the repeal of “Don’t ask, Don’t tell”

DACOWITS members asked, “Will the repeal of the ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ policy have an impact on sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military? In what ways?” Frequently, Service members

discussed the impact of *Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell* (DADT) on man-on-man harassment. Occasionally, Service members discussed the impact of DADT on woman-on-woman and man-on-woman harassment. In all cases, Service members indicated that any initial increase would be followed by an eventual decline in sexual assault and harassment.

*“I think that it will be more of a male issue than it would be for females.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“Yes (1 other participant agrees), in one way, harassment between males and males and females and females will increase if those individuals happen to come out. But as this generation filters out the next generation, I think it will be less of a big deal.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“I think it will go up. There’s a dynamic culture change that will occur. I’ve read that it’s not an issue within the military, but in the short term I think there will be an increase with harassment claims, within the realm.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

*“Yes, with the DADT [repeal], I think that it will [lead to] more harassment.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

#### Impact of Women in Ground Combat

Focus group participants were asked, “If women were allowed to serve in ground combat assignments, would this have an impact on sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military? In what ways?” Frequently, study participants expressed that the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment on women would increase if they served in combat, although not necessarily due to being in theatre.

*“[Yes, sexual assault and harassment would increase.] I can only imagine how women overseas or in Iraq, the things going on, the stress and the time over there – how bad it is with this.”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

*“I can see how [women in combat] potentially heightens the threat. It’s a different story when someone’s orders say ‘indefinite’ and you only see two females. I’m sure things can go wrong.”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

*“When I was on my IA [Individual Augmentee Assignment], when you brought a group to the base, certain behaviors changed because of [women coming in], and it will happen...just because [women] are simply present, they are going to be available to be sexually harassed – on subs, on detachment, anywhere.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“It (i.e., women in combat) could have a big impact on harassment and assault. Because we serve with Joes and we smoke and joke, now you put a women in there – that can now be considered harassment.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

### Summary: Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Harassment in the Military

#### Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Harassment Today and Over Time

DACOWITS asked focus group participants a series of questions about the prevalence of sexual assault in the military. Regardless of Service branch, focus group participants reported that sexual assault is prevalent in the military, although several junior Service members stated that they did not feel sexual assault occurs on a regular basis. Focus group participants often expressed that the prevalence of sexual assault has remained the same over time. Several senior Service members cited alcohol and a perceived decline in the moral character or “quality” of those entering the Services as reasons why the prevalence of sexual assault has increased. Some participants reported that junior Service members are typically harassed more than senior Service members – by both their junior peers and higher-ranked superiors. A few senior women Service members questioned if low self-esteem may make some junior women Service members more susceptible to sexual assault. These women also discussed the significant role sexual harassment and assault can play on junior Service members’ desire to leave the military.

DACOWITS asked focus group participants a series of questions about the prevalence of sexual harassment in the military. Most focus group participants stated that sexual harassment is prevalent in the military today, and most indicated that its prevalence had not

changed over time. Several women focus group participants expressed difficulty discerning what constitutes sexual harassment, while a small number of men Service members shared they felt sexual harassment was not prevalent in the military and is instead a form of hazing. Several Service members expressed that the prevalence of sexual harassment may be declining due to increased prevention training, while others felt the decline could instead be attributed to a shift toward a climate less tolerant of sexual harassment. Several Service members stated that sexual harassment prevalence has not declined because leadership has not taken a strong enough stance against sexual harassment.

#### Effectiveness of DoD Policies and Programs

When asked to rate the effectiveness of DoD policies and programs on addressing the needs of victims of sexual harassment and assault, responses differed widely and often by gender. The majority of men Service members gave the DoD high marks for providing ample resources to victims, while women Service members were divided on the effectiveness of DoD policies and programs, with the majority offering low grades. Men and women focus group participants were more evenly divided when asked to rate the effectiveness of DoD programs and policies on punishing offenders, with the majority of both genders giving the DoD low marks for their handling of the punishment of offenders.

#### Potential Impact of Future Military Policy Changes

When asked to consider the impact that the repeal of DADT will have on sexual assault and harassment, the majority of focus group participants discussed the impact the policy change will have on man-on-man harassment. Of the minority of Service members that discussed the impact the repeal will have on women, most felt that there would be an initial increase in sexual assault and harassment followed by an eventual decline.

DACOWITS asked focus group participants whether sexual assault and harassment would increase if women served in combat, and the majority of Service members from both genders felt that it was likely that sexual assault and harassment would be more prevalent, although not necessarily due to being in theatre. The

majority also indicated that the initial increase in sexual misconduct would be followed by an eventual decline once women were integrated into ground combat roles.

### Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Programs

DACOWITS asked focus group participants to discuss their experiences with sexual assault and harassment prevention training programs and how effective these programs were in raising awareness and educating Service members about how to respond and where to seek help if necessary. This section discusses focus group findings concerning the following sub-topics:

- Awareness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Training
- Effectiveness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Training
- Role of Leadership in Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention

#### Awareness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Training

DACOWITS focus group participants discussed their awareness of sexual assault and harassment prevention training, and nearly all reported that they had undergone some form of training.

*“[The training] is more frequent and structured.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“We all have the training we have to do.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“There’s much more awareness [of the impact of sexual assault and harassment] now.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“With SAPRO (Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office), you have to repeat the training over and over again.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

### Effectiveness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Training

With some exceptions, Service members tended to believe that sexual assault and harassment prevention training has effectively educated the military about preventing sexual assault and harassment and has also provided victims and allies with the necessary tools to report an assault or harassment.

*“I don’t so much know if it has gone down, but we have been trained better to deal with [sexual harassment].”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“I think that now it starts with the recruiting station. They will sit you down and talk about it. [The military has] realized it is a problem... training and starting with prevention, but it also includes how to submit a report... If we change on all levels, from reporting to submitting, it will get better.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“I think [the number of sexual assaults] went down due to all the ‘death by PowerPoint’ and trainings.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

#### Effective Aspects of Sexual Assault and Harassment Training

Focus group members were asked, “Based on the training or educational programs designed to help prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment in which you have participated, what aspects of these programs did you find most effective?” Frequently, Service members discussed that they felt skits and in-person presentations were the most effective forms of sexual assault and harassment training, as well as small group discussions.

*“They had a... play. It was great. After every skit, they asked the audience if they felt like it was sexual assault or sexual harassment. It resulted in all kinds of feedback.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“People pay more attention when there are people talking about [sexual assault and harassment prevention] in person.”*

— Junior Male Service Member



“...you can say, ‘What are you going to do in this scenario? What do you think this person’s buddy should do?’ And walk them through it and show them what the right thing to do is. Otherwise, people will not be paying attention.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

“[The military] needs to move away from the AKO (web-based) training. When they came into the gymnasium [for training], it stopped being so PC. It was so real.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“...a smaller group...that helps. The whole battalion of 1,000 people – they pack us all in at DHHB, and that soldier in the corner isn’t paying attention. He’s not interacting.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

Rarely, junior women Service members expressed that small group discussions were not an effective form of training.

“...the [sexual assault and harassment prevention] discussions become a joke, and everyone makes jokes about it.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

### Ineffective Aspects of Sexual Assault and Harassment Training

Focus group members were also asked, “Based on the training or educational programs designed to help prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment in which you have participated, what aspects of these programs did you find least effective?” Typically, Service members stated that large group training was the least effective method. Some participants mentioned that they found the repetitive nature of the trainings to be increasingly less effective.

“We’ve heard it so many times that we know it.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

“The [sexual assault and harassment prevention] trainings are all the same, just change a few words.”  
— Junior Male Service Member

“We watched videos when I went through from the early ‘90s and that doesn’t fit with our generation. That doesn’t fit with the digital age.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“If you teach en masse, you’re not going to reach people at the individual level. You’re not going to reach the people that really need it...mass education will not help the girl who is falling in love with the guy who raped her...”  
— Senior Male Service Member

Occasionally, men Service members shared they felt training would not effectively prevent sexual assault and harassment.

“With all the training, the awareness is higher, but some people will just do it (i.e., commit sexual assault or harassment). With the awareness, you can stop a lot of people from doing it. [But] there will be people with those personalities and tendencies, and they will do it [regardless].”  
— Junior Male Service Member

“If someone thinks that it is okay to sexually assault someone, the briefing is not going to change [their] mind – those classes are not going to stop it.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

“It’s still going to happen regardless; there’s still going to be that one person [who commits sexual assault or harassment].”  
— Junior Male Service Member

A few participants discussed prevention tools which they believed to be ineffective, either because the response was delayed or because the tool did not help to actually address the issue.

“They gave us a rape whistle and bells. They were helpful, but it was after the fact. I think they wait too long.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“...they definitely treat it as a crime, but they are not preventing the problem. So, in Iraq, there is an assault, and all the females have to have a battle buddy, but the males just walk around just fine.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

### Bystander Intervention Training

Of the eight focus groups that discussed bystander intervention training, seven groups had one or more Service members who reported participating in this specific form of prevention training. Among those who had participated, opinions about the training were mixed; with most reporting that bystander intervention training was effective.

“[Bystander intervention training] is like that commercial, someone steps in and steps up and pays it forward. It’s like, ‘You can’t do this,’ it’s like a constant thing.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“Awareness is the first thing... I knew what to expect. As soon as you see it, you need to stop it.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“I believe that with this [bystander intervention] training, people will actually look out for each other that they work with.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

Less frequently, focus group participants indicated that they felt bystander intervention training did not help them feel more compelled to act to help prevent sexual harassment or assault.

“If you are out at a bar and see someone that you don’t know – some lady getting drunk – it is hard to come up to them. And if you see someone in the uniform, you’re more likely to help. But out in town, you’re not like, ‘She looks like a Marine. I’ll say something to them.’”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“[In bystander awareness training] I think that you learn that it’s easier to just walk away and say that you didn’t see it.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

### Role of Leadership in Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention

The influential role senior Service members play in sexual assault and harassment prevention was a dominant theme in the focus groups. Service members expressed a desire for leadership to actively participate in sexual assault and harassment prevention training and to “walk the walk” by serving as positive role models to create a zero-tolerance environment for sexual assault and harassment.

“It’s not just the video and training, it’s seeing General X sharing and talking about it. It’s an open door. From the leadership, to see that dynamic come into play – it’s great.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

“When the chain of command doesn’t tackle [sexual assault and harassment], that’s why things happen.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“No matter how good the training is, it’s up to the command... Someone made a comment about [someone else’s] butt, and the supervisor took action right away, and I think that had a positive consequence in that he was serious about it.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“When you put someone in a command position, it needs to be instilled in them just the same as the warrior creed [is instilled in them]. We know it; it needs to be instilled in the command like it’s no joking matter. [The command] needs to be [held] accountable.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

A few senior Service members discussed the culture they must create as leaders to help combat sexual assault and harassment.

“The command has to provide the culture that is acceptable and a culture where it is safe to report, and where the person reporting has to feel that they are safe and are comfortable reporting it.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“It’s zero-tolerance, so it’s up to us to make the corrective action in a case-by-case basis. If a case arises it’s up to us to implement the correct punishment based on the crime they have done.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

### Summary: Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Programs

This section summarizes the findings on Service member awareness and effectiveness of sexual assault and harassment prevention programs.

#### Awareness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Training

Most DACOWITS focus group participants reported that they have received some form of sexual assault and harassment prevention training.



In focus groups that covered the topic of bystander intervention training, many of the participants were aware of that specific program.

### Effectiveness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention Training

DACOWITS explored the extent to which the current sexual assault and harassment prevention trainings are perceived as effective at addressing the needs of Service members. Within those focus groups that discussed prevention training, the majority of participants indicated that the training has effectively educated Service members about resources available to victims of sexual assault or harassment. Some participants said that prevention training is part of a larger culture shift, and that this training will contribute to an eventual decline in sexual assault and harassment. Of the eight focus groups that discussed the effectiveness of bystander intervention training, the majority of participants felt it was an effective form of sexual assault and harassment prevention training.

DACOWITS asked Service members what methods lead to effective program delivery. Most often, focus group participants felt that in-person presentations, small group discussions, and plays were the most effective forms of sexual assault and harassment prevention programming. A small number of women Service members instead expressed that small group discussions were seen as a joke by man Service members. Most often, Service members shared that large group presentations and online training were the least effective forms of sexual assault and harassment prevention. A small number of Service members discussed sexual assault and prevention tools that they perceived as ineffective, including rape whistles and women buddies. A few man Service members shared they did not feel any prevention training could successfully eradicate all sexual assault and harassment.

### Role of Leadership in Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention

Focus group participants frequently discussed the important role leadership plays in preventing sexual assault and harassment. Service members expressed a desire for leaders to serve as role models by treating sexual assault and harassment prevention seriously

– both in their daily lives and by participating in prevention trainings.

## Reporting Procedures for Victims of Sexual Assault and Harassment

DACOWITS asked participants about awareness and effectiveness of reporting procedures for victims of sexual harassment and assault.

This section discusses focus group findings concerning the following sub-topics:

- Awareness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Reporting Procedures
- Effectiveness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Reporting Procedures
- Effectiveness of Safeguards to Protect Those Who Report from Retaliation
- Perceived Justice

### Awareness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Reporting Procedures

DACOWITS members asked focus group participants: “If a friend experienced sexual assault or harassment, where would you refer that individual to get help or assistance?” Frequently, Service members were able to identify available resources for victims.

“...people know what to do. It’s everywhere – SAPRO is everywhere.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“You have a lot of options. Chaplain, Supervisor, SARC (Sexual Assault Response Coordinator).”  
— Junior Male Service Member

“I would take them to the Chaplain, and take it from there, and if the Chaplain thinks that she should take it further... I haven’t been in a situation where this happened to me or to someone I know. I would tell them to talk to the Chaplain.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“Most commands have Victim Advocates. They are on duty 24/7, and someone will be on the phone all week. They have a duty SAVRON; resources are out there if something happens, no matter the time of day.”  
— Junior Male Service Member

Less frequently, the groups contained women participants who were unclear about how to connect with available resources in the case of sexual assault or harassment.

“We just got back from deployment. I’m sure there is someone, but we just don’t know because we just got back.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“I wouldn’t know who to report [sexual assault] to at this command, and I don’t think everyone knows who to report it to other than your immediate supervisor.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“I was thinking the chain of command? That’s the only place I can think [of].”  
— Junior Female Service Member

### Awareness of Restricted Reporting Options for Victims of Sexual Assault

A few woman study participants discussed their awareness of restricted<sup>1</sup> reporting options for victims of sexual assault. Senior woman Service members expressed uncertainty about whom to contact to correctly submit a restricted report.

“You have [restricted reporting] in theory, but in practice it is not working right. You have posters all over, but there is no name about who to contact for more information.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“I wouldn’t know who to report it to (i.e., sexual assault using restricted reporting) at this command, and I don’t think everyone knows who to report it to other than your immediate supervisor.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

### Awareness of Reporting Procedures for Troops Serving Outside the United States

Occasionally, focus group participants expressed a lack of knowledge about how to report sexual harassment or assault when serving with foreign troops.

<sup>1</sup> Restricted reporting is an option for victims of sexual assault who prefer to confidentially disclose the crime via one of four reporting avenues (SARC [Sexual Assault Response Coordinator], VA [Victim Advocate], Health Care Provider, or Chaplain) without triggering the official investigative process.

“For the Reserves, we’ve had incidents overseas; we have very few Reservists overseas, and we don’t really know what to do... and there was no policy for dealing with that [were there to be an incident]. As a Reservist, I had no idea what to do if that were to happen. There’s a lack of info, especially as [Reservists] are there only a weekend or two a month.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“I’ve seen [sexual harassment] happen more openly and actively with the French and others [overseas troops] more openly than here.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

“For the Reserves, we’ve had incidents overseas; we have very few Reservists overseas, and we don’t really know what to do...”  
— Senior Male Service Member

## Effectiveness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Reporting Procedures

### Strengths of Sexual Assault and Harassment Reporting Procedures

DACOWITS asked focus group participants for their views on the effectiveness of sexual assault and harassment reporting procedures. Occasionally, Service members expressed that as awareness of available reporting options has increased, victims have become more comfortable submitting reports of sexual assault and harassment.

“I think that as females become aware of reporting procedures, more are being reported and come to light, versus when there was less training.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

“I think we’ve done well and things are starting to be reported a bit more. Maybe at the start of my career, people wouldn’t report things but with the shift in attitude, they are more likely to report things now.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“I also think that the reporting that goes on today is a lot easier than it was 20 years ago. It allows us to deal with harassment and assault.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“Used to be if I tell on them [the victims], I’ll be prosecuted. Now it’s more likely that they can tell someone who will initiate the process for them.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

### Barriers to Reporting

Focus group participants were asked, “Do barriers exist that might prevent your friend from being willing to report the incident or get help? If so, describe them.” Service members listed a number of barriers to reporting, including a lack of trust in the reporting system, fear of stigma, fear of reprimand for underage drinking, and conflicted feelings of victims toward attackers.

#### Lack of Trust in the Reporting System

Frequently, Service members mentioned that a lack of trust in the reporting system served as a barrier to reporting sexual misconduct.

*“...there is no confidentiality.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“...if [sexual assault or harassment victims] don’t trust the advocate... what if the problem is the victim advocate, you know? It’s a big trust issue.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“People know what’s wrong, but there is not trust in the system for reporting. I had a woman who was having an issue, and instead of reporting it through [our] system, she filed a civil restraining order, both for the benefit of herself and the person on the other [end].”*

— Senior Female Service Member

This lack of trust in the reporting system leads some victims to seek resources off-base, as was occasionally discussed by focus group participants.

*“I would imagine they go off[-base], as a safer bet if you want to keep it confidential.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“I would say that 90% of the time, the programs [to help victims of sexual harassment or assault] on-base are useless. I understand why they’re there, but they don’t work.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“[Victims of sexual assault go] off-base. Because they feel they have more confidentiality.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

Some of the junior Service member focus groups discussed the effectiveness of the restricted reporting option for victims of sexual assault. Several participants within these groups expressed concern that although the restricted reporting process is supposed to be confidential it is still possible for victim information to leak out.

*“... if you’re junior [Service member] and you don’t know all the options and she [the victim] says something to her supervisor because she trusts her, and now you can’t go restricted, and now everyone is going to know...”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“It can be a little harder to find out if it’s a restricted case, but even if it is, [officers] can use their rank to find out.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

[Moderator: There is restricted reporting that is meant for the victim without having to report... Are people going to find out anyhow?]

*“I think so – it depends on the connections and who people may tell.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

#### Fear of Stigma after Reporting Sexual Assault and Harassment

Occasionally, study participants discussed how the stigma of reporting, including the possibility of being “singled out” after making a report, may lead to underreporting.

*“The stigma of reporting is still there. Some people are just lucky enough to have leadership to try to protect them from the stigma.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“I would say the lack of reports [of sexual harassment] is [from] not wanting to cause problems or being seen as someone who people can’t talk and trust while they’re around. So barriers shift and that’s how you get into a group of people who end up talking about that (i.e., making comments that may be perceived as sexual harassment).”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“No one wants to be that person who stands up when everyone else is not reporting these incidents.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

Less frequently, focus group participants reported that the stigma of reporting sexual assault or harassment had declined.

*“The stigma of reporting isn’t as bad as it used to be.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

#### Fear of Reprimand for Underage Drinking

A few woman focus group participants discussed how victims of sexual assault or harassment that were engaged in underage drinking may be reluctant to report the incident due to fear of being reprimanded for illegal behavior.

*“I think a lot of people are just scared. I hear about it in dorms, and people are scared because they have been drinking underage, and they are nervous to put themselves in trouble. So they won’t report because they don’t want to get in trouble.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“If you were involved with underage drinking, they don’t want the double jeopardy; they don’t want to get involved with that. They won’t report anything where they feel that they’ll find out that I was drinking and I’ll go to mast, and they’ll think I’m a dirtbag.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

#### Conflicted Feelings of Victims Toward Attackers

Rarely, men Service members discussed how conflicted feelings of victims toward their attackers may serve as a barrier to reporting sexual assault.

*“Might be that the female really liked the guy. She doesn’t want to not have contact with him.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

#### Effectiveness of Safeguards to Protect Those that Report from Retaliation

Focus group participants were asked, “Are the safeguards the Services have in place to protect members who report sexual harassment or sexual assault effective in preventing retaliation against those who complain of sexual harassment or sexual assault?” Although not discussed at length in many groups, some women Service members expressed that safeguards in place did not prevent retaliation.

*“I think [the underreporting of sexual misconduct is caused by the] fear of repercussion. If I got into trouble with someone in my unit, there’s no way to separate us if I were to report him.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“Vigilante justice does happen – we’re all soldiers but we’re also humans.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“Yeah, it could happen in your evaluation. There are ways to do it that are not so direct.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

Less frequently, participants expressed that safeguards that are in place were effective in preventing retaliation by offenders.

*“I think [that safeguards are effective], because with restricted or unrestricted [reporting], if something happens it is kept up, and the CO (Commanding Officer) handles it, and months pass and people transfer, and you don’t know that it happens.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

#### Perceived Justice

Focus group participants frequently expressed a lack of clear understanding of the military’s stance on offender punishment, and they often stated they felt offender punishments were inconsistent.

*“The variety of punishment is out of this world.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“The measures are there but are not being enforced or implemented.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“It’s devastating when a senior person doesn’t follow through on what policy is.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“We see all these videos on how [punishment of offenders] happens, but it never shows the outcome after the fact.”*

— Junior Female Service Member



*“...it depends on who you know, and what you’re doing. So, if you’re accused of assaulting and you’re seen as being good, it’s going to be different than if you were already seen as a dirtbag...”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“Yeah, what happens to them after they are prosecuted?”*

— Junior Male Service Member

Occasionally, men participants provided suggestions on how to use offender punishment as a prevention tool.

*“Seeing actual results will make soldiers reflect on their actions more so than the threat of action.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“To help prevent [incidents]... showing what happens to the perpetrator in the end. They are separated by the command, and everything after that is hearsay, so that would help with deterrence.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“Use examples without using someone’s name. We get soldiers, 5 or 7 years and they can remember that joker who did X, Y, Z. That will keep people from violating policies.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

### Perception of Punishment Differences by Rank

DACOWITS asked focus group participants, “Does the rank or position of an individual accused of sexual harassment or sexual assault make a difference in the action that is taken with respect to that accusation? In what way?” Junior and senior Service members expressed opposing views on punishment differences for sexual harassment and assault offenders by rank. Junior Service members expressed that higher-ranked Service members are given more leniency than junior Service members. In contrast, senior Service members stated that higher ranked officers get stricter punishments, were more scrutinized, and more likely to lose their jobs than lower ranked officers.

*“It happens. If you complain about a male, and they’re over you, most likely they’ll give you a bad review.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“...I think that they would be quicker to bust an enlisted soldier than an officer. They get more chances to screw up than a lower enlisted. We had a LT [Lieutenant] that screwed up three times and nothing happened – they just moved him.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“They say that they are getting away with it because of their rank, but that’s not the case. I think that they are dealt with severely.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“If a Sergeant Major does it he gets pushed into retirement, and [if] a private does it, he’s kicked out.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“Lately, the military has been making strides. Years ago, it would be that a junior person got punished and the senior person got it swept under the rug. Now, you see them getting punished majorly. There [has been] major change.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

### Perceived Impact of the “Good Old Boys” Club on Offender Punishment

Some participants discussed how preferential treatment—which they described as the “old boys club” or “old boys network”—plays a role in whether or not sexual assault and harassment offenders receive punishment.

*“Even the crappy ones will get away with it because it’s a good ol’ boys club.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“It’s not apparent a lot (i.e., the good ol’ boys network), but you’d be a fool to think [preferential treatment] isn’t happening.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“If it’s reportable – don’t get it twisted, it’s still the good ol’ boys’ system. If some people don’t like them, they will get rid of people, but you never know who they may know and it could be bad on the person who told on them.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

## Summary: Reporting Procedures for Victims of Sexual Assault and Harassment

This section summarizes the findings on Service member awareness and effectiveness of sexual assault and harassment reporting procedures.

### Awareness of Reporting Procedures for Victims of Sexual Assault and Harassment

DACOWITS focus group participants discussed a wide variety of reporting options available to victims of sexual assault and harassment. Popular resources noted by Service members included: SAPRO, the Chaplain, a SARC, a Victim Advocate, and one’s supervisor. On occasion, junior women Service members expressed uncertainty about the resources available to them to report an incident of sexual assault or harassment. Rarely, men Service members expressed that they were uncertain about reporting procedures when serving overseas.

### Effectiveness of Sexual Assault and Harassment Reporting Procedures

Service members expressed mixed views on this topic. Several participants expressed that the current sexual assault and harassment reporting procedures were effective, sharing that as reporting options have increased, victims have felt more comfortable submitting reports. The majority of participants, however, believed barriers to reporting sexual assault and harassment still remain. The most commonly expressed barrier leading to underreporting was a lack of trust in both the unrestricted and restricted reporting systems, which may lead victims to utilize resources off-base. Less frequently, Service members discussed fear of the stigma associated with reporting sexual misconduct, although several focus group members felt that the fear of stigma had declined over time. On occasion, men Service members discussed how a victim’s conflicted feelings about her attacker may serve as a barrier to reporting sexual assault.

### Effectiveness of Safeguards to Protect Those that Report from Retaliation

The majority of focus group participants reported that current safeguards in place to prevent retaliation against those that report sexual assault or harassment are not effective, although a small number of Service members felt that the safeguards in place were sufficient.

### Perceived Justice

Service members frequently expressed frustration about the lack of clear punishments for offenders of sexual assault and harassment, reporting that measures in place to punish offenders were not being enforced and that punishments vary widely. Several men Service members provided suggestions for how to use offender punishment as a tool to prevent future sexual assault and harassment. Suggestions included clearly publicizing what happens to offenders after they are convicted and using offender experiences and punishments as examples during prevention training.

### Perceptions of Punishment Differences by Rank

Participants were asked about their views on the role an individual’s rank plays when accused of sexual assault or harassment. Not surprisingly, opinions on this issue varied by the rank of participants. Frequently, junior Service members expressed that their peers were likely to be punished more severely than senior Service members when accused of sexual assault or harassment, and that senior Service members would more likely be encouraged to retire without severe punishment. In contrast, senior Service members expressed that their peers were likely to receive stricter punishment than junior Service members. Rarely, focus group participants felt both junior and senior Service member offenders are punished equally. Occasionally, Service members discussed the impact of the “good old boys” club on treatment of sexual assault and harassment offenders, sharing that those who are in the club are much more likely to receive preferential treatment when accused of sexual assault or harassment.

## Impact of Sexual Assault and Harassment on Unit Readiness

To conclude the focus groups, DACOWITS asked focus group participants “Do you think sexual assault has an impact on a unit’s readiness and its ability to perform its mission? If so, how?” Most Service members expressed that sexual assault and harassment has a negative impact on a unit’s readiness and ability to perform its mission.



*“...it’s hard if there is someone there that makes me uncomfortable. It affects the whole picture, just passing them down the hallway and they give you a look. It affects your ability to impact the mission.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“...with harassment, there are days when I’m being told I’m being emotional... even harassment affects [unit readiness]. If I’m not wanting to be there, then my mind is someplace else.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“[Sexual assault] affects morale, it’s a huge deal.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“Why would you want to go to work with someone who is making perverted jokes? You don’t want to do good work if you know they are going to harass you all day – I wouldn’t want to do good work.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“You take a squad full of seven males and one female and she’s been assaulted – the trust is gone. It affects everyone.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

## Appendix G-2

# Assignments Focus Group Findings

In 2009 and 2010, DACOWITS researched the topic of women in combat to gain insight into the combat experiences of our women in uniform. The Committee recommended that the current assignment policy be updated to allow for the assignment of women to all MOSs, as they found that women have been and are being employed in combat jobs for which they are excluded from assignment. As follow-up to these studies, the 2011 DACOWITS Committee sought to better understand the adequacy of weapons training women service members receive in preparation for combat and the potential implications of the integration of women into all combat units. The Committee gathered data, using a focus group protocol and a short demographic survey of focus group participants, on the adequacy of weapons training and participants' views on the possible implications of the full integration of women into combat units. This chapter summarizes DACOWITS' findings on these topics in 2011.

Presented first is a description of the 2011 focus group participants and the qualitative analysis methodology used for the data presented in the report. The remainder of the chapter highlights focus group findings organized into the following domains:

- Adequacy of Weapons Training Provided to Women in the Military
- Potential Implications of Revising the Assignment Policy to Fully Integrate Women into All Combat Units
- How to Make Full Integration of Women into Combat Units a Success

Where applicable, the Committee's focus group findings are supplemented with results from mini-surveys completed by study participants.

### Characteristics of Focus Group Participants

To provide context for the overall themes and individual comments that emerged during the focus group sessions, presented here is an overview of the demographic and background characteristics of the focus group participants. During summer 2011, DACOWITS conducted a total of 21 focus group sessions on the topic of the Assignment Policy of Women in the Military. Focus groups were held at seven locations. A total of 199 participants attended the focus groups, with a range of 3 to 12 and an average of 10 participants per session, representing the entire Active component (AC) Services and some elements of the Reserve component (RC). Each focus group session included Service members who had deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and/or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), including junior and senior, enlisted and officer, women and men.<sup>2</sup> The overall demographic characteristics of the focus group participants are presented in Exhibit G2-1.

As Exhibit G2-1 shows, the majority of focus group participants were female (70%). Almost half of study participants were non-Hispanic White (48%), just over a quarter were non-Hispanic Black (26%), and almost a fifth were Hispanic (19%). The Army was the most represented Service, with over a quarter (28%) of participants, followed by the Marine Corps (21%), Navy (17%), Air Force (14%), Army National Guard (13%), and Reserves<sup>3</sup> (8%)<sup>4</sup>. Nearly half of

<sup>2</sup> For this study, DACOWITS defined junior Service members as those in ranks E1 through E6, and senior Service members as those in ranks E7 through E9 and all officers.

<sup>3</sup> Reserves include Army Reserves and Navy Reserves.

<sup>4</sup> DACOWITS visited a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) installation in 2011; however, no Assignments topic focus groups were conducted (Wellness topic focus groups were conducted).

Exhibit G2-1: Demographic Profile of Focus Group Participants (N=199)		
Variable	N	Percent*
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	139	70%
Male	60	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Service</b>		
Army	55	28%
Marine Corps	41	21%
Navy	33	17%
Air Force	28	14%
Army National Guard	26	13%
Reserves (Army and Navy)	16	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Pay Grade</b>		
E1-E4	45	23%
E5-E6	70	35%
E7-E9	19	10%
O1-O3 (including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers)	45	23%
O4-O6	20	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>		
Non-Hispanic White	96	48%
Non-Hispanic Black	51	26%
Hispanic	38	19%
Other (Non-Hispanic)	14	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	100	50%
Single, with no significant other	42	21%
Single, but with a significant other	35	18%
Divorced or legally separated	22	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Length of Military Service</b>		
Under 3 years	11	6%
3-5 years	46	23%
6-10 years	60	30%
11-15 years	42	21%
16-20 years	25	13%
More than 20 years	15	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

participants were junior or senior Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs – E5-E9) (45%), and roughly a third were officers (33%) (O1-O6, and including Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers), and almost half of study participants had served more than ten years in the military (42%). Half of participants were married (50%). For a complete summary of the demographic characteristics of these focus group participants, see *Appendix F-2*.

### Qualitative Analysis Methodology

The methodology used by DACOWITS to identify salient themes related to the assignment policy of women in the military from the 2011 focus groups is similar to the approach the Committee has employed in previous years under its revised charter. Specifically, the Committee employed the services of a professional research contractor (ICF International) to assist in the development of focus group and survey instruments tailored specifically for the topic at hand. Contractor research staff served as scribes, accompanying the Committee members/facilitators to each focus group and generating a transcript from the session. Each individual focus group transcript was then content-analyzed to identify major themes and sub-themes, and the resulting transcript-level findings were entered into a sample-wide database for further analysis. The purpose of the sample-wide analysis was to determine the most salient comments throughout the focus group sessions, i.e., themes that appear most frequently within and across focus group sessions. These findings are presented in this chapter.

Exhibit G2-2: Please rate the adequacy of the weapons training you received prior to your most recent deployment in preparing you for combat.*			
Response	Women	Men	Overall
Very adequate	40%	54%	44%
Somewhat adequate	29%	36%	31%
Neither adequate nor inadequate	10%	3%	8%
Somewhat inadequate	9%	3%	7%
Very inadequate	8%	3%	7%
<i>I did not receive any combat-related training prior to my most recent deployment</i>	4%	0%	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### Adequacy of Weapons Training Provided to Women in the Military

In previous years’ research, DACOWITS found that women deployed to OIF and OEF have served in combat jobs – to which they were not assigned before deployment – while in theatre. As such, the 2011 DACOWITS Committee decided to study the adequacy of the weapons training that women are receiving in preparation for combat. This section provides a summary of the focus group findings concerning the following sub-topics:

- Extent of Weapons Training Provided
- Weapons Training and Gender

This section concludes with a summary.

#### Extent of Weapons Training Provided

The vast majority of focus group participants – both men and women – reported that they received some form of weapons training. The majority of participants (75%) reported on the mini-survey that the weapons training they received prior to their most recent deployment was somewhat or very adequate in preparing them for combat (Exhibit G2-2). Overall, women who participated in the focus groups were more likely than men to report that weapons training they received was somewhat or very inadequate, or that they did not receive any combat-related training prior to their most recent deployment. About one fifth (21%) of women in the 2011 focus groups reported inadequate or no combat weapons training.



Though most women indicated on the mini-survey that their weapons training was adequate, during the focus groups, only a few offered positive comments on their training.

*“I had the opportunity to go out on the ranges and shoot. I had plenty of opportunity to shoot and train.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“If you’re not deploying, you are not doing weapons training outside of basic training. If you do deploy, I’m fully confident you get the right weapons training.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

### Weapons Training Inadequate

Although women participants generally agreed that they are getting weapons training, most reported that it was inconsistent and/or inadequate in some capacity. For example, several said that training received was not consistent among Services, MOSs, or installations.

*“It seems like there is not a consistent training cycle, and it’s like, if they have time they’ll train you, but if not, then, ‘Okay, you’re out.’”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“To me, the training varied... The way that the Army trains, it lasts a lot longer than the Navy. The training that the Army gave was a lot more detailed; if you did not get it, they would not let you [deploy], they would make you stay behind...”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“Being in medical we’re not allowed to do much. I was not allowed to do much; I didn’t have time to train for anything. I just had to go.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

Many women also said that the weapons training they received was poor quality in some fashion, such as training not being long enough.

*“It is training, but going to a gun range for one hour and just shooting the number of bullets required, I don’t feel that was adequate.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“They wanted us to just check-the-box. It didn’t prepare me to shoot [the weapon] in theatre.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“I don’t think it’s sufficient. One time a year isn’t enough... Unless you do things on your personal time. It’s necessary to be a soldier, to protect yourself, and your battle buddy...”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“I think that [the weapons simulator training] is treated as a check-the-block type thing.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

There were also concerns that training was not always taken seriously, as trainers would let people qualify regardless of ability.

*“[There was] a lot of cheating going on. For soldiers who don’t shoot, it was like, ‘Just get it done at the end of the day,’ [for] both males and females. You would have someone in the range next to you shooting your targets [if you couldn’t qualify]... Towards the end of the day, the trainers were poking holes in the paper targets to make sure you were qualified.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“I don’t think they are getting ready in my unit. The supervisors ask about the recoil, and they say [they] don’t want that, and the supervisors are like, ‘Okay,’ and they don’t have to [shoot it]; they just check-the-block.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

Some focus group participants expressed a need for additional weapons training, including longer/more in-depth training and training on more weapons, as they often needed to use or were issued weapons other than those they were trained on.

*“I definitely agree that they need to get more Army [weapons] training.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“If the frequency of training is increased, you’ve increased the familiarity. Males and females, you get more comfortable; how to engage targets with it, what to expect from the weapon, any weapon... I don’t know if it’s a budget issue, but you should increase the frequency.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

Some said that they think lack of sufficient weapons training is a funding or budgetary issue.

*“The funding was getting short because it took too much time; they cut back on a lot of that... The good thing is that it saves some money and the people at a desk don’t have to go through that unnecessarily. At the same time, you could go to country (i.e., deployed to a combat theatre) and never get that training.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“...my company’s problems are lack of equipment. You’ll get only 3 bullets, and then you’ll get 5, and how are you going to get better if you can’t practice? How are you going to get the basics before you go out to the range?”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“It’s about the budget.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“We have no money. We are supposed to go out there and do training, but we are all broke.”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

### Weapons Training and Gender

Although the mini-survey results suggest that women participants see their weapons training as less adequate than the men in the focus groups, most participants reported that weapons training is not gender-specific – men and women receive essentially the same weapons training.

*“...it’s not men or women, because it is pretty much the same [training for both genders] these days.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“Generally everything is the same as the male; we’re getting the same treatment.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“They get the same training that the males get, so if it is adequate for the men, then it is adequate for the women... we get the same weapons training as the men.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

Some also said that weapons training is equally inadequate for both women and men, and a few noted that inconsistencies in weapons training is more due to MOS than gender.

*“[Weapons training is] not that adequate. It’s not just [with] women; it’s everybody.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“I think it’s equal [between the genders], but not adequate.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“There are always going to be training shortfalls. Is there a bias to train the men more than the women? There would not be a bias. There are always going to be training shortfalls, about who is going to need the training more. There is the bias, and it is not going to have to do with gender, it has to do with MOS.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

A few participants, however, noted differences in weapons training and/or qualifications by gender.

*“They get the very broad basics, but after that, no, [women do not get the same weapons training as men].”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

*“I started out at [a different installation], and now I’m at the division unit with women, and the difference in training is big. I don’t remember them doing the 240-range; now it is the M4 and M9, and now it is completely different. We trained more, we trained harder out there. Now we just go out to the range for a week, and they will qualify, maybe they won’t. At the divisions with more females, that’s the difference that I see.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

During the discussion on weapons training, a few participants expressed frustrations with regulations concerning women’s hair, especially with buns interfering with the fit of the Kevlar.

*“...helmets are always an issue. You have a bun and that’s standard, and they tell you to put your helmet on, and it just won’t fit.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“I think you need an adjustment back there; the webbing and the interior makeup of the Kevlar needs adjustment to keep it from moving. I have to buy a bunch of extra stuff like donuts and padding to keep it from moving.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

### Summary: Weapons Training

The vast majority of DACOWITS 2011 focus group participants said that they have received weapons training. Although the majority of study participants – both women and men – reported on the mini-survey that the weapons training they have received is adequate, as this topic was explored in more detail during the focus group discussions, most participants said that their weapons training was inadequate in some capacity. The most commonly cited inadequacies included inconsistencies among Services, installations and MOSs, poor quality training, not enough training, and trainers not taking training seriously enough. Some participants shared that they thought the reason, at least in part, for the weapons training inadequacies is lack of sufficient funding. As the questions on weapons training were asked in the context of the training military women receive, the discussion touched on whether training varies between the genders, and the majority of focus group participants agreed that the training did not vary by gender. That is, most said that women and men receive the same weapons training.

### Potential Implications of Revising the Assignment Policy to Fully Integrate Women into all Combat Units

DACOWITS asked the 2011 focus group participants a series of questions concerning potential implications of fully integrating women into combat units. These included questions about lessons learned from previous integration of women onto combat ships and aircraft, potential challenges that may arise if women were fully integrated into combat units (including those related to mission accomplishment, women’s careers, and women’s well-being), impact on unit readiness if women were to be fully integrated, and mentoring. This section presents the themes that emerged in the discussions resulting from these questions, and is organized into the following sections:

- Views on Revising the Assignment Policy
- Possible Impact on Readiness
- Possible Challenges

A summary is included at the end of this section.

### Views on Revising the Assignment Policy

Although not expressly asked about their opinions regarding the assignment of military women, many of the focus groups sparked discussion on this topic. Of those who expressed an opinion on this, most were in support of fully integrating women into combat units.

*“I think [fully integrating women into all combat units] is a good thing... You need females, especially in Muslim countries where men can’t search women.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

*“I can tell you from my readiness I would love it [if women were fully integrated into combat units]... If they changed it, I’d stay until the day I die...”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“I think women have proved themselves... I want the best person for the job, period.”*  
— Senior Male Service Member

During this discussion, many participants expressed that they thought that men and women should be treated equally, and as long as standards were not lowered for women, there would not be a problem integrating them into ground combat units.

*“Standards cannot be lowered. A handful of women might make it.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

*“Hold us to the same standard.”*  
— Junior Female Service Member

*“You set one precedent and you can meet this standard that a man can, the same MOS fields, then there wouldn’t be any issues.”*  
— Junior Male Service Member

*“I think if you can meet the physical demand it shouldn’t matter the plumbing.”*  
— Senior Female Service Member

A few women expressed that they were upset that women were not receiving recognition for their combat experience.

*“It pisses me off I’m a second class citizen. I went to Iraq, Kuwait; I could’ve died, and I get no respect... If they changed it (i.e., the assignment policy), I think it will help. I think there are a lot of disgruntled females because of it. So you lose a lot of great leaders, especially on the officer side because of it.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“The... guys got their ribbons; when I was out there, and I fractured my arm out there, but I didn’t get the recognition.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“It pissed me off females are good enough to go on these deployments and fill the slots, but not when we return. We’re good enough to get shot at as the gunner, as a driver or medic or save a life, but as soon as we get home, ‘You can’t be in the infantry, you can go back to your support unit.’ That pisses me the hell off!”*

— Senior Female Service Member

Some men focus group participants and a few women participants expressed opposition to the full integration of women in ground combat units.

*“I don’t support women in ground combat. I think it’s a bad idea. Distractions... fraternization... physical capability – I think there are women who can do it, no doubt. But on average, I think that it is a bad idea to implement that. I think there is a big difference between men and women.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“I will be totally honest. Are there women who could do the infantry job and artillery job? Yes, I guarantee some would run laps around the men. The big difference is that having the females in our job makes stuff hard - the pregnancy and harassment. You like her and I like her, let’s fight. It’s our natural instinct to protect them. If you see her with that heavy pack, you are going to want to help. It creates more issues and problems as far as the effectiveness of the unit. You have females being sent home... all these issues. I think a few could be just as effective. They should have to pass these same things as the men, but it would add all those other things on the table, and it would make it harder. It creates more paperwork and more animosity in the unit.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

### Possible Impact on Readiness

DACOWITS asked focus group participants what they think the overall impact on military readiness would be if women were to be fully integrated into combat units. The majority of participants felt that the full integration of women into ground combat units would have a positive or neutral impact on unit readiness.

*“I think it will be positive overall... The more you integrate, the tighter it will be.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I think it (i.e., military readiness) will stay the same or go up.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I think that we would have a better Army if it (i.e., full integration of women into combat units) were implemented, getting females into the roles...”*

— Junior Female Service Member

Some said that the full integration of women into combat units may have a short-term impact during a transition phase, but that any impact will dissipate over time.

*“On the short term there are these speed bumps, and you have the ‘old crusties’ that won’t let them do things, and the females may fight back. So I can see that happening first, but once that first female is allowed to do her job and she does it well, the integration process will speed up. But there will be short-term issues.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“If anything, it will be issues in the beginning, but it will smooth itself out over time.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“It was just like when women first started in the Armed Forces. Initially there are issues, but as it grows it will get better just like now.”*

— Junior Female Service Member



*“You’ll have the old-school guys, and I’m open minded, luckily, but you’ll have these guys who will be like, ‘No, I won’t do it’, and they’ll be in the position to make those decisions, and it will take 5 or 10 years for them to retire, and the new generation will come through, and the new sergeants and higher-ups – they will be the norm, and until then, it will affect the readiness.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

Rarely, participants said that they think the full integration of women in combat units would have a negative impact on readiness.

*“I can see a negative impact. If they put a woman on a 50 cal, according to my experience they needed help, and she got moved to a driver. So guys have trouble breaking in the line on a runaway gun. I weigh 240 lbs. Will a female be able to carry me if I’m injured? That’s the problem.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“I really believe that women shouldn’t be in that type of environment... We are too emotional, we are [that’s] not to say that all women are like that, we are [that way], generally speaking, but at the same time they are physically stronger than us; our bodies are just made completely different.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

### Possible Challenges

DACOWITS asked focus group participants what, if any, challenges they think there would be if women were fully integrated into combat units, including those related to the success of the unit and its mission, the careers of women, and the well-being of women. Participants anticipated several potential barriers to integration, such as cultural issues in a male-dominated environment, sexual harassment and assault, logistical issues (e.g., facilities and hygiene), and fraternization.

#### Cultural Issues

An overwhelming majority of focus group participants foresaw cultural issues within combat units as a potential challenge to the full integration of women. They mentioned issues such as men not being accepting of women in combat units, women having to overcome stereotypes and having to work harder to prove themselves, and men wanting to protect women.

*“In terms of a cultural shift, that will be big. In Afghanistan, there was an infantry female; they don’t have laws banning that; she was just the first female to do that. She was on ground controls and she didn’t have any issues. It’s the same thing with NATO forces, with having DADT repealed. The British, Italians, whatever, they have a fully integrated Army with homosexuals. It would just be a cultural shift.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

#### Men not Readily Accepting Women into Combat Units

Some of the men in the focus group discussions said that they or their male peers may struggle with accepting women into combat units. A few of the women also noted this, mentioning that combat units are often a “good old boys club”.

*“If you asked me, ‘Women: could they operate a tank battalion?’ Yeah, they could, but it is about the environment. The maturity of our male environment – they are not there.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I don’t think the women would have any problem integrating; it would be the males.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I think it will be harder because men don’t believe women should be in that position.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“My squadron, coming back from my third tour, it’s a squadron that hasn’t had a woman in there in like five years. I’m coming in there and kind of breaking up the good old boys club, and it took another two years after the last woman was in there... it was almost two years before we got another female in our war room.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“In most naval communities, it’s a good old boys club. Having a thick skin and being able to roll with it, and if you hear something that you don’t like, just correct it on the spot [is how you overcome this challenge].”*

— Senior Female Service Member

#### Overcoming Stereotypes: Women Need to Work Harder and “Prove” Themselves

Several women said that women in combat units will have to work harder and prove themselves in order to overcome stereotypes and be successful; some men noted this challenge as well.

*“A lot of it is overcoming stereotypes. It would be women showing that we can accomplish just as much; we can do a lot of different things and be just as effective, and sometimes more effective.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“You have to go at 110%; you’re always going to be on display.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“Women have to work twice as hard; for some people they think women shouldn’t be in that position, but if they prove themselves, they can do it – guy or girl.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“I’m sure [women] can do all the things if they’re there, but they will have to prove themselves.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

*“I was one of them in 1994 that was one of these five female units that had just integrated... We had to work extra hard. When we broke into that community we had to work extra hard.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“It’s conceptually going to be the same as having gay men in the military; conceptually it’s going to be the same way as when women and minorities got integrated. It’s a mindset, it’s about proving yourself. I’ve always been in the male-dominated roles. I’ve had to prove myself every single time...”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“Speaking from experience, I was the only female in the battalion. Being in that environment, it’s proving yourself, speaking their lingo, and once you gain that respect... I was cursing with them, speaking their language, and once I got in there and they saw that I was not in there as a female but as a team member, they saw that I was their brother, not their sister; their fellow soldier.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

#### Men’s Desire to Protect Women

Several study participants, both women and men, said that they think men have an instinct to protect women, and that this may be a challenge if women were to be fully integrated into combat units.

*“At first it can seem paternalistic, and you may want to protect them. That will turn into a brother, sister thing where you are leading them like all your other soldiers.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“The men that are working beside us – they still want to protect us... I was deployed with some guys who encountered an IED, and the guys were trying to shield the women...”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“There’s more of a need to protect the women. As men we all protect each other, but with a woman you have to protect and impress her.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I think certain males, depending on upbringing, will think they have to protect the women.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

#### Sexual Harassment and Assault

Some participants mentioned sexual harassment and assault as a potential challenge to the full integration of women into combat units.

*“The guys are worried about sexual harassment going through the group.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“There’s the fear of some type of sexual harassment that may happen.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“There was a fair amount of sexual misconduct on the FOB (Forward Operating Base). It really had to do more with harassment, and not necessarily reported rapes, that I knew about.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“Sexual assault and sexual harassment... there’s a lot of harassment with them going down-range.”*

— Senior Female Service Member



“...the first that comes in mind is sexual harassment.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

### Logistics: Facilities, Hygiene and Access to Quality Healthcare

Frequently, DACOWITS 2011 study participants cited logistical issues, such as facilities, hygiene, and access to quality healthcare, as potential challenges to the full integration of women into combat units.

#### Facilities

“In a different setting, logistics can be an issue, like facilities.”  
— Senior Male Service Member

“If they fully integrate, they just need some privacy...”  
— Senior Male Service Member

“The only thing I would think would be housing. They need to deal with their female issues [being] met and that’s hard when we are in a small group... Privacy and things are the issues: sleeping quarters, showers, that type of thing.”  
— Junior Male Service Member

#### Hygiene

“Female hygiene [is a] big issue. Not having a shower for 30 days or 60 days - can females really handle that?”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“Their housing and hygiene things - that’s the biggest issue. How to have integration with privacy. Harassment and hygiene and things.”  
— Junior Male Service Member

“Personal hygiene. You can only do so much with baby wipes.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“Just relieving yourself - a guy can stand off to the side of the road. You can get a UTI...”  
— Junior Female Service Member

#### Access to Quality Healthcare

“Women’s health issues, especially with smaller deck ships. Women are being taken care of by the male IDC’s (Independent Duty Corpsman), and they look at the women from the top-up only, and these women have abnormal pap smears, and these [male IDC’s] don’t get in for the colostomies [sic], and yes, they say that as long as you do the test, you’re fine; it’s a check-in-the-box, and these junior women don’t have the confidence to fight for their health care.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“In combat arms and radar, there’s no good logistical reason why we can’t do it. They’ll be like, ‘You can’t do it because of your period,’ and with the birth control I’m on, the menstruation is not an issue. The Army might want to address that - informing the females of their birth control [options] in certain types of environments.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

#### Fraternization

Several focus group participants believed that fraternization would be a challenge to the full integration of women into combat units. A few mentioned pregnancy resulting from fraternization as a challenge as well.

“I think the biggest problem regarding female officers is when they sleep with someone, it’s seen as something everyone does. And that’s a huge hurdle to overcome.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“I deployed 9 months late for a 15 month deployment. There were issues with females in my unit sleeping with the males. It was harder because of the reputation the other women established before I got there. They think every female is the same. That’s what I came into.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“People see you out with another platoon leader... maybe at dinner, and you’re going to get a reputation.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“On fraternization: you just can’t stop it. Every deployment that happens, whether it’s reported or not, as they work closer and get closer and start training more, the line that separates [everyone] disappears, and the next thing you know, it’s late at night, and you’re going home together. When that happens and you’re alone, even if you’re not fraternizing, the appearance of fraternization creates a distraction.”  
— Junior Male Service Member

#### Pregnancy as a Result of Fraternization

“We were talking about the women getting pregnant on these ships and being taken off... well, it takes two, so take the male off too. It’s only fair. One woman had that issue, and the man got taken off, but she had to petition [for the man to be taken off the ship].”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“The dynamics with women on ship, when that happens during or before deployment; when a woman gets pregnant, that is a huge issue - multiply that exponentially when [a pregnancy] happens on a ground combat unit and taking away that person from the unit.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

“With family planning, I got calls from officers about the female pregnancy rate. When these women are getting on the ship and learning the rate is when they get pregnant, and they get removed after 20 weeks [into the pregnancy], and then they are back on the ship one year later after having the newborn. A lot of these females are single females; a lot of these parents have to take care of the children, and this is tough on the sailors when they are behind on their rate. There is birth control available, and I don’t know what to say about it other than mentoring.”  
— Senior Female Service Member

#### Leadership

During the discussion on potential challenges if women were to be fully integrated into combat units, a few focus group participants mentioned unintended consequences of practices implemented by leadership, such as requiring all women to walk around with a whistle and a buddy while on base.

“And there was this issue where these females were running a convoy, and she got attacked in the showers, and they made it look like it was her fault because she took a shower alone, and he didn’t bring up the fact that one of

her eight battle buddies could have stood outside there, and after that he made us wear a whistle - just the females - and how am I going to wear the whistle in the shower? With this little rape whistle, you can’t even hear it! I would just point out [spots] where you don’t want to be alone where you could get raped, and I just wouldn’t go there. And he brought all the females out with us on the FOBs, telling us not to go out alone, but still, he’s holding us accountable for not getting raped, and he’s telling them not to rape their battle buddies. And then they ran out of whistles. I felt like it was one of those things that was fairly ridiculous.”  
— Junior Female Service Member

### Summary: Potential Implications of Revising the Assignment Policy to Fully Integrate Women into all Combat Units

This section summarizes DACOWITS’ findings on the potential implications of fully integrating women into all combat units.

#### Views on Revising the Assignment Policy

Although DACOWITS did not explicitly ask study participants their opinions concerning revising the current assignment policy of women in the military, this topic arose during several of the focus group discussions. Of those who shared their thoughts on this, most were in support of revising the policy to open all MOSs, including combat positions, to women. A few also expressed opposition to women serving in combat. Some believed that women will be able to successfully serve in combat as long as the standards are the same for both men and women. A few expressed discontent that women who have served in combat are currently not receiving due recognition.

#### Possible Impact on Readiness

DACOWITS asked study participants to share their thoughts on the potential impact on military readiness if women were to be fully integrated into combat units. Most focus group participants said that they thought it would either have a positive or no impact on military readiness, and a few thought it would have a negative impact. Some also believed that there may be an impact during the transition of women into combat units, but that this would lessen over time.

### Possible Challenges

DACOWITS asked focus group participants to consider, if women were to be fully integrated into combat units, what challenges may arise. Specific challenges of interest to the Committee included: (a) the success of the unit and its mission, (b) the careers of women, and (c) the well-being of women. Although most focus group participants were in support of fully integrating women into combat units, many noted several potential barriers to integration, such as cultural issues in a male-dominated environment, sexual harassment and assault, logistical issues (including facilities, hygiene, access to healthcare), and fraternization.

## How to Make the Full Integration of Women into Combat Units a Success

DACOWITS asked women study participants who have served in combat ships or aircraft, as well as men who have served alongside women in combat ships and aircraft, to share their experiences and lessons learned from these experiences, in an effort to gather ideas that may be applied in the future if women were to be fully integrated into combat units. These ideas on how to make the full integration of women into combat units a success are presented below.

### Need for Consistent Performance Metrics and Qualification Criteria

Several focus group participants expressed a need for consistent and equal performance metrics and qualification criteria, regardless of gender, in order to successfully integrate women into all combat units.

*“I think the standard should be the same. If I have to carry a person [who weighs] 250lbs, then fine. I shouldn’t volunteer to be in a unit [if] I can’t pick up that guy... So the standards should be the same. The problems come if you go into these units and you don’t expect to meet the same standards. Then that’s not fair...”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“I think having measurable metrics would be good, and consistent performance [indicators] so you can say that we have a rolling average and it is 3.2, for example, and if you fall within that [range], you are qualified, so if the women make the grade, they have that number to back them up. So, if you have that number as a cutoff to maintain credibility, when you come into a male organization... the default is they assume that you are not having that credibility.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“I think that if we were to do a full integration... there should be a sidebar PT (Physical Training) test, and if you don’t pass the male’s standards on the PT test, then you can’t be [in a] combat MOS, and it should be the same [standard] for males and females.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

### Leadership Needs to Play a Role

Many participants also believed that in order for the integration of women into all combat units to be a success, leadership needs to play a key role in the process.

*“If the leadership shows support, it will be better integration.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“It starts with the leadership - they set the standards, and we follow them.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“It’s leadership all the way to the top, the top level folks setting equality standards.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I think that the potential commander in these units should have extra training, because if they support it, then it makes it even better.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“We are always going to be viewed a certain way by men, and it is always going to be up to the command to put that to rest. It is all the higher-ups. If there is a guy saying something, they have to tell them to shut up. It’s up to them to determine how we are viewed. And that is everyone, and it starts with NCOs all the way up to staff NCOs. It’s up to them to cut it off.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

### Benefit to Large Integration, as Opposed to Only One or Two Women at a Time

A few participants said that if women were to be fully integrated into combat units, a large-scale integration would be more successful than integrating only a small number of women at a time.

*“We don’t [want to] bring them in by ‘one-sies and two-sies’; you do it as a herd. You bring a quality group that meets a standard, but a group [nonetheless].”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“Any failure with such a small group will be magnified. I don’t believe in the process of trial, I believe in the process of large integration. With these units that are being slowly integrated, policy needs to be behind this full force with these integrations such as with the [integration of women on] submarines.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

### Training

Only a minority of participants mentioned training as a way to make the full integration of women into combat units a success. Of those who brought up training, their comments were mixed on whether training would successfully mediate potential challenges anticipated with the full integration of women into combat units.

*“When it comes to the military, I think there is a need to keep your training involved. Sexual harassment, cultural bias, and so forth. You may have a nice unit, but you have a couple of crazies. [They] need to be consistent with training and the same standard is necessary.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“The issues will be what we already have – sexual assault and harassment. You don’t assume there will be new things; you need to wait and see before jumping to conclusions. It not like women or gays and lesbians just showed up in the military, they’ve always been there. To provide training on how you treat someone, when they’ve been sitting next to you all along, it’s not needed...”*

— Senior Female Service Member

### Mentoring

DACOWITS asked focus group participants a few questions relating to mentoring of women in the military, including in what ways they think mentoring would be helpful if women were fully integrated into combat units, what forms would be most helpful, and about mentorship experiences of those who have served on combat ship or aircraft. Overall, study participants thought that mentoring would be helpful to both men and women if women were to be fully integrated into combat units.

*“I think mentoring comes into play when we help them avoid the mistakes they would make without us. Broken homes, absent fathers... you come into a male dominated field and misconceive the [military] family for something that it’s not.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“It starts with the NCO. They should be training and mentoring the soldier.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

Several mentioned the importance of gender neutrality in mentoring.

*“If you get a new soldier, male or female, if you treat the female different, you’re already throwing them under the bus. You have to mentor her the same way as a male, or it will never be the same.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I think the worst thing you could do is set up special times and things. Every soldier gets a mentor, so you shouldn’t break the status quo.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“Everyone should have a mentor, not just the women; it helps the whole unit.”*

— Junior Male Service Member



*“If a female wants to be treated as a soldier, she will be treated as a soldier, not a female, and with that being said, every soldier needs a mentor, regardless if they are male or female.”*

— Junior Male Service Member

Some participants stated a preference for women mentors while others held no preference by gender.

*“If you have females in the unit already, obviously a female mentor would be better. Either way you look at it, we’re still different, males and females. But if there’s a female already integrated into the unit, then that’s what you need.”*

— Senior Male Service Member

*“I have had really great female and male mentors both. A woman tells me what to expect, and I had a male department head who took me under his wing professionally, and sometimes that’s all you need professionally. And that’s all he did. He just told me what I needed to do professionally. And again, there are just not enough women. We’re not retaining enough women.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“I think it should be a male mentoring [a female], and a female mentoring a male. So you get the full experience. You switch up like that you get a feel for both sides.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“It is harder to mentor the opposite sex, because it’s always going to be looked upon that they have a relationship. I find it less drama to mentor same sex, but I’ll continue to do it. I really don’t care. It’s easier on everyone, especially some of the males, if they try to do it. It’s easier with same sex.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

A few participants expressed that informal mentoring is preferred over formal mentoring.

*“[I prefer] informal [mentoring], because then you know that they mean it and they aren’t forced to do it.”*

— Senior Female Service Member

*“With the mentoring, it depends on the mentee. There’s a program that has been established [for mentoring], and it’s like a check-in-the-box, and I want someone to care about*

*[mentoring] and do it in my interests, and a lot of people are doing it as a check-in-the-box because they have been told to do it. And they get promoted and I get left behind.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

*“This one guy that was my unofficial mentor, he was one of those people that actually pushed me.”*

— Junior Female Service Member

### Summary: How to Make the Full Integration of Women into Combat Units a Success

DACOWITS acknowledges that lessons learned from the past may help facilitate successful change in the future of our military. As such, the Committee asked women study participants who have served in combat ships or aircraft, as well as men who have served alongside women in combat ships and aircraft, to share their experiences and lessons learned from these experiences, in the hopes that the military may apply these lessons to the full integration of women into ground combat units. These discussions led to several ideas on how to make full integration a success. These ideas include having consistent and equal performance metrics and qualification criteria for both men and women, leadership playing a strong role in supporting this transition, integrating women in large numbers rather than one or two at a time, training, and mentoring.

DACOWITS understands the important role that mentoring often plays in the success of any military career, and wanted to know what role women and men in the military think mentoring can play in helping to make the full integration of women in combat units a success. Most study participants acknowledged that mentoring would be helpful, to both women and men, if women were to be fully integrated into ground combat units. Several also noted that any mentoring program needs to be gender-neutral, as to not single out women. When asked about what forms of mentoring would be helpful, some participants said that same-gender mentors are preferable, while others believed that mentors of both genders would be helpful. A few also said that informal mentoring is better than check-the-box formal mentoring programs.



Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

## Appendix H **Literature Reviews**



# Appendix H-1

## Summary of Recent Research on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military

### Background

Six years have passed since DACOWITS last examined the topic of women and sexual assault in the military, and the Department of Defense (DoD) has taken a number of significant steps in combating the issue of sexual assault since 2004. Sexual assault and sexual harassment, however, continue to be an ongoing problem in the military, affecting thousands of Service men and women each year.<sup>5</sup> In March 2010, the Pentagon reported an 11 percent increase in the number of complaints of sexual assault by members of the military services between fiscal years 2008 and 2009.<sup>6</sup> In May 2011, 14 current and former members of the U.S. military, as well as two former members of the Coast Guard, filed a lawsuit charging that the Pentagon ignored their reports of being sexually harassed, assaulted and raped by fellow service members while on active duty.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, several high-profile cases have drawn attention to the devastating impact of sexual assault and harassment in the military. In August 2010, a jury convicted former Marine corporal Cesar Laurean of first-degree murder after he was found guilty of killing Lance Cpl. Maria Lauterbach in December 2007. Lauterbach had accused Laurean of

rape and was pregnant when she was murdered.<sup>8</sup> In June 2011, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) cited the Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital with failing to adequately monitor, prevent, and report sexual assault incidents, finding that nearly 300 sexual assault incidents (involving veterans, civilians, and staff) reported to the VA police were not reported to VA leadership officials between January 2007 and July 2010.<sup>9</sup> Of additional concern is that fact that many of these victims were women veterans seeking in-patient treatment for previous sexual trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As these examples illustrate, the consequences of sexual assault are far-reaching. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated regarding the issue of sexual assault, “This type of act not only does unconscionable harm to the victim; it destabilizes the workplace and threatens national security.”<sup>10</sup>

This literature review briefly summarizes data and findings on the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment in the military and programs, service, and policies that the DoD has implemented to work toward eradicating unwanted sexual contact in the military. It should be noted that although this issue is not gender-specific, DACOWITS’ mission involves a focus on how various issues affect women in the military, and as a result this review addresses the question of how successful the Department of Defense has been in reducing the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment for women in the military since 2004.

5 The terms unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault will be used interchangeably in this report. As described in the 2010 *Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members*, unwanted sexual contact/sexual assault includes completed and attempted sexual intercourse and sodomy, and unwanted sexual touching. Sexual harassment is defined separately, and is “a form of gender discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature,” according to *Army Regulation 600-20* (18 March 2008), p. 67, retrieved from [http://www.sexualassault.army.mil/files/r600\\_20\\_chapter7.pdf](http://www.sexualassault.army.mil/files/r600_20_chapter7.pdf)

6 Bumiller, E. (16 March 2010). Sex Assault Reports Rise in Military. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/17/us/17assault.html>

7 Parker, A. (15 February 2011). Lawsuit Says Military Is Rife With Sexual Abuse. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/16/us/16military.html>

8 Associated Press. (24 August 2010). Marine convicted of killing pregnant colleague who accused him of rape. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/23/AR2010082304528.html>

9 Rizzo, J. (7 June 2011). Audit: Sexual assault incidents within VA system underreported. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2011/US/06/07/veterans.administration.assaults/>

10 Department of Defense Sexual Assault and Prevention Office (2011). Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military: FY 2010. Retrieved from [http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/DoD\\_Fiscal\\_Year\\_2010\\_Annual\\_Report\\_on\\_Sexual\\_Assault\\_in\\_the\\_Military.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/DoD_Fiscal_Year_2010_Annual_Report_on_Sexual_Assault_in_the_Military.pdf)

## Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military

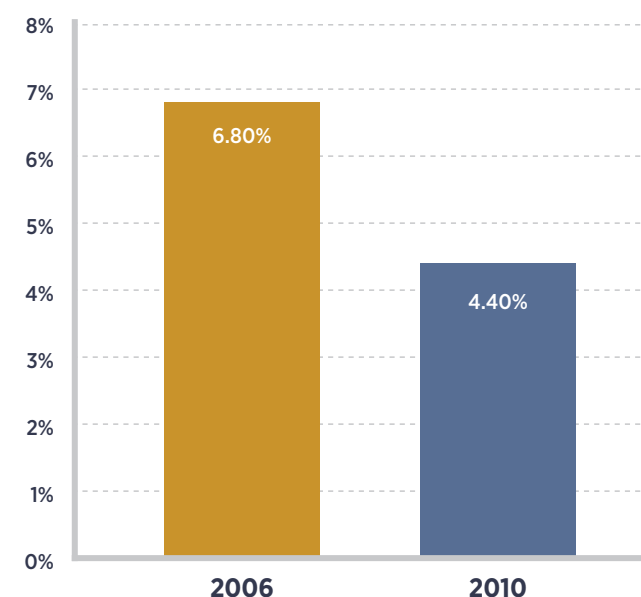
As part of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2006, Congress amended Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) to consolidate the wide range of actions and articles that previously defined sex-related offenses into one distinct article. The revised Article 120 “sets forth new sex-related offenses constituting degrees of sexual assault offenses,” and includes the following: rape, aggravated sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact, abusive sexual contact, indecent acts, forcible pandering, wrongful sexual contact, and indecent exposure.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently, DoD modified the terminology used to define sexual assault to align with amended Article 120.<sup>12</sup>

As illustrated in Figure 1, DoD has made progress in reducing the prevalence of reported unwanted sexual contact since 2006. In 2010, 4.4% of women reported unwanted sexual contact, which is one-third lower than the incident rate in 2006 of 6.8%. Although these findings are encouraging, there is still more progress to be made to eradicate all sexual assault and harassment in the military. As former Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Clifford Stanley recently wrote, “Sexual assault has absolutely no place in our military and cannot be tolerated.”<sup>13</sup>

## Women Service Members Perceptions of the Prevalence of Sexual Assault in the Military

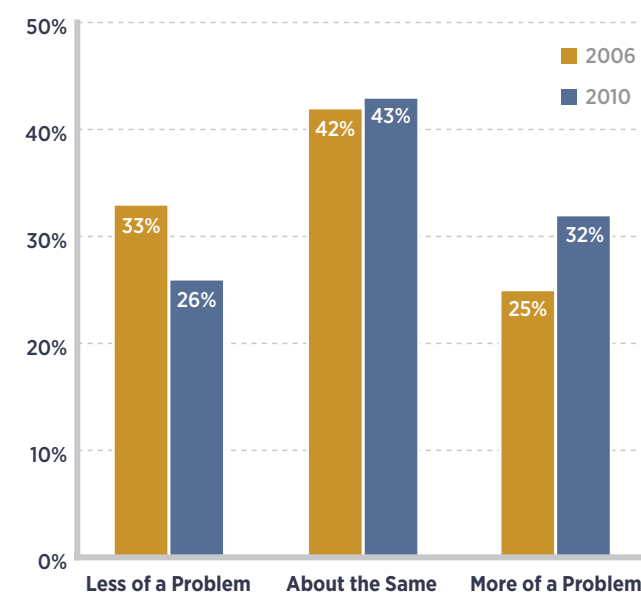
In 2010, active duty members were asked their perceptions of how prevalent sexual assault is in the military today in comparison to four years prior. Of those Service members that had been in the military for four or more years, 26% of women felt that sexual assault was less of a problem in the military in comparison to four years ago, in contrast to 33% in 2006 (Figure 2). However,

**Figure 1:** Percent of Women in the Military Reporting Unwanted Sexual Contact, 2006-2010



Source: (1) 2006 Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members, (2) 2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members, both compiled by Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC)

**Figure 2:** Percent of Women Service Members who Indicated Perceptions of Prevalence of Sexual Assault in the Military Today Compared to Four Years Ago, 2006-2010



Source: (1) 2006 Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members, (2) 2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members, both compiled by DMDC.

the percentage of women that felt sexual assault in the military in 2010 was more of a problem than the previous four years was 32%, an increase from 25% of women in 2006. The fact that women in the military in 2010 perceived that sexual assault is more of a problem than their counterparts in 2006 illustrates that the issue of unwanted sexual contact is still a concern for today’s women Service members.

## Reporting of Sexual Assault and Harassment in the Military

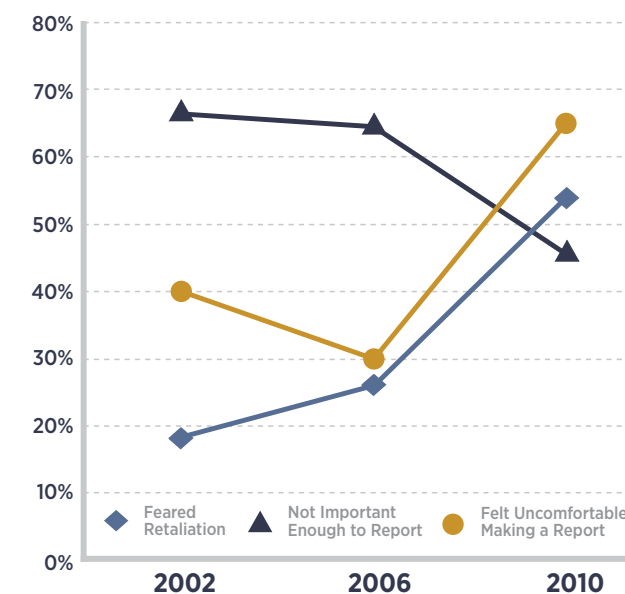
The percentage of women in the military reporting that they would feel comfortable to report sexual assault without fear of reprisal has risen since 2006. In 2010, 89% of women reported that they would feel comfortable reporting sexual assault, an increase of six percentage points from the 82% of women that felt free to report sexual misconduct in 2006. However, there still exist numerous barriers that inhibit women from reporting unwanted sexual contact.

### Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault

Women that had experienced unwanted sexual contact that did not report the assault were asked to provide their reasoning for not reporting the assault in the *Armed Forces 2002 Sexual Harassment Survey*, the *2006 Gender Relations Survey*, and the *2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Surveys of Active Duty Members*. Some of the most common reasons for not reporting assault include fear of retaliation from the offender, feeling that the incident was not important enough to report, and feeling uncomfortable making a report.

Between 2002 and 2010, the percentage of non-reporters that stated they did not report sexual assault because “You feared retaliation from the offender” increased substantially, from 18% in 2002 to 54% in 2010 (Figure 3). In the eight years between 2002 and 2010, the percentage of non-reporters that stated they did not report sexual assault because they felt uncomfortable making a report increased by 25 percentage points – from 40% in 2002 to 65% in 2010. The percentage of military women that experienced a sexual assault and stated they did not report because they felt the incident “was not important enough to report” declined between 2002 and 2010, from 67% in 2002 to 46% in 2010.

**Figure 3:** Reasons Women Service Members did not Report Sexual Assault, 2002-2010



Source: (1) *Armed Forces 2002 Sexual Harassment Survey*, (2) *2006 Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members*, (3) *2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members*, all compiled by DMDC.

## Women Service Members’ Knowledge about Available Resources

Encouragingly, the percentage of women reporting that they were familiar with a Sexual Assault Victim Advocate rose eight percentage points between 2006 and 2010, from 77% to 85%. The percentage of women indicating there was a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) available to help those who experienced sexual assault on their specific installation or ship also rose between 2006 and 2010, from 74% to 83%.

An increasing number of Service men and women have reported receiving sexual assault training. In 2006, 89% of women and men shared they had received sexual assault training in the previous twelve months.<sup>14</sup> By 2010 the percentage of men and women indicating they had sexual assault training in the 12 months preceding the survey had increased to 93%, while 92% reported they had a good understanding of what constituted sexual assault.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> 2006 Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Military

<sup>15</sup> 2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Military

<sup>11</sup> (December 2009). *Annex to the Report of The Defense Task Force on Sexual Assault in the Military Services*, pp. B-1- B-9.

<sup>12</sup> The amended Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) created a new definition of unwanted sexual contact. The *2006 Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members* included the new baseline measure which became effective October 2007. That is referenced here instead of the previously-used measure.

<sup>13</sup> Stanley, C. (1 March 2011). *Opposing view: ‘We clearly need to do more’*. *USA Today*. Retrieved from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2011-03-02-editorial02\\_ST1\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2011-03-02-editorial02_ST1_N.htm)



## Long-term Consequences of Military Sexual Assault

Although the prevalence rates of military sexual assault vary depending on the method of assessment and definition used, the associated long-term effects can be devastating. Research on the long-term consequences of military sexual assault indicates that victims are more likely than non-victims to suffer from mental health problems and physical health concerns including PTSD, depression, and homelessness.

### Mental and Physical Health Issues

Active duty women and men that experience sexual harassment or sexual assault experience increased psychiatric symptoms and poorer functioning compared to their counterparts that were not exposed to unwanted sexual contact.<sup>16</sup> They are also more likely than non-victims to have increased rates of PTSD symptoms, and depression,<sup>17</sup> and victims are more likely to report suicidal ideation and attempt suicide.<sup>18</sup>

Limited research has been conducted on the impact of sexual assault on military Reservists. However, as deployments increase for those in the military reserves, additional research is necessary to evaluate the impact of sexual assault on this unique population. A 2008 survey of 3,946 former reservists found that, among women in the Reserves, those that experienced either sexual harassment or sexual assault were at an increased risk of depression, somatic symptoms, and medical conditions. These negative outcomes are comparable to those experienced by active Service members after unwanted sexual contact.<sup>19</sup>

16 Murdoch, M., Pryor, J.B., Polusny, M.A., & Gackstetter, G.D. (2007). Functioning and Psychiatric Symptoms among Military Men and Women Exposed to Sexual Stressors. *Military Medicine*, (172)7, 718-725.

17 Kimerling, R., Gima, K., Smith, M., Street, A., & Frayne, S. (2007). The Veterans Health Administration and military sexual trauma. *American Journal of Public Health*, 97(12), 2160-2166. and Suris, A., Lind, L., Kashner, T. M., & Borman, P. D. (2007). Mental health, quality of life, and health functioning in women veterans: Differential outcomes associated with military and civilian sexual assault. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 22, 179-197.

18 McFarlane, J., Malecha, A., Gist, J., Watson, K., Batten, E., Hall, I., et al. (2005). Intimate partner sexual assault against women and associated victim substance use, suicidality, and risk factors for femicide. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 26, 953-967.

19 Street, A.E., Stafford, J., Mahan, C.M., & Hendricks, A. (2008). Sexual harassment and assault experienced by reservists during military service: Prevalence and health correlates. *Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development*, 45(3), 409-420.

### Homelessness

An increasing number of women are leaving the military and becoming homeless, and recent research has found a relationship between sexual assault during military service and future homelessness. In a small study of 33 non-institutionalized homeless veterans and 165 housed women veterans, 53% of the homeless veterans experienced sexual assault during military service, in comparison to 27% of the housed veterans. The homeless veterans were also more likely to experience PTSD, which was significantly associated with being homeless.<sup>20</sup> In another study, 40% of homeless women veterans reported experiencing some form of sexual assault while in the military.<sup>21</sup>

## DoD's Response to Previous DACOWITS Recommendations

In 2004, DACOWITS made several recommendations to the Department of Defense that closely mirrored those suggested by the DoD 2004 Task Force on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault. Those recommendations centered on eight topics, ranging from underreporting to training. The recommendations, as well as the ways in which the Department of Defense has responded to those recommendations, are briefly discussed below.

### Zero-Tolerance Policy

DACOWITS recommended that the military's zero-tolerance policies be widely disseminated by commanders at every level. In October 2005, DoD issued Directive 6495.01, which states that it is DoD policy to "eliminate sexual assault within the Department of Defense by providing a culture of prevention, education and training, response capability, victim support, reporting procedures, and accountability that enhances the safety and well-being of all its members."<sup>22</sup>

In addition, the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) – which was opened in October 2005

20 Washington, D.L., Yano, E.M., McGuire, J., Hines, V., Lee, M. & Gelberg, L. (2010). Risk Factors for Homelessness among Women Veterans. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 21(1), 82-91.

21 Williamson, V. & Mulhall, E. (2009). *Invisible Wounds: Psychological and Neurological Injuries Confront a New Generation of Veterans*. New York: IAVA.

22 DoD Directive 6495.01. (6 October 2005). Retrieved from <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/649501p.pdf>

to provide oversight of the Department's sexual assault policy – has integrated the Department's zero-tolerance stance into the sexual assault prevention materials, conferences, and educational programming disseminated throughout the military. This message has been stressed at all levels of command. In the spring and fall of 2009, the Secretaries of the Army, Air Force, and Navy, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps all spoke to the personnel responsible for sexual assault program implementation, in which they each stressed their "commitment to eradicating sexual assault in the military services."<sup>23</sup>

### Defining Sexual Assault

As discussed earlier in this review, a clear definition of sexual assault is necessary to deter criminals, provide effective training, improve rates of reporting, and provide consistent and fair enforcement. DACOWITS recommended that a new definition of sexual assault be quickly incorporated into the UCMJ and be used consistently in training, in data collection and by military law enforcement authorities.<sup>24</sup> In October 2007, Article 120 of the UCMJ was amended to more widely encompass all forms of unwanted sexual contact. The article includes 36 forms of sexual assault, including rape, aggravated sexual assault, and abusive and wrongful sexual contact.<sup>25</sup>

### Addressing the Issue of Sexual Assault Underreporting

Underreporting of sexual assault crime is prevalent inside and outside the military, and is often based on fear about maintaining both privacy and confidentiality during the reporting process. In order to bolster response rates, DACOWITS encouraged the DoD to take steps to increase victim confidence in the military's reporting system. Since the creation of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, hundreds of Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and Victim Advocates have been trained to assist victims of sexual assault around the world, and they in turn have educated thousands of members of the military about the importance of prevention

23 Government Accountability Office (GAO). (February 2010). Military Personnel: Additional Actions Are Needed to Strengthen DoD's and the Coast Guard's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Programs, p. 12.

24 2004 DACOWITS Report, p. 80.

25 (December 2009). *Annex to the Report of The Defense Task Force on Sexual Assault in the Military Services*, pp. B-1- B-9.

and intervention. For example, in 2010 the U.S. Air Force trained 400 facilitators to assist SARCs in bystander intervention training at installations and subsequently held several 3-day train-the-trainer courses for local installation volunteers.<sup>26</sup>

In June 2005, the DoD introduced a restricted reporting option for victims, which allows confidential access to medical care and advocacy services *without* requiring the initiation of a formal investigation. In describing the motivation behind implementing this option, then-Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Chu stated: "While we want to sustain good order and discipline by holding those who assault their fellow service members accountable for their actions, first and foremost we want victims to come forward for help."<sup>27</sup> In the six years since its introduction, the number of restricted reports has increased. If even a small percentage of the Service women that utilize restricted reporting would not have previously submitted a report after a sexual assault before the introduction of this additional option, the restricted reporting choice may very well be successfully providing another important avenue for victims to obtain necessary support and assistance in responding to unwanted sexual contact.

As illustrated in Figure 4, the percentage of women utilizing the restricted reporting option increased between 2006 and 2010. In 2006, of those women who experienced unwanted sexual contact, 21% discussed it with an authority or organization. Of that twenty-one percent, 3% of women made a restricted report.<sup>28</sup>

By 2010, the percentage of women making restricted reports had more than doubled. About 28% of the women who experienced unwanted sexual contact discussed it with an authority or organization. Of that approximate quarter of women affected, 8% made a restricted report, while an additional 6% made a restricted report that was converted to an unrestricted report.<sup>29</sup> The increase in use of the restricted reporting system, as well as the conversion from restricted reports to unrestricted reports, indicates that women Service members may have increasing confidence in the sexual assault reporting options available to victims.

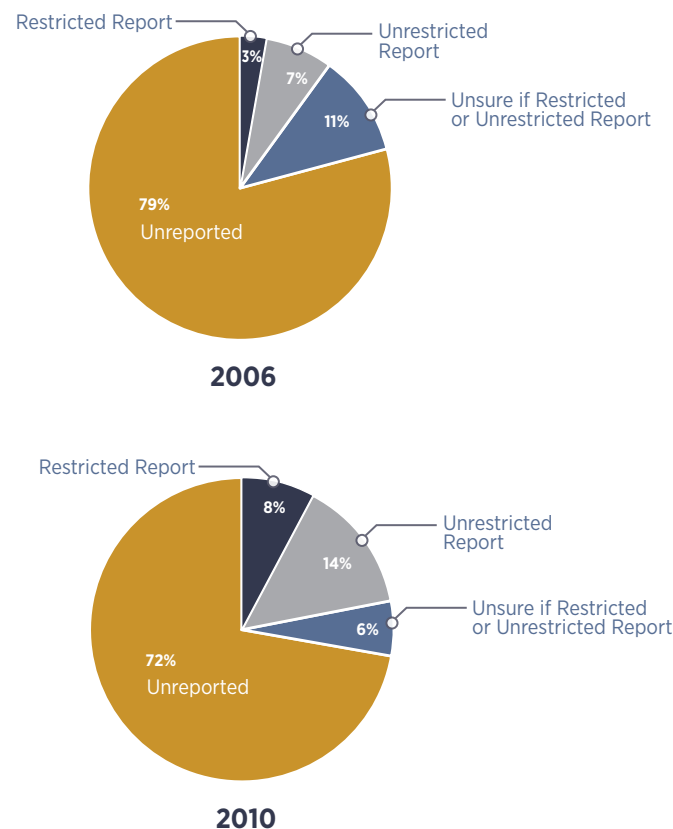
26 2010 DoD Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military

27 Department of Defense News Release. (18 March 2005.) DoD Issues Confidentiality Policy for Sexual Assault Victims. Retrieved from <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=8320>

28 2006 Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members

29 2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Military

**Figure 4:** Percentage of Women Reporting and not Reporting Unwanted Sexual Contact, 2006-2010



Source: (1) 2006 Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members, (2) 2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members, both compiled by DMDC.

### Sexual Assault Victim Resources

Although the DoD has increased the resources available to victims of sexual assault, it is also essential that those victims be able to readily access those resources in a way in which they feel comfortable. DACOWITS recommended that the DoD take steps to ensure that Service women at all rank levels have a high level of awareness of resources available to victims of sexual assault. SAPRO has successfully created a wide range of resources that have been disseminated to Service women at all levels, within every branch of the military. In April 2011, the DoD implemented the “Safe Helpline”, a free, confidential, and 24-hour resource for victims of sexual assault to receive advice and support from trained professionals via text messaging, telephone, and the internet. When asked about

the program, former Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Clifford L. Stanley stated, “We believe the Safe Helpline will provide DoD sexual assault victims with a variety of support outlets, which will lead victims to report sexual assault, seek needed information, and receive care.”<sup>30</sup>

### Sexual Assault Training

Finally, DACOWITS emphasized the important role comprehensive sexual assault training plays in preventing unwanted sexual contact, and encouraged the DoD to make such training an integral and ongoing part of Professional Military Education for all levels. The Department currently requires all Service members in both the Active and Reserve components receive annual awareness training. In addition, sexual assault awareness instruction is currently a mandatory component of all professional military education programs. Each military service has implemented some form of intervention. In 2010, the U.S. Army educated Service members through the Sex Signals training tour, a 90-minute live audience-interactive program that includes skits dealing with dating, rape, consent, and other associated topics, such as paying attention to body language, alcohol use, and safe intervention. In addition to public service announcements, all of the military services currently utilize social marketing campaigns. In 2010, the Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and National Guard Bureau employed the ‘Department’s Hurts One. Affects All.’ campaign, while the Army utilized the ‘I. A.M. (Intervene – Act – Motivate) Strong’ campaign. Both focus on educating Service members about the responsibility each person has on preventing sexual assault.<sup>31</sup>

### The Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID)

In 2004, the DoD was urged by DACOWITS “to implement a comprehensive and consistent data reporting system that preserves the confidentiality of the

<sup>30</sup> Department of Defense News Release. (15 April 2011). DoD Launches New Helpline to Support Victims of Sexual Assault. Retrieved from <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=14410>

<sup>31</sup> Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. (2011). *Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military: FY 2010*.

victim”.<sup>32</sup> In October 2008, Congress passed the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, which required the Secretary of Defense implement a centralized database for the collection of information about sexual assaults involving members of the Armed Forces by January 2010. Although the DoD is currently working with contractor *Microfact* to complete development of the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID), the revised completion date has not been released. In its February 2010 report evaluating the oversight and implementation of military sexual assault prevention and response programs, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) expressed concern about this delay, emphasizing that a comprehensive and consistent data reporting system ensures “the privacy and restricted reporting options of victims”.<sup>33</sup>

### DoD’s Progress in Addressing the Issue of Sexual Assault of Women Service Members

Recent news reports have highlighted the continuing problem of sexual assault in the military, and this issue remains a significant concern to the Committee. Sexual assault threatens our national security, destabilizes the workplace, and destroys lives. The consequences of sexual assault last way beyond the battlefield, and include lifetime mental and physical health problems as well as an increased likelihood of homelessness – appalling outcomes for the Service women willing to give their lives to serve our country.

<sup>32</sup> 2004 DACOWITS Report, p. 81

<sup>33</sup> GAO. (February 2010). *Military Personnel: Additional Actions Are Needed to Strengthen DoD’s and the Coast Guard’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Programs*, p. 23.

Although the Department has not successfully eradicated unwanted sexual contact against Service women, it has made progress in addressing the issue of sexual assault prevention and response since DACOWITS’ 2004 report. The prevalence of sexual assault declined from 6.6% to 4.8% between 2006 and 2010. At the same time, the percentage of women that experienced unwanted sexual contact and chose to report their sexual assault to an authority figure *increased* during that time – from 21% to 28%. While the number of sexual assaults has declined, it appears that victims have also felt more confident reporting their sexual assaults. Implementation of the restricted reporting option for victims, in conjunction with the numerous prevention programs and victim support services created by the SAPRO, are steps in the right direction for the DoD.

However, sexual assault and harassment continues to be a concern for women Service members. In 2010, a larger percentage of women perceived that sexual assault was more prevalent than four years ago in comparison to their counterparts in 2006. Further, the percentage of women sharing that they failed to report a sexual assault because they feared retaliation or felt uncomfortable making a report as steadily increased since 2002. It is essential for the DoD to continue to work on creating an environment where women no longer feel at risk for sexual assault and victims no longer fear retaliation or discomfort in reporting unwanted sexual contact.



# Appendix H-2

## Summary of Recent Research on Assignment Policy for Military Women

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

### Background

Studies and news reports have consistently shown that U.S. women Service members are involved in combat operations and facing hostile fire in war. The 2009 and 2010 annual DACOWITS reports examined issues concerning women in combat, and found that women Service members are often regularly serving in combat roles, although not assigned to combat military occupational specialties (MOSs). At first glance, this finding may appear to contradict the intent of a memorandum from former Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, dated January 13, 1994, which guides current Department of Defense (DoD) policy on the assignment of women service members, stating, “Service members are eligible to be assigned to all positions for which they are qualified, except that women shall be excluded from assignment to units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground...” The memo defines direct ground combat as, “...engaging an enemy on the ground with individual or crew-served weapons, while being exposed to hostile fire and to a high probability of direct physical contact with the hostile force’s personnel. Direct ground combat takes place well forward on the battlefield while locating and closing with the enemy to defeat them by fire, maneuver, or shock effect.”<sup>34</sup>

The apparent contradiction between current DoD policy and the realities of war in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan may be that the above-stated definition of “direct ground combat” does not accurately reflect these recent/current realities, in which

traditional front lines no longer exist and where both women and men service members are being employed in roles distinct from those to which they are assigned. Military leaders have described these wars as, “asymmetric and noncontiguous: there are not front and rear areas.”<sup>35</sup> Consequently, as noted by one journalist reporting from Afghanistan, “The nature of war has also done much to change the debate over combat roles. Any trip off the heavily secured bases now effectively invites contact with the enemy.”<sup>36</sup> As the 2009 DACOWITS Report summarizes, “The asymmetric warfare and absence of front lines result in a new type of battlefield, spread over larger geographic regions, involving a larger proportion of the deployed force.”

Significant numbers of women and men service members in OIF/OEF have been exposed to hostile fire and involved in combat operations, despite not being assigned to ground combat MOSs. Accordingly, 85% of women service members report being deployed to a combat area or an area drawing hostile/imminent danger pay since September 11, 2001, and 42% of women service members report being involved in combat operations.<sup>37</sup> As documented in popular media accounts, the Lioness Program and Female Engagement Teams (FETs) are two programs that recruit women for combat situations, specifically utilizing women soldiers to attach to all-male combat units and interact with, search, and gather intelligence with local wom-

<sup>34</sup> Memorandum on direct ground combat definition and assignment rule from the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of the Army, Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Air Force, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), and Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs). (13 January 1994).

<sup>35</sup> Putko, M. (2008). The combat exclusion policy in the modern security environment. *Women in combat compendium*, as quoted in 2009 DACOWITS Report, p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Myers, S.L. (August 17, 2009). Women at arms: Living and fighting alongside men, and fitting in. *The New York Times*.

<sup>37</sup> *November 2008 Status of Forces Survey of Active Duty Members: Tabulations of Responses*, compiled by DMDC. Question #47 “Since September 11, 2001, have you been deployed to a combat zone or an area where you drew imminent danger pay or hostile fire pay?”, 85% of female respondents answered “yes”, compared to 90% of males; and Question #50 “Were you involved in combat operations?”, 42% of female respondents answered “yes”, compared to 58% of males.



en.<sup>38</sup> As attested in media accounts and in the 2009 DACOWITS Report, these and other MOSs in which women are assigned to in OIF/OEF face similar risks as soldiers assigned to ground combat units.<sup>39</sup>

The assignment policy, also commonly known as the “combat exclusion policy for women,” has accordingly faced recent scrutiny from numerous sources in addition to DACOWITS. A 2007 RAND Report, aiming to assess the Army’s assignment policy, recommended to “Recraft the assignment policy for women to make it conform – and clarify how it conforms – to the nature of warfare today and in the future, and plan to review the policy periodically.”<sup>40</sup> RAND found that not only does the language in the policy not conform to the asymmetric nature of current warfare, but that returning service members generally did not find the assignment policy useful, if they understand the policy at all. While RAND concluded that the assignment of Army women met the “letter” of DoD *assignment* policy, the current nature of warfare has led individual women and units to be *employed* in ways not envisioned during the framing of policy, likely violating its intent of keeping women away from engaging with enemy fire. Yet, the authors concluded, on the basis of their extensive focus group research with service members, these practices of assigning women to positions likely to see combat has “been consistent with maintaining unit effectiveness and capability.”

In March 2011, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC), a congressionally-mandated commission tasked with examining policies and practices that shape the diversity of military leaders, recommended eliminating the combat exclusion policy as well.<sup>41</sup> An increased need for diverse military leadership

informed the commission’s recommendation. MLDC concluded that the combat exclusion policy as it exists prevents women from entering tactical career fields that lead to “career-enhancing assignments” and are associated with significantly higher promotion opportunities. With this recommendation came the caveat that qualification standards for combat arms positions should not be lowered with a change in assignment policy. While promoting diversity in the upper military ranks was the driving force behind the recommendation, the commission also considered the potential impact on military readiness brought about by women in combat, and concluded the impact on readiness would be negligible.

As noted in the 2010 DACOWITS Report, numerous high-ranking military commanders have expressed support for women in direct combat as well.<sup>42</sup> Direct change to women’s assignment policies is imminent as well, with women scheduled to join crews on submarines for the first time in late 2011.<sup>43</sup> Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates also recently indicated that more women will serve in Special Forces operations in the future, after incorporating lessons learned from Navy’s submarine gender-integration.<sup>44</sup> Given this level of support from the public, policy leaders, and Pentagon officials for adjusting, if not altogether eliminating the current assignment policy, abolition of the combat exclusion policy seems likely. As a part of its 2011 research agenda, DACOWITS thus aims to examine not just *whether* women should serve in direct ground combat, but *how* gender integration could be successfully implemented in today’s military.

## Potential Implications of Eliminating the Combat Exclusion Policy

As the public becomes increasingly aware of Service women’s combat roles in recent/current conflicts, criticisms about the continued gender integration of the military continue to arise. Examples of such criticisms include those related to reduced unit effectiveness and cohesion, sexual behavior and pregnancy, women’s physical and mental readiness for combat, and difficulties recruiting women Service members if all combat opportunities were to be opened to women.

### Impact of Women in Combat on Unit Cohesion and Effectiveness

While there are numerous anecdotal accounts that suggest women serving in combat units negatively impacts unit cohesion, there is little empirical data to support this conclusion. As noted in Davis and McKee (2004),<sup>45</sup> a major study by the RAND Corporation in 1997<sup>46</sup> reported that mixed-gender military units showing high degrees of conflict could attribute such divisions to rank- and work-group divisions, and not gender. Gender was not a main factor influencing morale in these groups, whereas leadership was. An intensive empirical study examining unit cohesion in performance in mixed-gender units conducted by Britain’s Ministry of Defence in 2000 came to the same conclusion, “Leadership and teamwork... were more important in explaining variation between sections than gender mix.”<sup>47</sup>

As has been documented in various media and literature reports<sup>48</sup> as well as the primary focus group data presented in the 2009 DACOWITS Report women’s increased roles in OIF/OEF have had mostly positive effects on unit effectiveness and mission accomplishment. For example, women offer unique skill-sets that have been especially useful in gathering intelligence and conducting

searches of local women on the ground in Muslim countries. In 2009, a primary theme expressed by DACOWITS focus group participants, men in particular, was that women service members’ made positive and unique contributions to unit effectiveness and morale, and gender played little factor in determining service members’ contributions to mission accomplishment.

Many arguments against women in combat focus on the ability of women to handle the physical demands associated with ground combat positions (e.g., strength, endurance, aerobic conditioning). Leaving aside the fact that these traits are not specific to males, there is significant evidence suggesting that many women are capable of performing the physical requirements of ground combat jobs given adequate training. For example, a 1997 study conducted by the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine found that only 24% of women volunteers were initially found capable of performing tasks normally conducted by men in the military; however, after 24 weeks of training, this figure rose significantly—to 78%.<sup>49</sup> Similar evidence can be drawn from a 2002 U.K. Ministry of Defence study, which reviewed over 100 works comparing the physicality of men and women. The study noted that proper training greatly increased women’s physical ability, and to some extent this ability rose in greater proportion in women compared to men, particularly in aerobic conditioning.<sup>50</sup> McKee and Davis (2004) note that the New York Fire Department came to a similar conclusion in 2001, finding that merely 3% of recruited women (compared to 57% of men) were able to pass field task drills. However, echoing the conclusions drawn from the aforementioned studies, the Fire Commissioner concluded that improved training would help women meet the required strenuous physical standards.<sup>51</sup>

It should be noted that advocates of opening ground combat assignments to women have not argued that lowered physical standards should be set for women. In fact, both MLDC and DACOWITS have explicitly argued that assignment to combat roles should be based strictly on individual capability

38 The Lioness Program was covered in-depth in a 2008 documentary, *Lioness, the Film*. For detailed media accounts of the Lioness Program and FET’s, see Burton, M. (10 March 2009). All female Marine team conducts first mission in southern Afghanistan. *Defense.gov News Article*. and Lee, F.R. (4 November 2008). Battleground: Female soldiers in the line of fire. *The New York Times*.

39 For notable media accounts attesting to the dangers of women-inclusive MOSs, including those that search local women, see Alvarez, L. (16 August 2009). Women at arms: G.I. Jane breaks the combat barrier. *The New York Times*. and Martinez, R. (2008). Women take command in combat. *Air Force Print News Today*.

40 Harrell, M., Castaneda, L.W., Schirmer, P., Hallmark, B., Kavanagh, J., Gershwin, D. & Steinberg, P. (2007). *Assessing the assignment policy for Army women*. RAND Corporation.

41 Military Leadership Diversity Commission (March 2011). *From representation to inclusion: Diversity leadership for the 21st century military, final report*.

42 Of note are comments from General Peter W. Chiarelli, Vice Chief of the Army: Chiarelli, Peter W. (28 July 2010). Guest Blog: Women in the Army. *Combined Arms Center Blog*. Retrieved from <http://usacacblogs.army.mil/guestblog/2010/07/27/>; and Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: Mullen, Mike (5 November 2010). Chairman’s corner: Too many doors still closed for women. *DoD Live*. Retrieved from <http://www.dodlive.mil/index.php/2010/11/chairmans-corner-too-many-doors-still-closed-for-women/>.

43 Ewing, P. (2010 February 23). Pentagon announces end of ban on women on subs. *Navy Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.navytimes.com/news/2010/02/navy\\_women\\_subs\\_022310w/](http://www.navytimes.com/news/2010/02/navy_women_subs_022310w/)

44 Miles, D. (30 September 2010). More women in special ops forces, Gates predicts. *American Forces Press Service*. Retrieved from <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=61083>

45 Davis, K. & McKee, B. (2004). Women in the military: Facing the warrior framework. In *Challenge and change in the military: Gender and diversity issues*. Ed. By Pinch, F.C., MacIntyre, A.T., Browne, P. & Okros, A.C. Ontario: Canadian Defence Academy Press.

46 Harrell, M.C. & Miller L.M. (1997). *New Opportunities for military women: Effects upon readiness, cohesion, and morale*. Santa Monica, CA and Washington, D.C.: National Defense Research Institute RAND.

47 Ministry of Defence (2002). *Women in the Armed Forces*. London: MoD.

48 See, for example, Grosskruger, P.L. (2008). Women leaders in combat: One commander’s perspective. *Women in combat compendium*. and Myers, S.L. (2009).

49 Harman, E., Frykman, Palmer, C., Lammi, E., Reynolds, K. & Backus, V. (November 1997). *Effects of a specifically designed physical conditioning program on the load carriage and lifting performance of female soldiers*. Natick, MA: Military Performance Division, U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine. (Report No. T98-1).

50 Ministry of Defence (2002).

51 Field, K. & Nagal, J. (2001). Combat roles for women: A modest proposal. *Parameters*.



and performance.<sup>52</sup> As Army policy currently stands, male recruits are not subjected to physical strength examinations prior to being assigned to combat positions (assignment is based on aptitude scores, medical evaluations and personal preferences).<sup>53</sup> However, all women are barred from being officially assigned to combat based, in part, on the assumption that they are physically incapable of performing combat duties. Accordingly, implementing a new policy that would assess recruits' physical suitability for combat, without regard to gender, would better allow for combat assignments to be filled only by those—both men and women—physically suited to their duties.

### Potential Obstacles Facing Women in Combat Roles

Should the U.S. open ground combat positions to women in the military, they would not be the first country to do so. Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Austria and Ireland all have women serving in combat arms positions.<sup>54</sup> Success in these integrations has been mixed; while little doubt remains that women are performing to the standards of their male colleagues, women have faced significant challenges—many of them cultural in nature—integrating into a male-defined and male-dominated workforce.<sup>55</sup>

Canada offers the U.S. a particularly useful historical precedent for gender integration in the military. In 1989, the Canadian Forces (CF) decided to fully integrate women into all positions, including combat arms, over a 10-year period, after a long, deliberative process that considered the roles of women military members dating to a 1970 report from the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.<sup>56</sup> As of 2006, the overall representation of women in the CF is similar to the U.S. military: 13.2% of personnel in the Regular Force Component are women and 20.5% of personnel in the

Reserve Component are women.<sup>57</sup> However, women comprise less than 4% of soldiers and officers in land combat arms.<sup>58</sup> And as of 2001, women comprised only 3.9% of officers and 1.4% of non-commissioned members in the combat arms.<sup>59</sup> As Febraro (2007) notes, though, more troubling is that the attrition rate for women in combat arms is, in some cases, six times higher than that of their male counterparts.<sup>60</sup>

To find out why the attrition rate had been so much higher among women in the CF, a research study was conducted and found that social and psychological barriers had largely prevented them from performing effectively in their roles.<sup>61</sup> As Davis (2007) notes, “women were confronted by pre-conceived perceptions of their ability and motivation, informed by masculine cultural assumptions about gender roles and the social and sexual behavior of women who choose traditional male employment.”<sup>62</sup> Particularly troublesome, especially for those women in leadership roles in the combat arms, is that a persistent double standard exists restraining how women conduct themselves in front of men, ultimately hindering their effectiveness. Davis and Thomas (1998) illustrate the dilemma facing women in leadership, noting that women felt like they had to become “one of the guys” to succeed, but if they did so, men looked down upon them behaving out of character for a woman.<sup>63</sup> These findings echo those of Rosabeth Moss Kanter in her work on token women,<sup>64</sup> where she describes the phenomena associated with the integration of women (or other non-dominant “token” groups) into male-dominated work places. She argues that token women are often highly visible in a

male-dominated environment, where any differences between them and the dominant group are exaggerated, and the attributes of women are often distorted in order to fit the dominant culture (e.g., women becoming “one of the guys”). These pressures, Kanter argues, may cause token women to “undergo a great deal of personal stress and may need to expend extra energy to maintain a satisfactory relationship in the work situation.”<sup>65</sup>

Nevertheless, while women combat arms leaders clearly must navigate a narrow path in order to become successful leaders, there have been notable successes and even clear advantages presented by women in combat arms leadership positions. In a comprehensive series of interviews, several women combat arms leaders in CF indicated that they felt exhibiting “feminine” styles of leadership (e.g., having good communication skills, demonstrating cooperativeness), were beneficial in developing an effective leadership style. Moreover, though, the interviews revealed that effective leaders successfully combined traits that the study authors described as masculine (e.g., aggressive, directive) and feminine (e.g., compassionate, participative) into their leadership style, and also indicated that they did not view their leadership style in gendered (i.e., male vs. female) terms. Rather, these leaders all spoke of developing their own personal style that often required adaptations based on the nature of the task presented (e.g., phase training, battalion, administrative).<sup>66</sup> While these leadership challenges are obviously constant for women in a range of military occupations, combat arms present firmer obstacles as these units have been the least accepting of women in CF.<sup>67</sup>

The challenges facing women in combat arms leadership positions bear resemblance to obstacles facing women entering other male-dominated and male-centered workforces. For example, in one American large law-enforcement agency in which less than 3% of the sworn personnel were women, the negative and sexist attitudes of male colleagues was identified as the most common problem facing sworn women in the agency.<sup>68</sup> Even in federal law enforcement agencies, in which women comprise 14.4% of the

sworn force (as of 2001), women officers identify negative male attitudes towards women, alongside balancing life and work issues, as the biggest challenge in their career. The effect is particularly harmful as women officers lack a social support structure in the workplace, that is, a “combination of instrumental support, emotional support, and mentoring received from colleagues and supervisors.”<sup>69</sup> One effect of this has been similar to those of women in the CF combat arms: sworn women in law enforcement show a drastically higher rate of workplace attrition than their male colleagues.<sup>70</sup>

As for the American military, preliminary evidence from attitudes surveys suggest that women will face similar obstacles as their counterparts in law enforcement and the CF with negative male attitudes. A 2009 study surveying West Point and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets showed that male cadets were significantly more disapproving of women serving in hand-to-hand combat positions than their female counterparts, and the male cadets were also more disapproving than the college student comparison group. Just 18% of male ROTC cadets and 10% of male West Point cadets indicated approval for women serving in hand-to-hand combat.<sup>71</sup> While the survey did not ask cadets *why* they disapproved of women serving in combat roles, a salient lesson from the CF gender integration process is that negative male perceptions of women's abilities in combat arms and of women's existence in these positions have had a significant deleterious effect on these women.<sup>72</sup>

### Strategies for Successfully Incorporating Women into Combat Arms Positions

Several studies on women working in male-dominated jobs, such as law enforcement and combat roles in militaries outside the U.S., have detailed the need for leader support for women serving in those roles. For example, each of the CF women combat arms leaders interviewed by Febraro (2007) indicated that they believed military leaders play an important role in facilitating gender integration. As one CF woman combat arms leader indicated, “If

52 MLDC Report (2011). p. 9; DACOWITS 2010 Report, p. 16-17

53 McSally (2007). Women in combat: Is the current policy obsolete? *Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy*, 14(2), 1011-1059.

54 Davis & McKee (2004).

55 Katzenstein, M.F., and Reppy, J. (eds.) (1999). *Beyond zero tolerance: Discrimination in military culture*. Lanham, MD. Rowman and Littlefield.

56 Davis, Karen. (2007). From ocean ops to combat ops: A short history of women and leadership in the Canadian Forces. *Women and leadership in the Canadian Forces: Perspectives and experiences*. Edited by Karen Davis. Ontario: Canadian Defence Academy Press.

57 Department of National Defence, Output Products. Retrieved from [http://hr3.ottawa-hull.mil.ca/dhrim/engraph/home\\_e.asp](http://hr3.ottawa-hull.mil.ca/dhrim/engraph/home_e.asp).

58 Department of National Defence (2006). *Canadian Forces national report to the Committee for Women in NATO Forces*. Ottawa: Director Human Rights and Diversity.

59 Holden, N.J. & Tanner, L.M. (2001). An examination of current gender integration policies in TTCP countries. *Director Strategic Human Resource Coordination Personnel Operational Research Team & Director Military Gender Integration and Employment Equity ORD Report R2001/01*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence.

60 Febraro, Angela (2007). Gender and leadership in the Canadian Forces combat arms: Perspectives of women leaders. *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Perspectives and Experiences*. Edited by Karen Davis. Ontario: Canadian Defence Academy Press.

61 Davis, K. & Thomas, V. (1998). *Chief land staff gender integration study: The experience of women who have served in the combat arms*. Ottawa: National Defence Headquarters, Personnel Research Team.

62 Davis (2007), p. 80.

63 Davis & Thomas (1998).

64 Kanter, Rosabeth Moss (1977). Some Effects of proportions on group life: Skewed sex ratios and responses to token women. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 82(5), 965-990.

65 Ibid

66 Febraro (2007)

67 Capstick, Farley, Wild & Parkes (2004), as cited in Febraro (2008). Promoting gender integration through leadership in the Canadian combat arms. *Paper presented at the American Psychological Association 2008 Convention*.

68 Lonsway, K. (2006). Are we there yet? The progress of women in one large law enforcement agency. *Women and Criminal Justice*, 18(1/2), 1-48.

69 Keverline, S. (2003). In the face of challenges, women in federal law enforcement persist and excel.

70 Lonsway (2006).

71 Matthews, M.D. & Ender, M.G. (2009). Role of group affiliation and gender on attitudes toward women in the military. *Military Psychology*, 21, 241-251.

72 Febraro (2007).



the leader is 100% for the mission, in this case, gender integration, then the troops will say all right, this is definitely something I should be looking at...” In this study, the mostly commonly cited leadership behaviors positively affecting women include: having a positive attitude toward women in combat roles; setting an example (mentioned by six of eight leaders); and not singling women out (mentioned by five of eight leaders).<sup>73</sup> A 2008 follow-on study identified various other practices that leaders should adopt for successfully integrating women into combat roles, such as:

...communicating with followers about problems in gender integration; acknowledging and dealing with gender differences (e.g., hygiene issues); demonstrating basic leadership competence (e.g., regarding fraternization, harassment, and gender-related logistical matters); mentoring; understanding family issues; setting gender-neutral performance standards; not defining gender integration as simply a ‘woman’s problem;’ accepting alternative leadership styles; refraining from gender stereotyping, sexist humor, or sexist language; and inspiring teamwork between women and men in combat arms units.<sup>74</sup>

Of note here, several women specifically addressed mentoring as an effective practice for successfully integrating women into combat arms. The MLDC also recommended that the Services enhance their mentoring efforts with the goal of promoting diversity in high-level positions by helping service members make more informed career decisions.<sup>75</sup> As the MLDC report notes, research shows that mentoring not only has positive effects on the careers and career satisfaction of mentored individuals (i.e., protégés/mentees), but also has a positive effect on the career satisfaction of the mentors themselves.<sup>76</sup> In addition, DACOWITS’ 2008 research on the success strategies of women service members found that “mentors are instrumental to a successful military career.”<sup>77</sup>

Nevertheless, improvements to the current services’ mentoring practices have been suggested by MLDC and various researchers. MLDC concluded, based on descriptions of the services’ current mentoring programs and practices, that the services begin formally evaluating the effectiveness of their mentoring programs as there is little research about program effectiveness to date. MLDC also recommended that the services follow several best practices, and in particular focus on, “...establishing clear objectives, allowing mentees and mentors to establish multiple mentoring relationships, providing high-quality training for both mentors and mentees, and (if relevant to the mentoring program) matching mentors and mentees based on multiple criteria that align with the goals of the mentoring program.”<sup>78</sup> MLDC specifically recommended that the services focus on providing mentoring practices for service members who have not chosen a career field, noting that current mentoring practices do not adequately address service members’ initial career decision making.

In concurrence with this conclusion, a 2003 study of officers in training at the U.S. Naval Academy found that only 45% of midshipmen reported being mentored (though, fortunately for the prospects of women entering combat arms, 63% of women reported being mentored), and only 5% of these mentees reported that the mentor relationship had been formally arranged.<sup>79</sup> Formal mentoring programs do exist in the services, of course, and the U.S. Air Force (USAF) in particular has provided formal instructions and guidance to commanders to provide mentoring programs since 1996. A 2007 study addressed the effectiveness and provided recommendations for the USAF mentoring policies, concluding that in order to increase the effectiveness of mentoring, 1) commanders need to express the value of mentoring; 2) leaders need to be held accountable for their mentoring role; and 3) formal mentoring programs should be available unless there is direct evidence that informal mentoring is occurring effectively. These studies found that if formal mentoring is not provided, noncommissioned officers (NCO’s) will not find the time for mentoring,<sup>80</sup> while

junior service members rarely initiate the mentoring relationship.<sup>81</sup>

Although mentoring and leadership support may be essential to the successful integration of women into combat roles in the U.S. military, it must be noted that studies have consistently emphasized the importance of gender neutrality in such a process. For example, the 2007 Febbraro study of women serving in CF combat roles found that, despite these best practices demonstrating the importance of formal mentoring programs, women in combat arms in the CF persistently discourage formal mentoring programs targeted at women service members, fearing that such programs would create an impression that women are receiving special treatment. As one woman commented:

*I think mentoring would probably be a great thing for women. But it would, I suspect, be received poorly as... putting women in a position of privilege, empowering them as a group and identifying them as a group, which you’d have to lay out whether the benefits would be more than the drawbacks... [Because it might be another form of singling out women].<sup>82</sup>*

Thus, an apparent dilemma exists for institutions trying to ease women into combat arms: develop formal programs to assist the integration process and in the process “single out” women in these positions and risk perceptions that they are receiving special treatment, or provide little or no assistance to ease women’s transition into these roles and risk serious attrition problems among these women. Clearly, this is not an either/or choice and there is more nuance to the issue than as offered in those two options, but leadership will still have to strike the right balance between those two sides should the U.S. military choose to open combat arms positions to women.

## Re-Crafting the Assignment Policy

Preliminary research suggests that the current assignment policy may be hindering the effectiveness of those women in theatre who experience combat action. For example, across gender, many 2009 DACOWITS focus groups participants indicated that the training they received in preparation for their deployment was in some measure inadequate,

particularly noting that weapons training was insufficient. For individuals without a combat MOS, but still attached to combat units (such as those in the Lioness Program), training is not designed to prepare individuals for performing functions basic to the units to which they might be attached. As one participant noted:

*These women are attached regardless of policy; these women are attached to combat units. Each one of these women is trained 100% in-depth for their assignment, not for their attachment. Shooting, we’re all trained to shoot. But for the Lioness program, they’re not trained to do searches and patrols. Females are not offered the same kind of training as their male counterparts due to their assignments. Females are now receiving training in theatre to get them up to speed, which is not enough.<sup>83</sup>*

Thus, it seems as a result of this policy, which does not account for the asymmetric reality of current warfare, service members—both women and men—without a combat MOS are unprepared for facing a combat situation, a likely event should one be attached to a ground combat unit.

As has been shown in OIF and OEF, women service members have been serving alongside men in the face of enemy action and have demonstrated their capability in combat time and again. Military commanders at various levels have praised the effectiveness of women in combat, while research to date has shown that gender-integrated units do not suffer from a lack of unit cohesion or effectiveness. Despite an assignment policy created with the intention of keeping women service members out of the way of hostile action, the asymmetric nature of warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan has necessitated that women serve in positions putting them in harm’s way, with 624 women wounded in action in OIF and OEF combined through June 2009.

Despite the various challenges women may face officially entering male-dominated combat arms positions, the current literature demonstrates that re-crafting the assignment policy so that Service members are assigned to combat on the basis of ability without regard to gender should have a positive impact on military readiness. Thus, in consideration of the various potential challenges facing women who would enter currently all-male combat units, the Committee seeks to advise DoD how to best achieve a successful integration.

73 Ibid.  
74 Febbraro (2008)

75 See the Commission’s 8th recommendation, found in the “Branching and Assignments” chapter, MLDC Final Report (2011).

76 In addition to the MLDC report, for research on the positive outcomes of mentoring in the military see also Baker, B., Hocevar, S. & Johnson, W. B. (2003). The prevalence and nature of service academy mentoring: A study of Navy midshipmen. *Military Psychology, 15(4)*, 273-283; and Hu, C., Wan, J.C., Sun, M. H. & Chen, H.H. (2008). Formal mentoring in military academies. *Military Psychology, 20*, 171-185.

77 2008 DACOWITS Report, p. 59.

78 MLDC Final Report (2011), pp. 70-71.

79 Baker, Hocevar & Johnson (2003).

80 Budd, F. (2007). Mentoring in the U.S. Air Force: A cornerstone for success through organizational transformation. *Performance Improvement, 46(3)*, 16-22.

81 Baker, Hocevar & Johnson (2003).

82 Febbraro (2007).

83 2009 DACOWITS Report, p. 56.



# Appendix I

## Briefings Presented to DACOWITS During Business Meetings

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

### Sexual Assault Prevention in the Military

Dr. Connie Best, Professor and Director of Adult Services, National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center, Medical Center University of South Carolina

### SAPRO Annual Report Results on Sexual Assault in the Military

Dr. Suzanne Holroyd, Communications and Policy Program Manager

### FY11 NDAA Requirements for Improved Sexual Assault Prevention and Response; and Proposed FY12 NDAA Provisions

Ms. Diana Rangoussis, Esq. Senior Policy Advisor, SAPRO

### DMDC 2010 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members

Dr. Rachel Lipari and Dr. Lindsay Rock, DMDC

### Status of Integration of Women into Submarines

LCDR Jean Sullivan, U.S. Navy

### Women in Service Restrictions Review

Mr. Doug Johnson, OSD Military Personnel Policy

### Military Leadership Diversity Commission Report Summary

General (Ret) Lester Lyles, MLDC Chairman and LTG (Ret) Julius Becton, Jr, MLDC Vice-Chairman

### Weapons Training and Implication of Integration of Women into All Combat Units: Focus Group Research on Assignment Topics

Ms. Amy Falcone, ICF International

### USMC Women in the Service Restriction Review

Colonel John Nettles, USMC, Branch Head of Manpower Military Policy

### Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military: Focus Group Research on Wellness Topics

Ms. Amy Falcone, ICF International

### DoD Sexual Harassment Policy Overview

Mr. Jimmy Love, Acting Director Military Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity

### Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office Update

Major General Mary Kay Hertog, Director, SAPRO



# Appendix J

## Acronyms Used in Report

Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services



<b>AC</b>	Active Component	<b>MPP</b>	Military Personnel Policy
<b>CF</b>	Canadian Forces	<b>NCO</b>	Noncommissioned Officer
<b>COL</b>	Colonel	<b>NDAA</b>	National Defense Authorization Act
<b>CST</b>	Cultural Support Team	<b>OEF</b>	Operation Enduring Freedom
<b>DACOWITS</b>	Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services	<b>OIF</b>	Operation Iraqi Freedom
<b>DEOMI</b>	Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute	<b>PTSD</b>	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
<b>DMDC</b>	Defense Manpower Data Center	<b>RC</b>	Reserve Component
<b>DoD</b>	Department of Defense	<b>ROTC</b>	Reserve Officer Training Corps
<b>DSAID</b>	Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database	<b>SA</b>	Sexual Assault
<b>FET</b>	Female Engagement Team	<b>SAPR</b>	Sexual Assault Prevention and Response
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year	<b>SAPRO</b>	Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office
<b>GAO</b>	Government Accountability Office	<b>SARC</b>	Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
<b>GCE</b>	Ground Combat Equivalents	<b>SSBN</b>	Ballistic Missile Submarine
<b>GEN</b>	General	<b>UCMJ</b>	Uniform Code of Military Justice
<b>JAMRS</b>	Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies	<b>USAF</b>	United States Air Force
<b>LTG</b>	Lieutenant General	<b>USC</b>	Unwanted Sexual Contact
<b>MEO</b>	Military Equal Opportunity	<b>USMC</b>	United States Marine Corps
<b>MLDC</b>	Military Leadership Diversity Commission	<b>VA</b>	Veterans Affairs
<b>MOS</b>	Military Occupational Specialty	<b>WISR</b>	Women in the Services Restrictions

