Department of Defense

Report to the President of the United States on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

2014

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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
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NOV 25 2014

The President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In your December 20, 2013, letter you directed that I provide a comprehensive report detailing major improvements since August 2013 in the prevention of and response to sexual assault, including reforms to the military justice system. As demonstrated in the enclosed report, the Department of Defense (DoD) has worked diligently to meet your request and convey our proactive and comprehensive approach to address the problem of sexual assault in the military.

The report details evidence of progress of the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program over the last three years, including reforms to the military justice system. The report also includes important preliminary data demonstrating signs of organizational change and results of current initiatives.

Results from an externally administered DoD survey show an overall decrease in the past-year prevalence of sexual assault from Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014. Furthermore, the significant increase in the number of victim reports of sexual assault over the same time period has greatly expanded our ability to provide support and services to victims and hold offenders appropriately accountable.

While the results and initiatives described in this report demonstrate signs of progress in the fight against sexual assault in our military, I recognize there is more work to do. I have made clear to Department senior leaders that our success depends on a responsive and sustained approach to all issues that affect our Service men and women, particularly sexual assault.

The Department will continue to work closely with White House leaders and Congress to improve our sexual assault prevention and response programs to build upon the solid progress we have made in recent years and our efforts to ultimately eradicate sexual assault from the military. Thank you for your continued leadership on helping not just DoD but all of society to stop this terrible crime.

Respectfully yours,

Enclosure:
As stated

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Annexes:
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Annex 2: 2014 Survivor Experience Survey (DMDC)
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DoD's Top Indicators/Agents of Progress: FY 2012 - FY 2014

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sexual assault is a significant challenge facing the United States military and the nation. Academia is wrestling with campus sexual assault, professional sports leagues struggle with intimate partner violence, and societies across the globe contend with horrific accounts of sexual violence that appear in daily headlines. For the first time in history, sexual assault has become a part of the national conversation, and a collective awareness and desire for action has emerged. Given its history of leadership on other social problems, the Department of Defense recognizes its vital role in advancing the campaign to prevent this heinous crime.

> *There is no silver bullet to solving this problem. This is going to require a sustained effort over a long period of time and we will not stop until we've seen this scourge eliminated.*
>
> *Barack Obama*
> *President of the United States*
> *May 16, 2014*

To this end, the Department's aim is to reduce, with the ultimate goal to eliminate, the crime of sexual assault in the Armed Forces. The Department of Defense-wide strategic approach to sexual assault is prevention-focused with an unwavering commitment to victim[1] care. By employing a comprehensive prevention and response system, the Department is taking deliberate, meaningful actions to:

- prevent the crime
- empower victims and facilitate recovery when incidents do occur
- sustain its commitment to holding offenders[2] appropriately accountable

With unprecedented leadership engagement, the Department has worked diligently to define the scope of the problem and take appropriate steps to field solutions that will foster lasting organizational change. As illustrated throughout this report, the Department has made notable progress in several areas. While these accomplishments are encouraging, the mission is far from complete, as leadership and Service members alike acknowledge the need for continued growth, persistence, and innovation in eradicating sexual assault from the ranks.

Purpose and Scope

In December 2013, the President of the United States directed the Secretary of Defense to provide a report on the Department of Defense's progress in addressing the issue of sexual assault, to include a review of the military justice system, by December 2014. In response, this report encompasses the key programmatic initiatives and policy

[1] Although many advocates prefer to use the term "survivor" to describe an individual who has been sexually assaulted, the term "victim" is also widely used. This document uses the terms interchangeably and always with respect for those who have been subjected to these crimes.
[2] Use of the term "offender" or "perpetrator" in this report is not intended to convey presumptions on guilt or innocence.

enhancements undertaken by the Department in Fiscal Years 2012 through 2014, with accompanying rationale, as well as synopses and evidence of progress. Also included are reports covering the same three-year timeline contributed by the Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, the National Guard Bureau, and the United States Coast Guard, as well as a review of the Uniform Code of Military Justice by the Office of the General Counsel of the Department of Defense.

The report also contains preliminary results from the new Survivor Experience Survey and the recent focus group effort on sexual assault prevention and response in the military, both fielded by the Defense Manpower Data Center;[3] provisional results of the RAND Corporation's Military Workplace Study;[4] and provisional statistical data on the Department's Fiscal Year 2014 reports of sexual assault.[5] Metrics and non-metrics[6] developed by the Department - as requested by the White House - are also provided for the assessment of strengths and opportunities for improvement in the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program. The data cover elements of prevention, the investigative and legal processes, and victim confidence in - and satisfaction with - the response system.

Organizational Change – Within and Beyond

The Department of Defense is unique in comparison to many other organizations or social groups, as it has an existing leadership structure, empowered by law to promote good order and discipline. In seeking ways to eliminate sexual assault, the Department is leveraging its existing culture of honor, dignity, and respect to drive organizational changes that empower every Service member to take action against disrespectful and dangerous behaviors. All who wish to serve must understand the Department of Defense has no place for those who do not live up to military core values.

> *We know that lasting change begins by changing the behaviors that lead to sexual assault.*
>
> *General Martin E. Dempsey*
> *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*
> *June 4, 2013*

While the Department has been acutely focused on addressing sexual assault internally, senior leaders, Service members, and even veterans have recently taken a public stand on sexual assault - and related issues of sexual harassment and intimate partner violence - in multiple venues external to the Department. In the past couple of months alone, the Secretary of Defense reviewed the relationship the Department has with a professional sports league over

[3] The *2014 Survivor Experience Survey Overview Report* and the *2014 Department of Defense Report of Focus Groups on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response* are available at Annexes 2 & 3, respectively.
[4] The *2014 RAND Military Workplace Study* report is available at Annex 1.
[5] See Appendix A: Provisional Statistical Data on Sexual Assault.
[6] "Non-metrics" are items that address the military justice process. There will be no effort to direct these aspects or outcomes, as doing so may constitute unlawful command influence on military justice. However, given the substantive interest in the military justice system and how it functions, these items will be used to describe or illustrate certain aspects of the system.

concerns regarding its handling of domestic violence,[7] a famous entertainer's performance was cancelled at a military installation due to his inaccurate and insensitive commentary on rape,[8] and a group of 60 veterans apologized via public letter to a female pilot from the United Arab Emirates when an inappropriate, sexist joke was made about her on an American news channel.[9] These are just a few examples of the change in attitudes and behaviors the Department seeks to inspire in its personnel as it advances a broader national and international discussion on dignity and respect for all.

Evidence of Progress – Top Ten Indicators and Agents of Change

In the past three years, the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program has undergone significant renewal and growth, impacting its strategy, policies, and programs. It has also invested profoundly in the development of its leaders and key "first responder personnel."[10] While the long-term target of eliminating sexual assault remains fixed on the horizon, the Department presents the following list of promising indicators and/or agents of positive change from Fiscal Years 2012-2014.

The Department of Defense is exhibiting unprecedented leadership engagement in its commitment to eradicate sexual assault in the ranks.

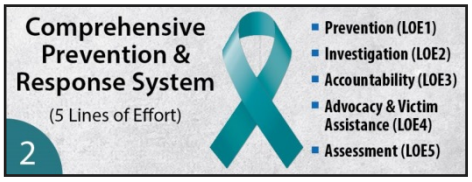
> *We must ensure that every Service member understands that sexist behaviors, sexual harassment, and sexual assault are not tolerated, condoned, or ignored.*
>
> *Chuck Hagel*
> *United States Secretary of Defense*
> *May 1, 2014*

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel has built on former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta's momentum on the issue, directing 28 sexual assault prevention and response initiatives during his tenure thus far. The result is a **total of 41 Secretary of Defense-directed initiatives over the past three fiscal years (2012-2014)**. The efforts include promoting and upholding a healthy command climate, enhancing training of key personnel involved in sexual assault prevention and response

[7] Starr, Barbara, "Defense Secretary Hagel asking for information about military ties to NFL," *CNN*, Sept. 19, 2014, http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/19/politics/hagel-and-nfl/.
[8] Dries, Kate, "Cee-Lo Green Pulled From Military Base Performance," *Jezebel*, Sept. 5, 2014, http://jezebel.com/cee-lo-green-pulled-from-military-base-performance-1630961014.
[9] Macias, Amanda, "US Veterans Send Fox News An Open Letter About 'Boobs On The Ground' Joke," *Business Insider*, Sept. 27, 2014, http://www.businessinsider.in/us-veterans-send-fox-news-an-open-letter-about-boobs-on-the-ground-joke/articleshow/43657166.cms.
[10] The term "first responder personnel" refers to Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates, Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel, medical and mental health personnel, law enforcement, military criminal investigators, legal personnel, chaplains, and more.

efforts, revising policy and strategy regarding victim rights and care, and improving criminal investigative capabilities and the military justice process.

While sexual assault prevention and response policy has been in place for some time, the Secretary's leadership is the catalyst behind the lasting and substantive organizational changes deployed since 2011. Through professional assessment tools and training, **commanders and leaders across the Department are empowered to promote an environment intolerant of the disparaging behaviors that may bring about sexual assault**. The championing of the program has had noticeable effects, as is evidenced in the latest climate survey and focus group feedback indicating Service members feel leadership is firmly committed to the issue.[11] Military leaders demand Service members understand and embody overarching military core values, and demonstrate the social courage needed to act on the issue as well. As a result, peer-to-peer mentoring, where every Service member plays a role in preventing sexual assault and is empowered to intervene when necessary, is now a growing practice across the Force.



The Department's strategic approach to sexual assault is at the organizational level, the centerpiece of which is the ***Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Strategic Plan***, revised[12] and published in May 2013. The strategy provides a proactive and multi-disciplinary approach to achieve Department-wide unity of effort and purpose on sexual assault prevention and response across **five Lines of Effort**, as follows:

- Prevention – focused elements at multiple levels to prevent the crime
- Investigation – competent investigations to yield timely and accurate results
- Accountability – offenders held appropriately accountable
- Advocacy/Victim Assistance – first-class victim services and care provided
- Assessment – qualitative and quantitative measures to inform programs/policies

The aforementioned comprehensive sexual assault prevention and response system is aligned across the Military Services and the National Guard Bureau in their respective strategies and programs. This provides a coordinated approach to sustain progress and implement requisite organizational change, leveraging the Department's enduring culture of dignity and respect. The Assessment component is the watermark behind the other Lines of Effort, as it allows for continuous evaluation and feedback to inform improvements to ongoing programs, as well as identify areas for improvement.

[11] See *Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey (*Feb. to Sept. 2014 results); *2014 Department of Defense Report of Focus Groups on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response,* available at Annex 3.
[12] The *Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Strategic Plan* was originally published in 2009.

The five Lines of Effort sections in this report detail the recent programmatic and policy initiatives implemented, to include rationale for action, synopses of progress thus far, and evidence of that progress in each area. Each Line of Effort section also addresses the following common topics:

By establishing the right command climate, ensuring leadership support, and empowering Service members to safely intervene, the Department of Defense will be the last place an offender wants to be.

Major General Jeffrey J. Snow
Director
Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office
May 1, 2014

- Role of the commander in supporting the respective Line of Effort
- Specialized and enhanced training and certification of key personnel
- Partnerships and collaborations with government and civilian experts
- Prevalent myths and clarifying facts related to the particular Line of Effort

Recent survey data suggest the percentage of Active Duty women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year **declined from 6.1 percent in 2012 to 4.3 percent in 2014.**[13] For Active Duty men, the rate of unwanted sexual contact stayed about the same, moving **from 1.2 percent in 2013 to 0.9 percent in 2014**. Although the prevalence rates of sexual assault in the Department are showing a downward trend, even one sexual assault in the Armed Forces is one too many. The Department's goal is to intensify its prevention work to continue this progress in forthcoming years.

Another positive trend is the recent substantive increase in reporting by victims of military sexual assault. While underreporting continues to be a problem, the number of victims in Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 who came forward to make reports significantly increased. **Fiscal Year 2013 featured a 50 percent increase in sexual assault reporting from 2012**, **and 2014 reporting maintained that gain and increased by another 8 percent. Whereas only one in 10 victims was reporting just two years ago, that rate has increased to one in four.** Given that the past-year prevalence (occurrence) of sexual assault decreased from Fiscal Year 2012 to Fiscal Year 2014, the importance of this upward trend in reporting cannot be overstated. Increased reporting signals not only **growing trust of command and confidence in the response system**, but serves as the gateway to provide more victims with support and to hold a greater number of offenders appropriately accountable.

[13] Statistics cited are based on the Workplace and Gender Relations Survey administered by Defense Manpower Data Center in 2012 and the RAND Corporation's fielding of the prior form 2012 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey in 2014, for comparative reasons (for more information, see page 57).

Increased Conversion Rate

Victims have the option to make either a Restricted or Unrestricted Report. The former provides the victim with limited disclosure of an incident to specified parties, and allows victims to access medical, mental health, and advocacy services while avoiding initiating the investigative or legal process. Unrestricted Reports, on the other hand, immediately trigger an independent investigation conducted outside the chain of command. Survivors who make a Restricted Report may convert their report to an Unrestricted Report at any time and participate in the military justice process. **In Fiscal Year 2014, 19 percent of Restricted Reports received converted to Unrestricted Reports, more than in any prior year**. An additional 47 Restricted Reports initially made in Fiscal Year 2013 and preceding years also converted to Unrestricted Reports during Fiscal Year 2014. Since 2006, conversion rates have typically averaged at 15 percent.

The Department has consistently and steadily augmented the depth and breadth of its approach to the prevention of sexual assault. In 2014, the Department revised its prevention strategy with the assistance of the Military Services and the National Guard. The *2014-2016 Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy* provides a **unified plan and purpose across the Department at all levels, and identifies commanders as the center of gravity for promoting prevention and safety.**

> *I am impressed by the scope and focus of DoD's strategy for addressing this important public health problem. Building a strategy based on what works in prevention holds great promise for achieving positive change.*
>
> *Dr. James A. Mercy*
> *Acting Director, Division of Violence Prevention*
> *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*
> *on the 2014-2016 DoD Prevention Strategy,*
> *October 2014*

Based on the social-ecological model for prevention,[14] the new strategy provides a roadmap for the delivery of consistent and effective prevention strategies and initiatives through empirically-based promising practices. The social-ecological model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors, and allows the Department to address those factors that put people at risk for experiencing or perpetrating violence. While there is no single "silver bullet" solution, as the President

[14] '"The Social-Ecological Model: A Framework for Prevention," *Injury Prevention & Control: Division of Violence Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control, http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/overview/social-ecologicalmodel.html.

recognized, this innovative prevention strategy allows for new promising practices to be incorporated, assessed, and adapted accordingly.

Victim participation and engagement throughout the military justice process are key to maintaining good order and discipline within the Total Force, as well as holding offenders appropriately accountable. However, participating in criminal proceedings can be exceedingly difficult for survivors, given that recalling memories about a sexual assault can sometimes be as traumatic as the crime itself. As a means to provide advice and advocacy, as well as empower victims to participate in the justice system, the Department created the groundbreaking Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel Program.

Witnesses who had been assigned Special Victims' Counsel told the Panel that their Special Victims' Counsel were critical to their ability to understand the process and participate effectively as witnesses against the accused.

Report of the Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Panel

These **military judge advocates provide independent, personalized legal advice and representation to victims of sexual assault**, **protecting their rights and empowering them to successfully navigate the military justice system**. These specialized attorneys are assigned to victims and act independently of the prosecutor. The Department's highly-regarded Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel Program provides survivors with a dependable resource that is specially trained to represent their legal interests – a service with overwhelmingly positive survivor reviews.[15]

The Survivor Experience Survey, fielded by the Defense Manpower Data Center, is the **first standardized and voluntary survey of sexual assault survivors conducted across all Department of Defense components** (Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard). This ongoing survey affords survivors an opportunity to provide direct and confidential feedback on their experiences throughout the reporting process. Topics addressed include: awareness of sexual assault resources and reporting options; use of and satisfaction with key first responder personnel; use of and satisfaction with sexual assault-related medical and mental health services; and leadership responses to sexual assault reports. Survey results offer essential insights into how the Department can

[15] See Annexes 2 and 3.

build on existing successes and address any remaining gaps and concerns to ensure every victim is treated with respect and sensitivity.[16]

While the number of respondents to this first effort was modest (just over 150), a large majority of these survivors favorably rated the services they received from first-responder personnel. **Ninety percent of survivors who used the services from Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel were satisfied or very satisfied with the assistance they received.**

Further, survivors indicated that maintaining privacy, having a "voice" in the process, safety, support in managing duty responsibilities, and mental health/counseling services are their most important concerns. However, too many of these respondents indicated they perceived social and/or professional retaliation as a result of making a report. Even so, **nearly three quarters of all respondents indicated they would recommend others report their sexual assault.** To this end, combatting social and professional retaliation after reporting a sexual assault will remain a focus area for the Department, along with other potential barriers to reporting. A Phase II version of the Survivor Experience Survey, including questions on the investigative and legal processes, is under development.

The Department implemented several training enhancements, advanced certification requirements for first responders, and newly developed training expectations for Service members that impact every Line of Effort in the comprehensive sexual assault prevention and response system. This deliberate professionalization of key sexual assault prevention and response personnel seeks to **develop and sustain a cadre of individuals armed with skills and a level of preparedness that meets or surpasses what is available in the civilian sector**.

The following are the major training and certification advancements recently put into effect across the Armed Forces:

- ***Trauma-informed Interviewing Techniques*:** Investigators assigned to Military Criminal Investigative Organizations[17] from all Services/National Guard Bureau undergo training that provides agents with the knowledge and skills to better understand the fundamentals of neuroscience, trauma, and effective victim

[16] The full report for the *2014 Survivor Experience Survey* is included at Annex 2, and is based on preliminary findings from Quarter 4 of Fiscal Year 2014.
[17] Army Criminal Investigation Command agents and Naval Criminal Investigative Service agents learn a technique called the Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview. Air Force Office of Special Investigation agents learn a technique called Cognitive Interviewing.

interviewing. These innovative interview techniques help agents work with victims to obtain more information about crimes, potentially leading to improved offender accountability. **Since 2009, nearly 2,000 special agents and prosecutors have completed courses in advanced sexual assault investigations in the Department.**

- ***Professional Certification of Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates:*** As the personnel who interact most frequently with sexual assault victims, Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates offer a specialized skill set and expertise to assist victims and advocate on their behalf. Further, they advise commanders and assist with sexual assault prevention and awareness training. The Department's Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program ensures that regardless of a victim's location, he or she will have access to the same high-level standard of support. This professional certification signals to survivors that Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates have the requisite level of knowledge and training to assist victims in their recovery. **Since the program was launched in Fiscal Year 2012, over 22,000 Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates have been certified** in a process administered by the National Organization for Victim Assistance**.**

> *The special agent was great. He treated me with sensitivity, kept me informed about the steps the investigation would take and with witness interviews and then provided me a wrap-up.*
>
> *Survivor regarding a Military Criminal Investigative Organizations agent*

- ***Advanced Training Course for Certified Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates:*** The Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office and the Military Services/National Guard collaborated with the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crimes during 2013 to develop an advanced training course for Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates. The online course, Advanced Military Sexual Assault Advocate Training, provides advanced sexual assault victim advocacy skills training by leveraging gaming technology in an interactive, online environment designed specifically for a military audience.

- ***Standardized Core Competencies and Learning Objectives:*** The Department worked collaboratively to develop a set of core competencies and learning objectives to assure consistency and effectiveness in training at all command levels. Sexual Assault Prevention and Response content has been integrated into military training, as follows:

- All levels of Professional Military Education
- Pre-Command and Senior Enlisted Leader Training
- Accession Training (within 14 days of entry on active duty)
- Initial Military Training
- Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Annual Training
- Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Pre-/Post-Deployment Training

The Department continues to collaborate and communicate with a variety of entities to discuss strategies and share best and promising practices to inform and enhance its programs. These efforts include reaching out to reputable government and civilian experts, as well as responding to requests in order to share knowledge and offer experience-based guidance. Leveraging partnerships and collaborations across these sectors provides significant advantages and allows the Department to remain at the cutting edge of the latest research and initiatives regarding sexual assault prevention.

By the same token, organizations across the country and internationally are looking to the United States military as a model to inform their own Sexual Assault Prevention and Response programs. Various universities and military allies have replicated the Department's policies and programmatic approach.

The DoD has done an incredible amount of work in a short amount of time in combatting sexual assault and violence against women. We have never seen that kind of change in a civilian community and I just wish more people would recognize that fact.

Joanne Archambault
Executive Director of End Violence Against Women
January 17, 2012

Noteworthy interagency, international, and cross-sector collaborations include:

Government Agencies/Organizations

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime
- Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation Victim Services
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of State
- The Peace Corps**
- United States Coast Guard**

Advocacy Organizations

- Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network
- National Organization for Victim Assistance
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center

Academia

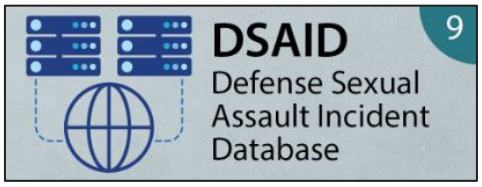
- Universities and colleges**
- Subject Matter Experts in various disciplines

Foreign militaries

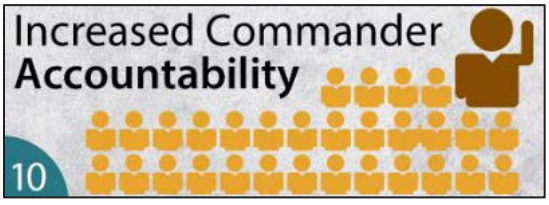
- Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, and Norway**

Indicates organizations that have consulted with the Department of Defense to inform their respective programs or approach

The Department also works closely with Congress to improve its programs and policies. **The last three National Defense Authorization Acts included 53 sections of law, containing more than 100 requirements related to sexual assault in the military – many of which were built on or in parallel with existing Secretary of Defense initiatives**. **The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 alone provided the most sweeping changes to military law since 1968.** Additionally, the Department was invited to serve in an advisory role on the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. Many of the recommendations made by the Task Force, including professional advocacy, confidential reporting, bystander intervention training, and surveying for prevalence, have been proven components of the Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response policy for many years.



The Department created the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database, a secure, web-based tool designed for reporting and case management of sexual assaults committed by or against Service members.[18] The database captures case information entered by Military Service and National Guard Sexual Assault Response Coordinators about both Restricted and Unrestricted sexual assault reports, enhances a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator's ability to provide comprehensive and standardized victim case management, enables authorized legal officers to enter and validate case disposition data, supports Service Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program management, provides improved oversight of how sexual assault cases are managed, and enables the Department to meet Congressional reporting requirements. Since October 2013, all Military Services and the National Guard are utilizing this innovative product.



Military commanders are responsible for establishing a command climate that promotes honor, discipline, respect, and integrity, all of which are core values of the United States military and fundamental components of the

[18] Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.

Department's effort to reduce – with the intent to eliminate – sexual assault in its ranks. The Department strives to provide military commanders with the resources they need to address this critical issue, and hold them accountable for failure to do so.

At every level of Department leadership, beginning with the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the message has been clearly established that sexual assault and harassment will not be tolerated, and the United States military is no place for individuals who find such behavior acceptable. Commanders are expected to embrace this philosophy, and do their part in disseminating this message to future leaders for whom they are responsible. To assist commanders at every level to promote and uphold a healthy, respectful command climate and give reports of sexual assault the high-level attention and seriousness they deserve, the Department has implemented a climate assessment process. This process represents a fundamental shift in how the Department drives organizational change. The climate assessments involve three primary activities:

- ***The Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute Organizational Climate Survey:*** This important assessment tool for commanders provides feedback from unit members to enhance a leader's knowledge about specific trends and behaviors within his or her unit, and provides an avenue for them to confidentially communicate concerns. Commanders leverage results to drive unit change, employing Service member feedback to address inappropriate actions, as necessary.

- ***Senior Leader Involvement:*** Results from the climate survey are automatically shared with the unit commander's immediate supervisor. Unit commanders are responsible for using survey results and additional information gathering activities to address any challenges facing the unit.

- ***Officer Evaluation Reports***: Senior leaders rate unit commanders on their actions to address unit climate. By incorporating commanders' response into their performance reviews, commanders are accountable for promoting a climate of dignity and respect. Given that sexual assault is less likely when sexist behavior and sexual harassment are less prevalent in a unit, the climate assessment process has the promise to produce substantive organizational change within the Department.

In addition, starting in June 2012, the Secretary of Defense directed that initial decisions about the dispositions of penetrating sexual assault cases be made by senior military officers who were at least in the grade of colonel or Navy captain and hold special court-martial convening authority. This action allowed seasoned commanders – typically without any personal knowledge of the victim or subject in the impacted subordinate units – to appropriately review how to best address the evidence and subsequent command action in these matters.

Metrics Overview

This report includes provisional results for 12 metrics and six non-metrics that were developed in collaboration with the White House for the purpose of analyzing specific aspects of the Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program (available in their entirety in Appendix B). Encouragingly, the Department clearly demonstrates indicators of progress in the areas of:

- Prevalence
- Reporting
- Bystander Intervention
- Command Climate
- Victim Support
- Perception of Leadership's Efforts

However, the Department was unable to identify clear progress in the area of perceived victim retaliation. Despite significant efforts by the Department, military victims continue to perceive social and/or professional retaliation. Retaliation, in any form, is unacceptable in the Department of Defense. Addressing this issue will be a top priority moving forward for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response programs across the Military Services.

Military Justice System Review

The following are key findings from the review of the military justice system conducted by the Office of the General Counsel of the Department of Defense, as directed by the President of the United States for inclusion in this report:

- The military justice system has undergone massive change over the past three fiscal years, resulting in the most sweeping revisions since 1968
- As a result, the system is better able to investigate and try sexual assault cases in a fair and just manner, while better protecting victims' privacy interests
- The military justice system can be further improved, and additional reforms will be implemented
- The Department agrees with the conclusion of the Response Systems Panel[19] that future reforms should **not** include transferring prosecutorial discretion from commanders to judge advocates - a move that would likely not only degrade mission readiness, but also diminish commanders' effectiveness in the fight against sexual assault in the military

[19] The Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes (Response Systems Panel) was established under Section 576 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, as amended by National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, to perform an independent assessment of the systems used to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate crimes involving adult sexual assault and related offenses.

Conclusion and Way Ahead

Senior leaders across the Department of Defense have provided unprecedented leadership engagement on sexual assault prevention and response, employing a proactive communication posture with clear and consistent messaging. Through reaching out to victims for feedback, collaborating with external partners and experts, working with Congressional and White House leaders, and professionalizing key personnel through advanced training and certifications, the Department continues to seek inventive and effectual approaches to inform and augment its strategic and comprehensive sexual assault prevention and response system.

The crime of sexual assault is a detriment to the welfare of men and women in uniform and is antithetic to core military values of trust, dignity, and respect. Combatting this crime requires sustained effort and resolve, coupled with a multidisciplinary approach across the five Lines of Effort. With an increased focus on prevention and steadfast commitment to excellence in support and care for victims, the Department has demonstrated significant progress in its mission to eradicate sexual assault from the Armed Forces. However, additional research and evaluation are necessary in order to refine and optimize existing approaches, as well as build on successes, positive trends, and insightful feedback to discover opportunities for improvement.

> *The Department needs to be a national leader in preventing and responding to sexual assault. We are committed to lead the daughters and sons of the American people with the values of our honorable profession and to ensure they serve in an environment that is free from sexual assault and protects the dignity and respect of every Service member.*
>
> *Chuck Hagel*
> *United States Secretary of Defense*
> *May 6, 2013*

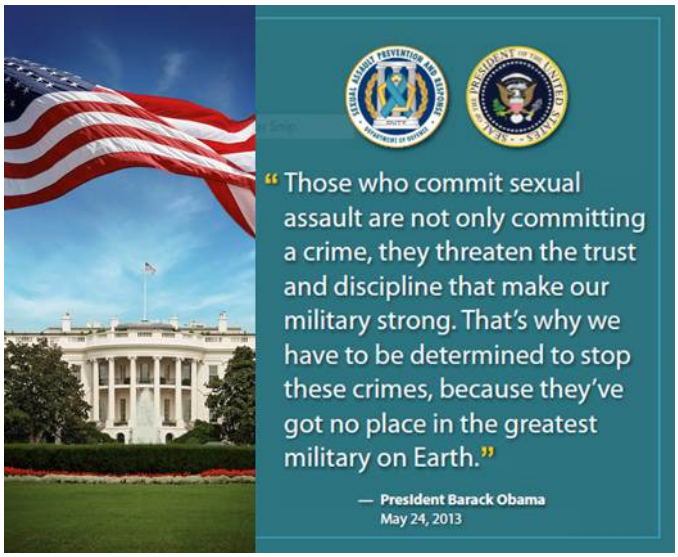
Beyond 2014, the Department will remain focused on its concerted efforts to sustain and enhance ongoing and new programs and initiatives, and identify and close gaps in requisite areas. As the many sectors of society contend with similar challenges, the Department will continue to advance the national conversation on eradicating sexual assault, and remain at the forefront of this moral imperative.

II. INTRODUCTION

DoD-wide Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Mission Statement

The Department of Defense prevents and responds to the crime of sexual assault in order to enable military readiness and reduce -- with a goal to eliminate -- sexual assault from the military.

A. Report Purpose and Scope



In December 2013, the President of the United States directed the Secretary of Defense to provide a report on the Department of Defense's (DoD's) progress in addressing the issue of sexual assault by December 2014. This report encompasses the key programmatic initiatives and policy enhancements undertaken by the Department from October 2011 through September 2014 – essentially Fiscal Years (FY) 2012 through 2014. Additionally, it details DoD's strategic and multidisciplinary approach to eliminating sexual assault and includes Service summaries contributed by the Departments of the Navy, Army, and Air Force, as well as summaries from the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG). An analysis of recent Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) reform by the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) of the DoD is also provided, as directed.

This report answers that direction, and also details the most recent assessment methods utilized by the Department, including the Survivor Experience Survey (SES) and the 2014 focus group effort on sexual assault prevention and response in the military, both fielded by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). Also included are provisional results of the 2014 RAND Corporation's Military Workplace Study and of the Department's FY 2014 reports of sexual assault as per the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID). The report organizes and communicates the Department's progress using the five lines of effort (LOEs) from the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Strategic Plan, revised[20] and published in May 2013. The LOEs are Prevention, Investigation, Accountability, Advocacy/Victim Assistance, and Assessment. Metrics and non-metrics, developed by the Department as requested

[20] The *DoD SAPR Strategic Plan* was originally published in 2009.

by the White House, are also provided to help evaluate the Department's SAPR program, and cover elements of prevention, the investigative and legal processes, and victim confidence in - and satisfaction with - the response system.

B. DoD's Strategic Approach

This report details DoD's proactive and multidisciplinary approach across the five LOEs to achieve unity of effort and purpose across the Department in reducing, with the goal of eliminating, sexual assault. The approach engages leaders at all levels and requires a personal commitment from every Service member to uphold military core values. The key to promoting the organizational changes needed to eliminate sexual assault is active leadership engagement with a commitment to DoD's enduring culture of mutual dignity and respect.

Over the past three years, Secretaries of Defense Chuck Hagel and Leon Panetta directed a total of 41 SAPR initiatives. Beginning with a December 2011 order giving victims the ability to request a transfer away from the accused, and continuing with multiple directive memos intended to enhance various aspects of the SAPR program, both Secretaries advanced necessary and significant changes to the Department's approach to prevention and response. The efforts have included promoting a healthy command climate, enhancing training across all LOEs, revising SAPR policies and strategy regarding victim rights and care, and improving accountability measures for investigations and the military justice process. While SAPR policy has been in place for some time, the Secretaries' leadership is the catalyst behind the lasting and substantive organizational changes deployed since 2011.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Designated as Chairman's #1 High Interest Training Issue for the Joint Force

On October 10, 2013, Gen. Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, released the FY 2014 - 2017 Chairman's Joint Training Guidance. At the top of the list for high-interest training issues (HITIs) is SAPR.

The HITIs represent operational focus areas consistent with the priorities established in defense strategic guidance, the Chairman's Strategic Direction to the Joint Force, and the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations, and constitute an integral part of joint training programs. "*The Services, Combat Support Agencies, and Combatant Commands should advocate a robust Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program and provide individual education and training to prevent and appropriately respond to incidents of sexual assault.*" (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Notice 3500.01 October 10, 2013)

1. Leadership Engagement

Strong and informed leadership at every level is essential to the effective prevention of and response to sexual assault. While some mistakenly infer that commander involvement impedes progress against sexual assault, no problem in the military has

ever been solved without the strength of the women and men in command making the right decisions and leading change. Leaders are expected to be more involved in the solution, not less involved. Research shows that sexual assault is more likely in environments where offensive behavior, unwanted sexual attention, and sexual harassment occur. Therefore, the Department's approach places a high level of responsibility on commanders and leaders to be proactive in identifying and correcting these behaviors. Command demands that Service members understand and embody overarching military core values, and embrace their responsibility to demonstrate the social courage needed to lead on the issue as well.

Commanders' behaviors, priorities, counsel, and actions set the expectations and tone for the entire unit. Therefore, the commander's role in sexual assault prevention and response is interwoven throughout DoD's SAPR strategy, and is essential to effecting organizational change.

2. Organizational Change

Sexual assault is a broad societal problem, one not just found in the military. While efforts to combat sexual assault can be found in pockets across society and the globe, DoD is unique in comparison to many other organizations or social groups, as it has an existing leadership structure, empowered by law to promote organizational good order and discipline. In seeking ways to eliminate sexual assault, the DoD leverages its existing culture of honor, dignity, and respect to effect organizational changes that empower every Service member to take action against disrespectful and dangerous behaviors. All who wish to serve must understand that DoD has no place for those who do not live up to military core values.

3. Partnerships/Collaborations

The Department continues to collaborate with a variety of entities to develop strategies and share best and promising practices. DoD's efforts include both reaching out to organizations, as well as responding to requests to share knowledge and offer experience-based guidance.

Noteworthy interagency, international, and cross-sector collaborations include:

a. Government Agencies

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Department of Justice (DOJ), Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)

- o DOJ, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Victim Services
- o Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)
- o Department of State
- o The Peace Corps**
- o USCG**

b. Advocacy Organizations

- o Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN)
- o National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA)
- o National Sexual Violence Resource Center

c. Academia

- o Universities and colleges**
- o Subject Matter Experts in various disciplines

d. Foreign militaries

- o Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, and Norway**

Indicates organizations that have consulted with the DoD to inform their respective programs or approach

The Department also works closely with Congress to improve its SAPR program. The last three National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAAs) included 53 sections of law, containing more than 100 requirements - many of which built on Secretary of Defense initiatives. Last year's NDAA alone resulted in the most sweeping revisions to military justice since 1968.

DoD was also invited to serve in an advisory role on the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. Many of the recommendations made by the Task Force, including professional advocacy, confidential reporting, bystander intervention training, and surveying for prevalence, have been proven components of the Department's SAPR policy for many years.

C. Scope of the Program

1. DoD Definition of Sexual Assault

In the Department, the term "sexual assault" does not refer to one specific crime; rather, it encompasses a range of sex crimes between adults that represent a broad spectrum of offenses from rape to forcible sodomy to abusive sexual contact, as well as attempts to commit these offenses. Consequently, the definition of sexual assault in the military is broader than the crime of rape.

In its current form, DoD SAPR policy[21] defines sexual assault as follows:

> *Intentional sexual contact characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation, or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent. The term includes a broad category of sexual offenses consisting of the following specific*

[21] DoDD 6495.01, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program.*

UCMJ offenses: rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact, abusive sexual contact, forcible sodomy (forced oral or anal sex), or attempts to commit these acts.

Consent is defined as:

Words or overt acts indicating a freely given agreement to the sexual conduct at issue by a competent person. An expression of lack of consent through words or conduct means there is no consent. Lack of verbal or physical resistance or submission resulting from the accused's use of force, threat of force, or placing another person in fear does not constitute consent. A current or previous dating relationship or the manner of dress of the person involved with the accused in the sexual conduct at issue shall not constitute consent. There is no consent where the person is sleeping or incapacitated, such as due to age, alcohol or drugs, or mental incapacity.

2. Continuum of Harm

The Continuum of Harm represents the environment and potential for harm where people live, work, and spend their lives. As illustrated in Figure 1, on the left side of the continuum is a healthy environment. As one moves to the right, behaviors and misconduct that detract from a healthy environment increase in severity, and range from such problems as sexism, objectification, and sexual harassment, to inappropriate touching and sexual violence. At the bottom of the continuum are capabilities that DoD has in place to prevent, correct, and respond to harmful behaviors. While all of these problems can coexist in a given environment, this figure graphically represents the pattern of escalation some use to dehumanize or objectify others, and the very serious consequences that can result.

While considered in the Continuum of Harm addressed by Department prevention efforts, other non-contact misconduct, such as indecent exposure and stalking, does not fall under the SAPR program as chartered in 2005. However, the Military Criminal Investigative Organizations (MCIOs)[22] investigate these and other sex crimes as appropriate. Incidents of sexual harassment are also not in this report because they fall under the purview of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO). Lastly, sexual abuse of children and spouses are not contained in this report because they fall under the purview of the DoD Family Advocacy Program (FAP). DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) continues to work closely with these DoD agencies and others in order to share lessons learned and develop complementary and reinforcing approaches to create and maintain climates of dignity and respect for all our personnel.

[22] MCIOs include the Army Criminal Investigations Division, NCIS, and the AFOSI.

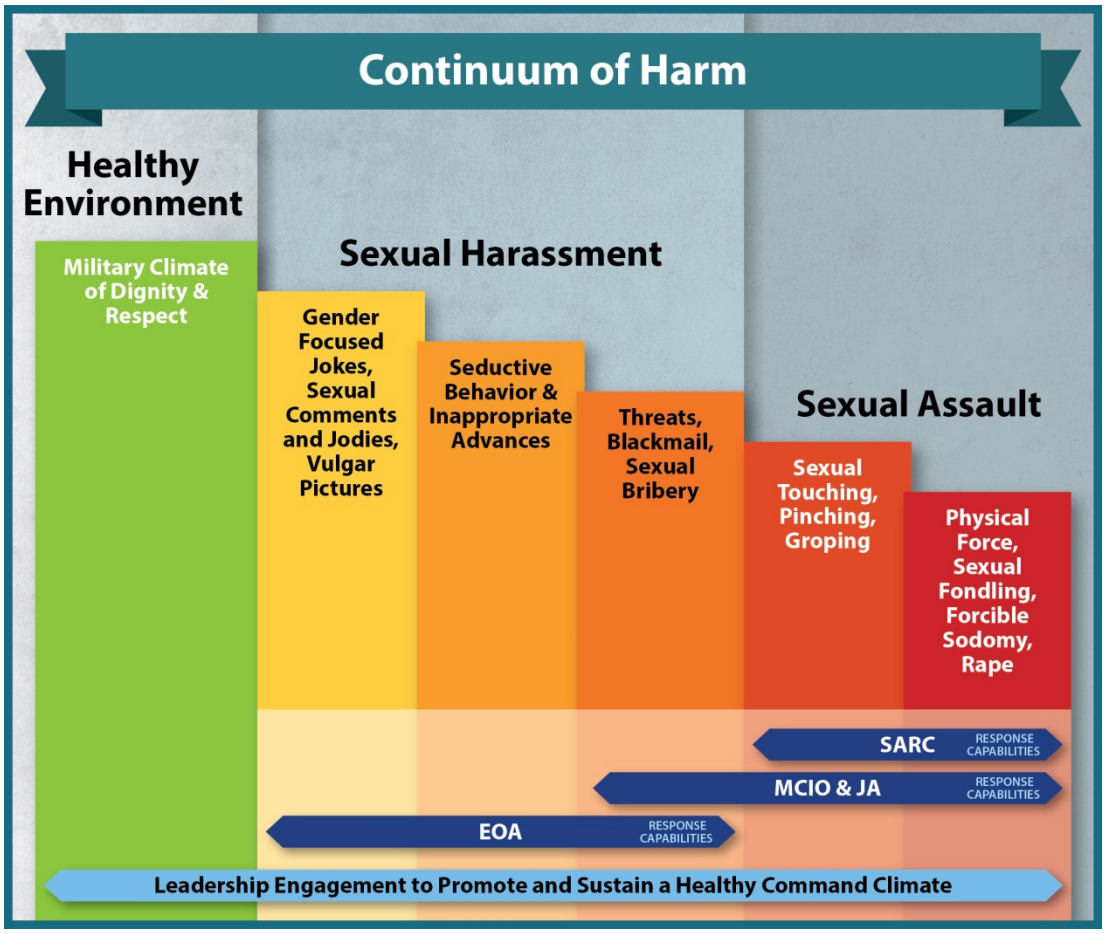


Figure 1 – DoD Continuum of Harm

D. Published SAPR Policy & Strategy

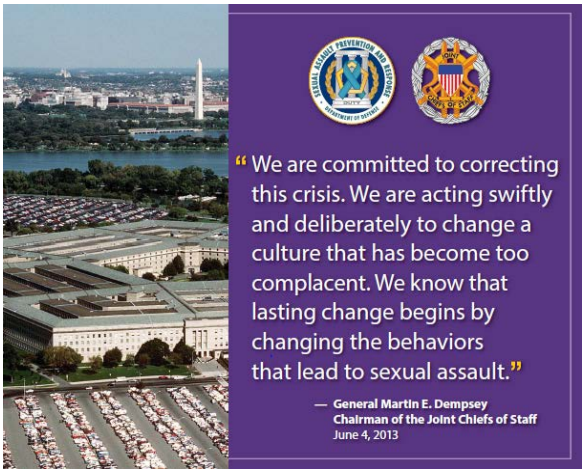
1. SAPR Policy

DoD SAPR Program policy is found in DoD Directive (DoDD) 6495.01 and DoD Instruction (DoDI) 6495.02. In FY 2013, the Department reissued both documents with a range of new policies, training requirements, and safety measures.[23] These changes reflect feedback from survivors and advocacy groups, as well as the Military Services, NGB, military investigators, DoD OGC, and DoD Health Affairs. The updated policy documents also incorporate recommendations from the GAO, the DoD Inspector General (IG), and the Defense Task Force on Sexual Assault in the Military Services (DTF-SAMS), as well as legislative requirements from the NDAA for FY 2009, FY 2011, FY 2012, and FY 2013. Other interim guidance addressing Sexual Assault Incident Response Oversight Reports (SAIRO), the Department's Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) capability, and the DoD Sexual Assault Advocate Certification

[23] DoDD 6495.01, "SAPR Program," Incorporating Change 1 was published on April 30, 2013.

Program (D-SAACP) has been published and will be incorporated into future revisions to DoD policy documents.[24]

2. SAPR Strategy



The *DoD SAPR Strategic Plan* represents the Department's holistic approach, applicable to all stakeholders and clarifying Department priorities, objectives, and initiatives with regard to prevention and response to victims. In FY 2013, DoD SAPRO and the Military Services and NGB revised the *DoD SAPR Strategic Plan* to align with and operationalize the key tasks defined in the *Joint Chiefs of Staff's (JCS) Strategic Direction to the Force*.[25] The 2013 update was the first since 2009, the year the plan was originally published. In a May 2013 memo, the Secretary of Defense directed the Military Services to align their respective programs and strategies with the *DoD SAPR Strategic Plan*, which has since occurred. Hereafter, DoD will review and update the *DoD SAPR Strategic Plan* as necessary each year via an annual review process, in collaboration with the Military Services and NGB.

E. Five SAPR Lines of Effort

DoD SAPRO organizes and reports Department progress in the SAPR program using the five LOEs from the *DoD SAPR Strategic Plan*. The plan presents a multidisciplinary approach with initiatives and objectives to achieve unity of effort and purpose across the Department.

The five LOE sections in this report describe the initiatives taken and evidence of progress in each area, and also address the following common topics:

- Role of the commander, specific to the LOE
- Specialized and enhanced training
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Prevalent myths and clarifying facts

1. Prevention (LOE 1)

No one should ever have to experience this crime. Prevention is the only means by which to stop sexual violence. Each Service is working to effectively embed key prevention strategies that empower leaders to affect the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of Service members, while shaping the environment in which all live and work. The

[24] All policies referenced are available on http://www.sapr.mil.
[25] JCS's Strategic Direction to the Joint Force was issued in May 2012.

objective of the LOE is to deliver consistent and effective prevention methods and programs that reduce, with a goal to eliminate, the occurrence of sexual assault. The desired end state is a culture wherein all elements of the military community work together to preclude the opportunity for sexual assault.

During FY 2014, the Department took steps to implement the *2014-2016 DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy.*[26] Prevention is more than training and education of individuals. A successful prevention strategy addresses the entire continuum of harm, shapes the environment, and includes a wide range of integrated elements targeting accountability, community involvement, communication, deterrence, incentives, and harm reduction at every level of military society.

2. The Response System

The Department's response system is designed to empower victims and facilitate recovery. Moreover, this comprehensive support system refers every Unrestricted Report[27] of sexual assault to an MCIO for a thorough investigation, holds offenders appropriately accountable, and supports victims throughout the process.
The "Response" component of DoD's SAPR system incorporates the following three LOEs that demonstrate the Department's uncompromised commitment to victim support:[28]

- Investigation (LOE 2)
- Accountability (LOE 3)
- Advocacy and Victim Assistance (LOE 4)

The DoD response system provides multiple reporting channels both inside and outside the chain of command and prioritizes victims' preferences in how they choose to heal. Several policy reforms are a direct result of victim feedback: opportunity for expedited transfers away from accused offenders, providing the option for Special Victims' Counsel (SVC), treating every case as a medical emergency, combatting professional and peer retaliation, encouraging more reporting from male victims, and ensuring the availability of anonymous, worldwide, 24/7 crisis support through the DoD Safe Helpline.

Since 2011, DoD has published updated policies and incorporated extensive recommendations from oversight organizations on sexual assault prevention and response, many of which advance victims' rights and offer a greater variety of medical,

[26] SAPRO developed and executed a sexual assault prevention campaign to identify evidence-based prevention practices and lessons learned, in order to update the *2008 Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy*.
[27] Military victims of sexual assault have two reporting options: Restricted and Unrestricted. Restricted Reporting provides the victim with the option of limiting disclosure of the incident to specified parties. Unrestricted Reporting provides the victim the opportunity to participate in the military justice process. For more information regarding reporting options, please see Advocacy and Victim Assistance (LOE 4) in this report.
[28] While the DoD Strategic Plan addresses the Investigation and Accountability LOE, these activities fall outside the oversight of the SAPR Program. Oversight of the criminal investigative process falls under the purview of the DoD IG, and legal processes involved in Accountability are the responsibility of the Judge Advocates General (JAGs) of the Military Departments.

psychological, and legal assistance than any other institution or jurisdiction in the United States.

In the past three years, DoD made significant advances in identifying, developing and implementing best practices to support victims of sexual assault. The most successful and ground-breaking initiatives with regard to the response component are the launching of DoD Safe Helpline, the fielding of the Special Victims Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) capability, and the creation of a SVC program.

3. Investigation (LOE 2)

The objective of the Investigation LOE is to achieve high competence in the investigation of sexual assault. The end state is where investigative resources yield timely and accurate results.

The Department continues to develop expert investigative capabilities that enable professional, responsive, and accurate investigations, independent from the chain of command. DoD investigative resources employ scientifically-informed techniques that optimize the recovery of physical and testimonial evidence while mitigating the potential for re-traumatizing a victim.

4. Accountability (LOE 3)

Achieving high competence in holding offenders appropriately accountable is the objective of the Accountability LOE, while the end state is where perpetrators are held appropriately accountable. The legal counsel and representation provided though the SVC program are intended to give sexual assault victims confidence that they will be treated fairly should they choose to engage the criminal justice process.

Over the past three years, the military justice process has been modified to inspire greater participation by victims, to include requiring more senior commander involvement in initial disposition decisions about the most serious sexual assault cases, protecting victim communications with victim advocates (VAs), and creating a more highly skilled set of response professionals. Through these efforts and others, the Department is sending a clear message that the military is no place for individuals who coerce, degrade, and humiliate others through sexual assault.

5. Advocacy and Victim Assistance (LOE 4)

The objective of the Advocacy/Victim Assistance LOE is to deliver consistent and effective victim support, response, and reporting options. The end state is to provide high quality services and support, to instill confidence and trust, strengthen resilience, and inspire victims to report. Throughout FY 2012-2014, the Department implemented numerous advocacy and victim assistance programs, initiatives, and policy enhancements.

A record number of victims in FY 2013 and FY 2014 came forward to make reports.[29] Given that the Department's estimate of past-year prevalence (occurrence) of sexual assault decreased from FY 2012 to FY 2014, the Department views this increased reporting behavior as an indicator of growing confidence in the DoD response system. DoD SAPR policies are designed to help victims exercise their rights, as well as provide them with a professional response, effective treatment, legal support, and a voice in the military justice process.

6. Assessment (LOE 5)

Assessment entails continuous evaluation of SAPR initiatives and programs to promote achievement of intended outcomes. The objective of the fifth LOE is to effectively standardize, measure, analyze, and assess program progress. The end state is where the Department incorporates responsive, meaningful, and accurate systems of measurement and evaluation into every aspect of the SAPR program. Each year, the Department integrates data from sexual assault reports, scientifically conducted surveys, and other forms of research to provide a fully transparent view of DoD SAPR program progress.

F. Oversight and Accountability

To support this effort, the Under Secretary of Defense (USD) for Personnel and Readiness (P&R) and the Director of DoD SAPRO provide weekly updates to the Secretary of Defense and other senior Department leaders on the progress of new and ongoing SAPR initiatives, development of new policy, and implementation of legislation. The Secretary uses these regularly scheduled meetings to consider recommendations from senior leadership and to hold Department leaders accountable to further enhance SAPR policies and programs.

1. Independent Oversight

The Department makes transparent its advances and setbacks as it works to eliminate sexual assault from the military. Outside evaluation and reporting on Department progress is important to achieving stakeholder trust. Evaluative reviews by various organizations are described below:

a. The Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel (June 2014)

Section 576 of the NDAA for FY 2013, as amended by the NDAA for FY 2014, directed the Secretary of Defense to establish the Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel – or RSP – "to conduct an independent review and assessment of the systems used to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate crimes involving adult sexual assault and related offenses under Section 920 of Title 10, United States Code (Article 120 of the UCMJ), for the purpose of developing recommendations regarding how to improve the effectiveness of such systems." The RSP released its report, including 132

[29] These reports include members of the military who reported being sexually assaulted by a civilian as well as survivors who reported being sexually assaulted prior to entering the military.

recommendations for the DoD, on June 27, 2014. The Department is currently identifying an appropriate action for each of the recommendations.[30]

b. Defense Task Force on Sexual Assault in the Military Services (December 2009)

As the result of a year-long review of all sexual assault policies and programs among the Services and DoD, this report recognized the significant progress made in responding to sexual assault since the establishment of the SAPR Program in 2005. Recommendations covered the spectrum from strategic proposals to specific actions that would continue improvement of prevention, victim response, and accountability within DoD.[31] Of the 91 recommendations, DoD has implemented 88. The other three are ongoing actions.

c. Defense Task Force for Care for Victims of Sexual Assault (April 2004)

This Task Force conducted a 90-day review of all sexual assault policies and programs in the Services and DoD. Throughout the review, the Task Force sought to understand the culture, command structures, and resource limitations involved with improving in-theater care of sexual assault victims. The findings provided a high-level, comprehensive assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in DoD and Service policies regarding care for sexual assault victims in 2004. This Task Force report was the first of three Task Forces on sexual assault prevention and response, and encouraged a Department-wide approach, culminating in ground-breaking new policy and establishment of DoD SAPRO in 2005.

d. DoD Inspector General (IG)

The DoD IG conducts audits and provides reports on topics of special interest. The DoD IG provides independent, relevant, and timely oversight of the DoD that supports the warfighter; promotes accountability, integrity and efficiency; advises the Secretary of Defense and Congress; and informs the public. With regard to SAPR, the DoD IG oversees the policies of the MCIOs that investigate sexual assault in the military. Since 2011, the DoD IG has published four reports that addressed and recommended improvements to DoD investigation, records retention, and sex offender registration policies.

e. Government Accountability Office (GAO)

GAO's mission is to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. Since 2008, GAO has published the findings and recommendations of six engagements regarding DoD SAPR policies, programs, and functions. The most recent engagement report, published September 9, 2014, assessed action taken to prevent sexual assault during initial military training. As of this report, DoD has implemented 25 of 31 recommendations from the six engagements and is working to implement the remaining six. Additionally, there are two ongoing GAO assessments: an assessment of the policy and program as it pertains to

[30] Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.
[31] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/research/DTFSAMS-Rept_Dec09.pdf.

male victims of sexual assault, and a review of DoD's efforts to prevent sexual assault. Results are expected in early 2015.

2. *Internal Assessment*

DoD SAPRO is the oversight body responsible for continually assessing the Department's SAPR strategy. SAPRO utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods, including surveys, focus groups, and annual reports in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Department's overall SAPR programs. While SAPRO serves as the overarching authority responsible for this assessment, the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps also perform their own internal assessments.

G. Appendices, Annexes, and Enclosures

Accompanying this report are several attachments submitted by the Military Departments, the NGB, the USCG, OGC, DMDC, and other government agencies or contractors that complement the Department's submission. These attachments include:

- provisional statistical data on FY 2014 reports of sexual assault
- background and trending of metrics and non-metrics
- a review of the UCMJ provided by OGC
- in-depth reports from the DMDC on findings from the SES and the Focus Groups on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (FGSAPR) in the Military
- report from the RAND Corporation on the 2014 Military Workplace Study
- an analysis of Service-specific SAPR initiatives provided by each of the Military Departments and NGB, as well as the USCG

III. PREVENTION (LOE 1)

Objective: Deliver consistent and effective prevention methods and programs.
End state: Cultural imperatives of mutual respect and trust, professional values, and team commitment are reinforced to create an environment where sexual assault is not tolerated, condoned, or ignored.

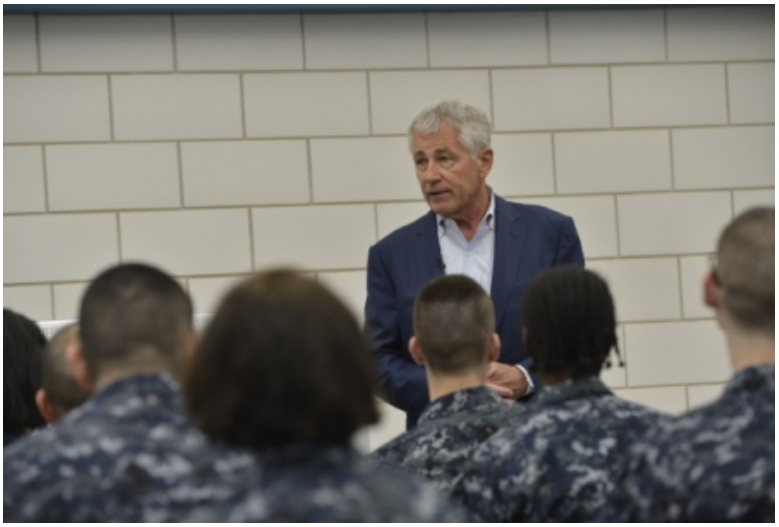
A. Introduction

Prevention is the key LOE, as it is the only one that precedes an incident of sexual assault. Prevention has neither a beginning nor an end. To sustain any reduction in the annual occurrence of the crimes that constitute sexual assault under military law, prevention work must be continuous and pervasive. Accordingly, the DoD has focused significant efforts on a proactive, comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to preventing the crime of sexual assault.

We must ensure that every Service member understands that sexist behaviors, sexual harassment, and sexual assault are not tolerated, condoned, or ignored.

Chuck Hagel
United States Secretary of Defense

Demonstrating progress in prevention is inherently challenging. By definition, effective prevention makes something much less likely to occur. Given the challenges associated with measuring the underreported problem of sexual assault, few institutions have taken on the challenge of regularly demonstrating their progress in preventing the crime. The Department has been documenting its progress since its first annual report to Congress in 2004. However, in the past three years, there has been considerable progress made to further advance dignity and respect as an inherent part of military culture.



Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel speaks with U.S. Navy recruits during a Recruit SAPR training class while visiting Naval Station Great Lakes, Ill., May 6, 2014.

DoD's prevention mission is to disrupt a perpetrator's offense cycle by targeting the attitudes and behaviors that precede an offense. While deterrence plays an important and necessary role in this mission, it is not sufficient to stop all offenders – especially since research shows

that perpetrators believe forcing sex can be acceptable and even justifiable[32]. Instead, the Department has taken a much broader view of prevention, leveraging its culture and core values to embed prevention initiatives at every level of military society. To this end, DoD prevention programs **do not** rely solely on training and education of individuals. Prevention encompasses a variety of new and ongoing initiatives that are regularly assessed and modified to advance a climate of dignity and respect throughout the Department. These organizational changes, promoted by DoD leadership at all levels, are intended to make DoD inhospitable to offenders. Key among the initiatives driving organizational change is the annual climate assessment process required of every unit commander.

Because law enforcement and leadership cannot be present in every situation, the Department promotes a personal commitment from each individual Service member to be a steadfast participant in creating an appropriate culture for upholding standards of behavior and military core values. Prevention is most effective when there is a sense of collective ownership across an organization in combatting sexual assault. In the past year, there is substantive evidence that Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines have embraced a personal commitment to helping eradicate sexual assault within the ranks and intervening before offenses can take place.

Key elements of an effective prevention program include policies that shape the environment to encourage the best outcomes, tailored education and awareness, leadership involvement, and empowerment of people to take direct action, as well as a wide range of integrated elements addressing accountability, community involvement, communication, deterrence, and incentives for participation. Ultimately, effective prevention is dependent upon substantial leadership engagement at all levels to promote a professional command climate based on dignity and respect for all.

Sailors and Marines participate in a 5K run in support of Sexual Assault Awareness Month 2014 on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman.

[32] Abbey, A., Zawackia, T., Bucka, P., Clintona, P., McAuslanc, P. (2003) Sexual Assault and Alcohol Consumption: What Do We Know About Their Relationship and What Types of Research Are Still Needed? *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 9,* 271-303.

B. Defining the Problem

Rationale: Defining the problem in the military provides important insights into how to best prevent sexual assault.

Synopsis of Progress: Although the Department has made great strides in sexual assault prevention and response in recent years, research suggests that sexual assault remains a significant problem in the Armed Forces. As in the civilian sector and contrary to common perception, most sexual assaults are perpetrated by someone known to the victim. While some sexual assaults can be perpetrated by strangers in attacks that leave the victim visibly injured, most crimes occur between people who know each other, often involving alcohol, and limited to few, if any, visible injuries.

> *By establishing the right command climate, ensuring leadership support, and empowering Service members to safely intervene, the Department of Defense will be the last place an offender wants to be.*
>
> *Major General Jeffrey J. Snow*
> *Director, DoD SAPRO*

This "non-stranger" fact pattern has a number of significant implications for prevention efforts, particularly given that most people mistakenly believe the "stranger" fact pattern often depicted in popular culture to be the predominate form of the crime. Past Workplace and Gender Relations Surveys of Active Duty Members (WGRA) show that sexual harassment and stalking may be related to incidents of sexual assaults; over half of women and nearly half of men surveyed who reported having been sexually assaulted also experienced some form of sexual harassment and/or stalking by the alleged offender, prior to, or after the unwanted sexual contact (USC) incident. As in the civilian sector, a significant percentage of sexual assaults in the military go unreported each year, meaning that official reports of sexual assault to DoD authorities are vastly outnumbered by the numbers of incidents believed to occur each year, as estimated by representative, scientific surveys of the military population.

Evidence of Progress: The preceding information is explained in greater detail in the *2014-2016 DoD Prevention Strategy* signed by the Secretary of Defense on May 1, 2014.[33] In addition, DoD regularly updates its understanding of the problem of sexual assault through new and existing data sources and publishes this information in its Annual Report to Congress.[34]

C. Defining Prevention

Rationale: Defining prevention allows for the subsequent identification and organization of strategies.

[33] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/SecDef_Memo_and_DoD_SAPR_Prevention_Strategy_2014-2016.pdf
[34] Annual Reports to Congress are available at: http://www.sapr.mil/index.php/annual-reports

Synopsis of Progress: The DoD looked to the CDC for assistance in better defining prevention as it applies to sexual violence.[35] The CDC identifies three levels of prevention based on when the prevention efforts occur:

Primary Prevention: Approaches that take place before sexual violence has occurred to prevent initial perpetration.

Secondary Prevention: Immediate responses after sexual violence has occurred to address the early identification of victims and the short-term consequences of violence.

Major General Jeffrey J. Snow, SAPRO Director, discusses new initiatives designed to continue efforts to eliminate sexual assault in the military, directs implementation of the updated sexual assault prevention strategy, and releases the annual report on sexual assault in the military for FY 2013.

Tertiary Prevention: Long-term responses after sexual violence has occurred to address the lasting consequences of violence and sex offender treatment interventions.

Evidence of Progress: The DoD placed **Primary Prevention** at the core of its focus in developing prevention-related tasks and initiatives. Primary Prevention is a systematic process that promotes healthy environments and behaviors and reduces the likelihood or frequency of sexual violence/assault before it occurs.[36] It improves understanding of the underlying conditions in society that perpetuate sexual assault, which in turn enhances the ability to change those conditions. The preceding information is provided in greater detail in the 2014-2016 DoD Prevention Strategy signed by the Secretary of Defense on May 1, 2014.

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[35] "*Sexual violence is any sexual act that is perpetrated against someone's will, and encompasses a range of offenses, including a completed nonconsensual sex act (i.e., rape), an attempted nonconsensual sex act, abusive sexual contact (i.e., unwanted touching), and non-contact sexual abuse (e.g., threatened sexual violence, exhibitionism, verbal sexual harassment).*" http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/definitions.html, accessed Sept. 18, 2014.

[36] Davis, R., Fujie Parks, L., & Cohen, L. (2006). *Sexual Violence and the Spectrum of Prevention: Towards a community solution*. Enola, PA: National Sexual Violence Resource Center, Prevention Institute.

D. Key Highlights

1. **Evolution of DoD Prevention Strategy**
2. ***SAPR Connect* Community of Practice**

1. Evolution of DoD Prevention Strategy

Rationale: As unique subsets of U.S. society, the U.S. Armed Forces have cultures all their own. Effective **Primary Prevention** of sexual assault requires "population-based and/or environmental and system-level strategies, policies, and actions" that work to "modify and/or eliminate the events, conditions, situations or exposure to influences (risk factors) that result in the initiation of sexual assault."[37] Further, Primary Prevention includes "universal interventions directed at the general population as well as selected interventions aimed at those who may be at increased risk for sexual violence perpetration."[38]

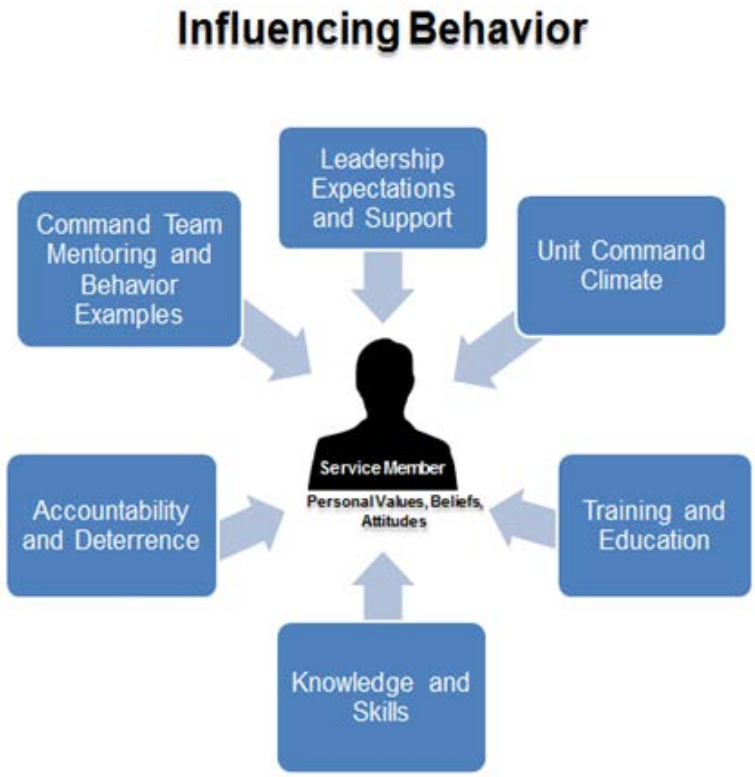

Figure 2 – Influencing Behavior

[37] *2014-2016 DoD Prevention Strategy*, p. 2.
[38] CDC (2004). *Sexual violence prevention: beginning the dialogue*. Atlanta, GA: CDC in DeGue, Sarah, Valle, Linda Anne, Holt, Milissa K., Massetti, Greta M., Matjasko, Jennifer L, and Tharp, Andra Teten, "A Systematic Review of Primary Prevention Strategies for Sexual Violence Perpetration," *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 19 (2004) 346-362.

Changing well-established **social** norms requires an overhaul of entrenched knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that support sexual assault. The influence of these factors beyond the individual can be so powerful that, as the Institute of Medicine concluded in its study on health promotion, "It is unreasonable to expect that people will change their behavior easily when so many forces in the social, cultural and physical environment conspire against such change."[39] Hence, the Department seeks to promote behaviors that define and support gender equity, healthy relationships, and conflict resolution (including safe and effective bystander intervention), with the goal of surpassing these barriers to change.

Synopsis of Progress: A key Prevention LOE task included in the *2013 DoD SAPR Strategy* was to review and update the 2008 DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy. The 2008 Strategy established a rationale for greater prevention initiatives and identified a variety of means by which to promote prevention. However, it did not identify a means by which to promote unity of effort.

As previously noted, DoD embarked on a four-phased plan to revise the 2008 strategy that included multiple visits to existing programs, a vast exploration of academic literature, and consultations with several renowned subject matter experts from advocacy groups, government agencies, and educational institutions known for their innovative programs and research. Utilizing the consolidated results of the research and observations, SAPRO published the revised ***2014-2016 DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy*** (see pages 43-44 for more detail).

Sailors and Marines gather on the flight deck of the multipurpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) to form a teal ribbon in support of SAAM, April 2013.

[39] The Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report, "The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century," (IOM, 2003, p. 4).

The 2014-2016 DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy

The objectives of the 2014-2016 Prevention Strategy are to achieve unity of effort and purpose across all of DoD in the execution of sexual assault prevention, to develop objective criteria for measuring progress, and to publish tasks that operationalize the Prevention LOE. The strategy's vision is to ensure a military environment where every Service member lives and operates in a climate of mutual respect, free from sexual violence; where individuals are motivated and empowered to intervene against inappropriate behaviors; where effective sexual assault prevention practices are institutionalized across the DoD; and where the Department serves as a national leader in preventing sexual assault. Finally, the mission calls for the DoD to execute proactive and comprehensive sexual assault prevention programs in order to enable military readiness and reduce −with a goal to eliminate− sexual assault from the military.

The updated strategy further enhances and augments existing efforts in the Prevention LOE by formalizing many of the successful ongoing initiatives, and standardizing practices and programs across the Department. The shift in emphasis is to a more complete, approach that includes the many spheres of influence in the "social ecological model (SEM)."[40] (Figure 3) The SEM is a framework for behavioral change and intervention at various levels or spheres of influence and is utilized by numerous organizations. For example, the CDC uses the framework to understand different influences on a person's values, attitudes, and behaviors and their relationship to one another. In addition, public health and safety organizations around the world employ this model to combat cancer, HIV, tobacco abuse, youth violence, and many other health-related issues.

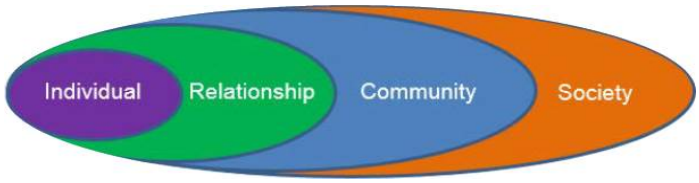

Figure 3 – Social Ecological Model

The SEM model describes how each level of society has its own collection of risk factors and protective factors[41] that must be considered when trying to achieve the prevention of sexual violence, as there are multiple levels of interconnected influences across society:

- Individual-level influences involve biological factors, personal history, and individual characteristics that increase or decrease the likelihood an individual will become a victim or perpetrator of violence.
- Interpersonal relationship-level influences are factors that involve the interactions of peers, intimate partners, and family members.
- Community-level influences are factors at play in community and social environments and include an individual's experiences and relationships with schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods.
- Societal-level influences are larger, macro-level risk and protective factors that influence sexual violence such as gender inequality, religious or cultural belief systems, societal norms, and economic or social policies that create or sustain gaps and tensions between groups of people.
- To better understand the military environment in which sexual assaults occur, DoD leveraged the SEM to establish its own framework for understanding risk and protective factors, their influences, and their relationship to one another. In the *2014-2016 DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy*, the SEM was adapted to address the prevention of sexual assault in the military (Figure 4), and advocates prevention initiatives and intervention

[40] Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32(7), 513.
[41] Risk factors increase the likelihood sexual violence will occur and protective factors decrease the likelihood sexual violence will occur, or buffer someone from becoming a victim or perpetrator of sexual violence.

across the spectrum of influence. The Department added an additional sphere – leaders – because they are the center of gravity in any prevention program. Leaders set the tone in word and deed, and their involvement is critical. Recognizing the essential role of leadership, DoD included leaders as a distinct sphere of influence to highlight the necessity that commanders and their staffs develop and execute tactics that target this "center of gravity" for prevention efforts. In the DoD SEM, the levels are as follows:

- Individual – Each person plays a role (beliefs, attitudes, and values)
- Relationships – Family, friends, peers, coworkers
- Leaders at all levels
- DoD/Services/Units ("the military community")
- Society – Laws, policies and cultural norms

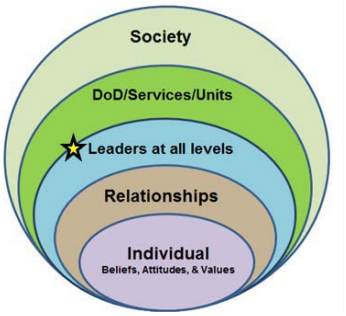

Figure 4 – DoD Social Ecological Model

The new strategy provides a roadmap for the delivery of consistent and effective prevention strategies and initiatives to address all the spheres of influence in the SEM. In order to address all the spheres of influence and reach the Strategy's desired end states, prevention programs in the DoD shifted toward the integration of a variety of practices using an multidisciplinary, comprehensive approach. This paradigm shift in theoretical application was based on established research indicating single-faceted (e.g., training only or deterrence only) efforts have not shown long-term effectiveness in reducing sexual assault.

The DoD researched promising practices and identified the following ten elements to include in all military sexual assault prevention programs:

- Leadership Involvement at all Levels ("center of gravity")
- Peer to Peer Mentorship (informal leaders)
- Personal Accountability
- Organizational Support (resources)
- Community Involvement
- Deterrence
- Communication
- Incentives to Promote Prevention
- Harm Reduction (aka Risk Avoidance/Risk Reduction)
- Education and Training

Leaders at all levels are the "center of gravity" for the prevention of sexual assault, as they are responsible for the climate of their unit and the welfare of their subordinates. Peer to peer mentorship promotes healthy relationships between peers, partners, family, and friends. Personal accountability for behavior enhances the unit climate of trust and safety. Organizational support involves the institutionalization of resources to support sexual assault prevention programs, to include manpower, budget, policies, and beyond. Community involvement extends the unit climate to the local community with the involvement of advocacy groups, healthcare services providers, family and social support service providers, and researchers, university faculty, epidemiologists, and subject matter experts grounded in scientific data. Specific actions ranging from deterrence of negative behaviors, targeted communication endorsing appropriate values, attitudes, and behaviors, incentives to promote prevention and harm/risk reduction tactics have shown to reduce the risks of sexual assault and help promote a healthy command climate. Lastly, education and training curricula that incorporates adult learning principles and is evidence-based, adapted to the environment, and responsive to the gender, culture, beliefs, and diverse needs of the targeted audiences improves knowledge, imparts skills, and influences attitudes and behaviors that support the concepts underlying the aforementioned ten prevention elements.

2. "DoD SAPR Connect" Community of Practice

Disseminating best and promising practices

Rationale: Given the size and global reach of the DoD, a means to connect personnel working the SAPR program worldwide is imperative. A military Community of Practice (CoP) focused on primary prevention of sexual assault provides a means to learn, share knowledge, and collaborate.

Synopsis of Progress: In FY 2014, the DoD developed a CoP to allow the Department to leverage and advance research, as well as share promising practices and lessons learned with external experts, federal partners, Military Services, advocacy organizations, and educational institutions for prevention of sexual assault. *DoD SAPR Connect* is the overarching name for the Department's collaboration and information-sharing CoP. Comprised of four "pillars" (Figure 5), *SAPR Connect* includes interfaces that range from virtual to face-to-face to webinars to a community toolkit.

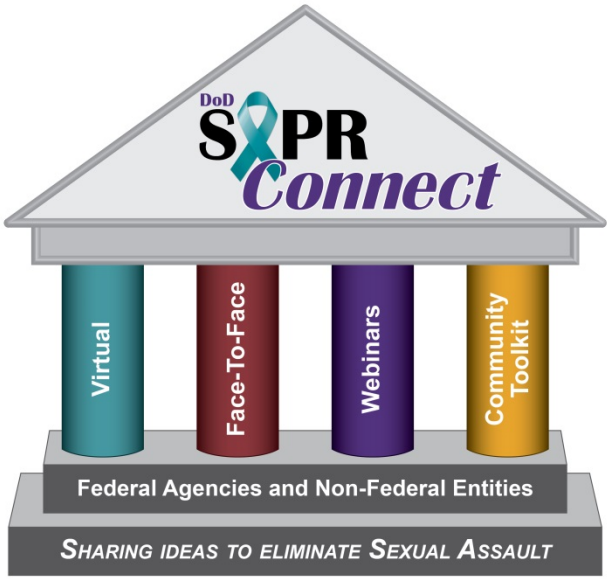

Figure 5 – The four pillars of the SAPR Connect CoP

- **Virtual**. The centerpiece of the DoD's virtual efforts is the presence of SAPR Connect on **milSuite.** This secured, collaborative environment features a variety of channels, including video sharing and a portion called "milBook," a social media venue where members can post and share ideas. DoD also has a virtual presence with **SAPR.mil**, the website for DoD SAPRO, and with **Defense Connect Online,** the DoD's means for holding on-line trainings and discussion forums.

- **Face-To-Face**. In-person meetings provide an opportunity to bring the Service SAPR Program Managers (PMs) together to collaborate on DoD prevention efforts. Established in 2013, the **DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Roundtable** has served as a forum to communicate and share information across the Services on prevention-related issues. For example, this forum was used to introduce the initial concepts behind the updated *2014-2016 Prevention Strategy*. **DoD SAPRO site visits** allow the Department to learn of new research and promising practices in use around the country. For example, in August 2014, SAPRO and the Service SAPR leads traveled to Atlanta to meet with CDC experts on research and practices that could further inform DoD prevention efforts.

- **Webinars.** Held once a quarter (Q), webinars build awareness within DoD of new programs as well as share insights on experiences with ongoing efforts. Depending on the topic, DoD webinar participants can hear from internal DoD experts, other federal agencies or non-federal entities. To encourage participation from Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs), participants can earn Continuing Education Units (CEU) from webinar attendance to apply toward their D-SAACP maintenance requirements.

- **Community Toolkit.** These resources support prevention efforts, such as SAPR-related policy and strategy documents, core competencies and learning objectives for SAPR Training, and prevention-related posters, public service announcements, videos and media materials. Another tool, currently in draft, is the *Commander's Guide to Preventing Sexual Assault in the Military,* a resource manual for commanders and those implementing sexual assault prevention programs. The *Commander's Guide* will be a concise reference for unit leaders desiring assistance in implementing the core elements of the 2014-2016 Prevention Strategy.

Evidence of Progress: In May 2014, the Secretary of Defense directed the development of a military CoP.[42] SAPRO developed the CoP in the months following and officially launched the *SAPR Connect* page on milSuite.mil in October 2014. *SAPR Connect* has membership from all four Services and the National Guard, including many personnel from overseas locations. As of October 2014, SAPRO has hosted five prevention webinars with 1,030 participants and awarded 1,000 CEUs. Topics thus far have covered Peer Education and Peer Mentors; a SAPR Program Highlight on prevention practices from the U.S. Army 704th Military Intelligence Brigade in Fort Meade, Maryland; Sexual Assault Offenders and Harm Reduction; the SEM supporting the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy; and the SAPR Connect CoP.

Any big problem in society that is resolved has to begin at the top. Every leader in the military is focused on [sexual assault], so it is important that our people in the military institution know that the Secretary of Defense is very focused on stopping sexual assault in the military.

Chuck Hagel
U.S. Secretary of Defense
during his visit to the Safe Helpline at RAINN
April 21, 2014

[42] Memorandum from the Secretary of Defense, "Develop a Collaborative Forum for Sexual Assault Prevention Methods," May 1, 2014.

E. Role of the Commander

1. Importance of Command Climate

Commanders Leading Long-Term Organizational Change

Rationale: Military-specific research highlights the relationship of a hostile work environment to incidents of sexual assault.[43] Chief among these findings is that there is a strong positive correlation between the level of sexual harassment in a military unit and the sexual assault of personnel within that unit. Further, sexually demeaning, offensive and/or humiliating behaviors that are sometimes minimized and labeled as hazing or horseplay have been central features in past cases of male-on-male sexual assault.

Leaders play a central role in the DoD strategy towards the prevention of sexual assault, as they provide a critical prevention capability in the Armed Forces unlike other sectors of US society that must capitalize on coalitions and networks to influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of individuals and groups. As the "center of gravity" in the unit, military commanders are instrumental in setting the tone and climate. This approach places a high level of responsibility on commanders to set an example of appropriate behavior, to be proactive in identifying and rooting out inappropriate behaviors, and to mentor and educate unit members through targeted messaging on sexual assault prevention.

Synopsis of Progress: To assist commanders, the Department has armed them with information, tools, and tactics to prevent sexual assault and other forms of misconduct in their units. From specialized leadership training to command climate surveys, commanders are equipped with information, tools, and resources to combat sexual assault and other problems that impact unit climate. To help commanders better understand the factors at play within their units and within each command, the Secretary of Defense and Congress both directed the use of a command climate assessment process (see Figure 6), required annually or within 120 days of a change in unit command.

At the heart of the climate assessment is a unit survey developed by the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI).[44] The DEOCS assists commanders in identifying a wide variety of potentially damaging attitudes and behaviors within their respective units.

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[43] Harned, M., Ormerod, Al, Palmieri, P., Collinsworth, L., and Reed, M. (2002). Sexual Assault and Other Types of Sexual Harassment by Workplace Personnel: A Comparison of Antecedents and Consequences. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 7, 174-188.

[44] The Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO) provides staff supervision of DEOMI.

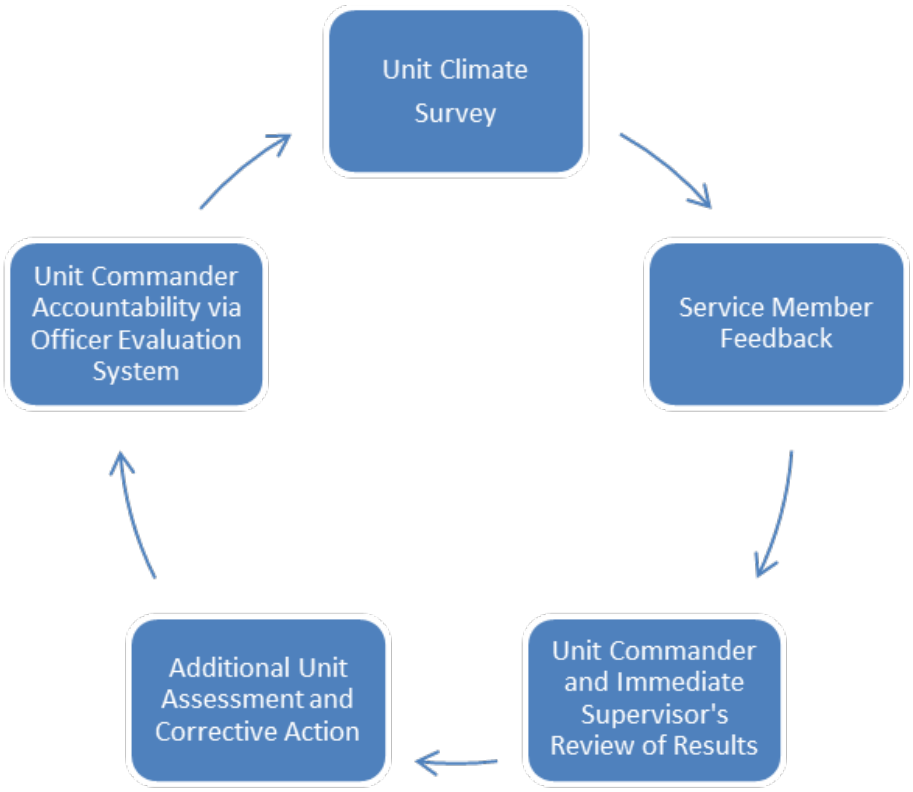


Figure 6 – The Climate Assessment Process

The DEOCS[45] is an important assessment tool for commanders, as the feedback obtained from unit members enhances a leader's knowledge about specific trends and behaviors within his or her unit and provides an avenue for unit members to confidentially communicate concerns. Responses to the survey are then used to spur additional information gathering and corrective action by unit leadership, as appropriate.

Last year, Secretary Hagel directed the results of the DEOCS be provided to both the unit commander and the next level commander in the chain of command. This added layer of oversight provides another level of commander accountability as a part of a broader system of checks and balances.

The Secretary further directed each of the Military Services to require commanders' yearly evaluations to include an assessment of their ability to promote climates of dignity and respect.[46] As a result, the Department has implemented measures that motivate commanders to promote and sustain healthy command climates.

[45] For more information on the DEOCS, please see the Assessment (LOE 5) section.
[46] Memorandum from the Secretary of Defense, Enhancing Commander Accountability (Elevate Command Climate Surveys) May 6, 2013.

As Figure 7 shows, the vast majority of Service members have never - and would never - commit a sexual assault.

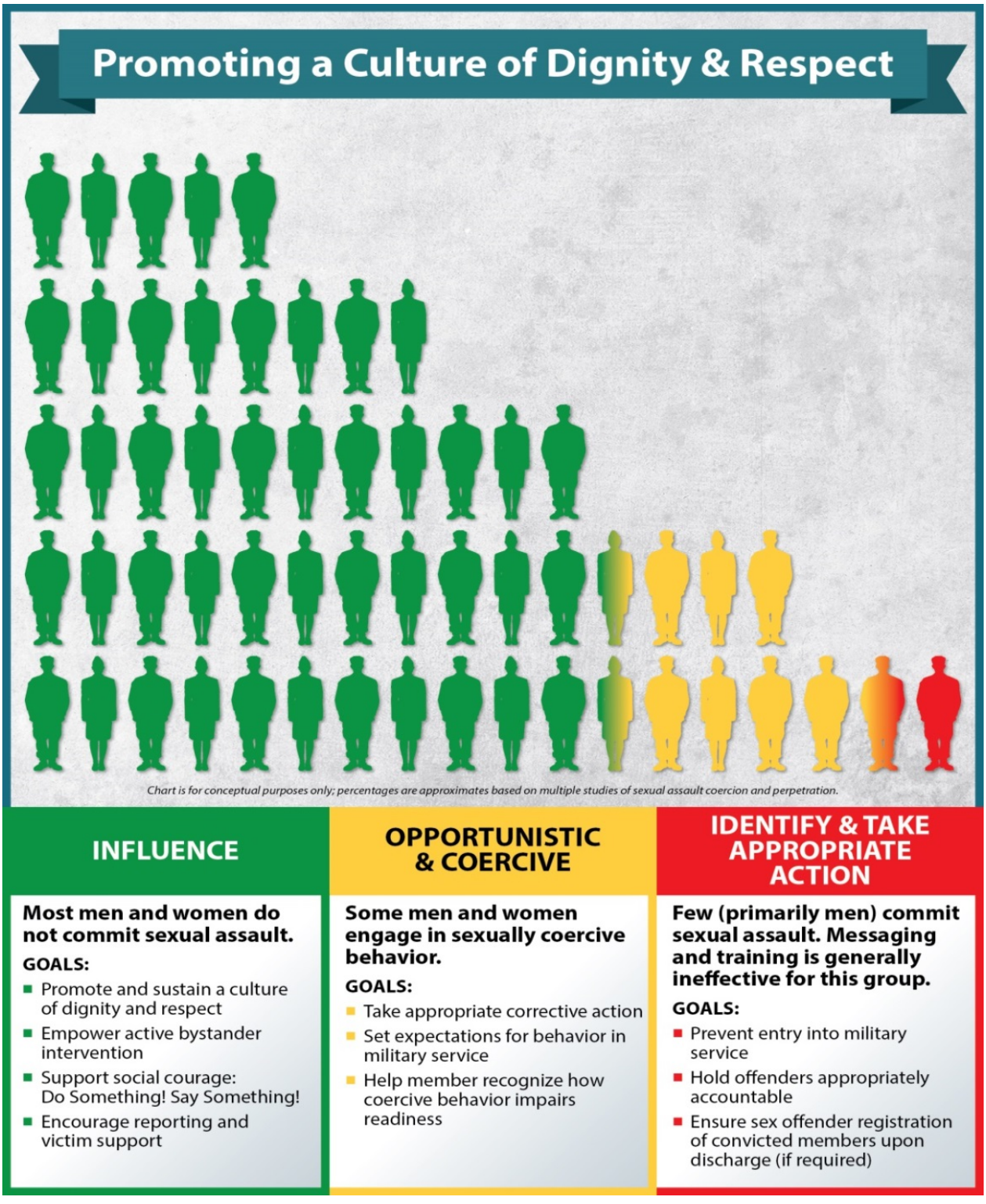


Figure 7 – Promoting a Culture of Dignity and Respect

Evidence of Progress:

- Metric Data: One of the metrics the Department developed uses a DoD-wide roll-up of three questions from the DEOCS that specifically address how Service members perceive unit command climate with regard to sexual assault prevention and response.[47] The roll-up rates respondent assessments on a four-point scale. As this was a new metric developed for the Report to the President, data is available from February to September of 2014.

  - Key Findings:

    - Overall, Service members perceived a favorable command climate with regard to SAPR, consistently rating their command climate, on average, 3.3 to 3.4 on a 4 point scale. While these data may appear similar month after month, they represent the average responses from 100,000 to 200,000 different respondents each month. This suggests that many Service members across the Force have a favorable rating of their respective commands. However, the DEOCS is a convenience sample and not necessarily representative of the entire Force.

    - Women perceived a slightly less favorable climate than men (Figure 8).

    - Junior enlisted and Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) perceived a slightly less favorable climate than Service members of all other ranks (Figure 9).

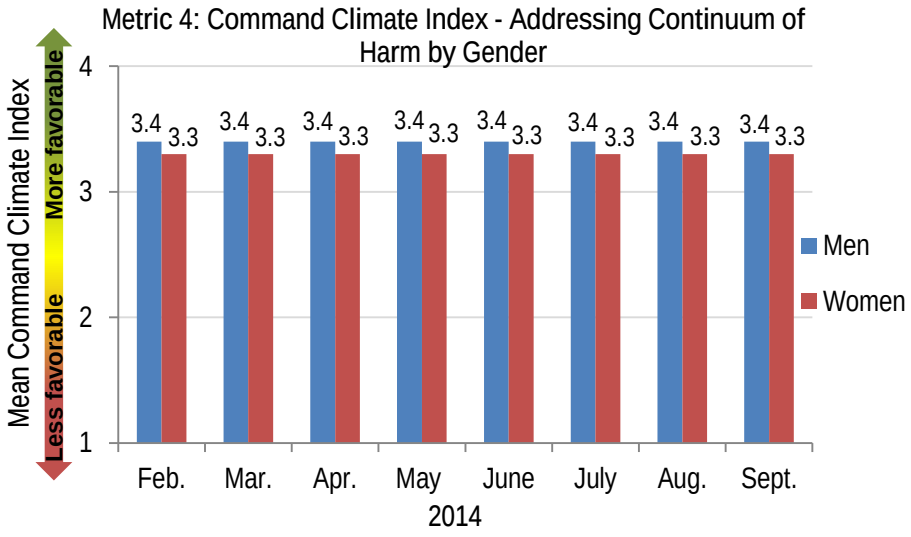


Figure 8 – Metric 4: Command Climate Index – Addressing Continuum of Harm by Gender

[47] Additional information about this metric and the methodology it employs is available at Appendix B.

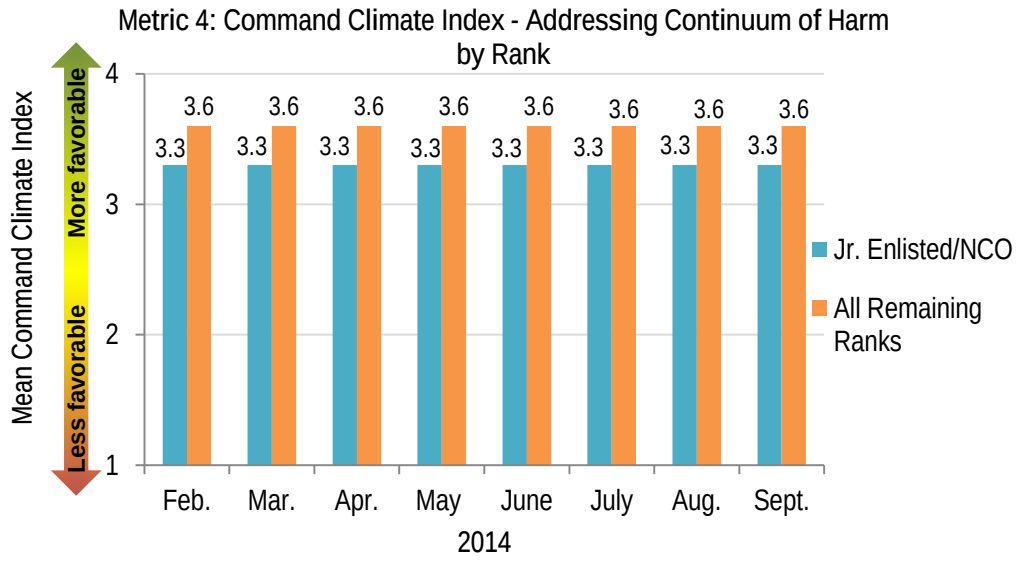


Figure 9 – Metric 4: Command Climate Index – Addressing Continuum of Harm by Rank

- Focus Group Feedback: In the Focus Groups fielded by DMDC,[48] the researchers asked participants about command climate. Focus group participants indicated their unit and senior leadership encouraged an environment of dignity and respect, and informed unit personnel that sexual assault and sexual harassment have no place in the military.

  Some individual Service member quotes include:

  - *"I think along the same lines of a culture of dignity and respect, it kind of encompasses all of that. It's not just sexual assaults or anything, it's just general respect of people." (O2-O3 Female)*
  - *"It's not tolerated. No matter what pay grade you're at, it's not tolerated." (E7-E9 Mixed Group)*
  - *"We actually had our leadership read off what everyone in the past month had been sent home for, and that really opens up what you see and what's going on. So it makes it more real." (E1-E4 Male)*

  Focus group participants also indicated all pay grade levels within the military contribute to creating respectful environments:

  - *"I think it does start up top, because in order for it to get pushed to the junior level, it had to come from somewhere else, because most of us didn't come in here with all these new ideas about how we are going to change the United States military." (E1-E4 Male)*

[48] Additional information about the DMDC Focus Groups and the methodology employed is available in the DMDC FGSAPR report, which is Annex 3.

- *"Can I say it works both ways? I feel like top down sets direction of a culture, of a desired culture change. If you set a policy and you have people who are enforcing that policy… and it sets an expectation. And then you have people underneath [who] are policing each other to make sure that they respect them." (E1-E4 Male)*

- *"It's got to be collaborative. I think the top has got to change their old ways of thinking, and then the new people have to know what is not acceptable and they have to meet in the middle." (E3-E4 Female)*

2. Commander's Guide to Preventing Sexual Assault

To assist commanders with addressing sexual assault in their respective organizations, DoD is developing a *Commander's Guide to Preventing Sexual Assault in the Military.* It is designed to be a concise reference to assist installation and tactical commanders, unit leaders, DoD civilian supervisors, and SARCs. The guide is also intended to be a reference for help in selecting and implementing prevention practices that could be used at any installation or command, with some adaptation.

F. Training Enhancements

Rationale: A number of training enhancements were directed over the past three years, required by either the Secretary of Defense or Congress via NDAA provisions. The Military Services and DoD SAPRO were directed to work collaboratively to develop a set of core competencies and learning objectives to assure consistency and effectiveness in training at all command levels.

Synopsis of Progress: Significant enhancements for SAPR-related training have been implemented across the Department, including for military personnel, first responders, those involved in the investigative or legal aspects, and those who work in a victim support capacity. While much of the training upgrades focus on specific populations on the response side, prevention-related training has advanced profoundly to incorporate a much more comprehensive and effective approach that impacts individuals on many levels to reinforce the Department's commitment to preventing sexual assault. More specifically, the implementation effort occurred throughout FY 2014 as a coordinated effort among the Services, the NGB, and the entire DoD community, underscoring the continued resolve of the Department to prevent sexual assault.

Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet, Combined Maritime Forces, Vice Adm. John Miller gives opening remarks during a SAPR stand-down at Naval Support Activity Bahrain.

Evidence of Progress: The Department standardized SAPR training across the Services in 2013. Core competencies and learning objectives were identified, defined, and implemented so that all Service members receive the same level of training. Below is a list of the many SAPR training upgrades and augmentations implemented across the Force:

- Incorporation of specific SAPR monitoring, measures, and education into normal command training, readiness, and safety forums (e.g., quarterly training guidance, unit status reports, safety briefings)

- Expansion of SAPR Training to include Recruit Sustainment Programs, Student Flight Programs, and National Guard prior to arrival at Basic Training

- Enhancement and integration of SAPR training into:

  - All levels of Professional Military Education (PME)
  - Pre-Command and Senior Enlisted Leader Training
  - Accession Training (within 14 days of going on active duty)
  - Initial Military Training
  - SAPR Annual Training
  - SAPR Pre- and Post-Deployment Training

- Focus Group Feedback: In the Focus Groups fielded by DMDC,[49] focus group trainees indicated they first received sexual assault prevention and response training in boot camp or basic training.

  - *"Boot camp… every day." (E1-E4 Male)*

  - *"[At Basic Training, received training] at least weekly. And I don't think a week went by that there wasn't something on it."* (E1-E4 Male)

G. From Awareness to Action

1. Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM)

Rationale: As a national event, SAAM offers a unique opportunity to call attention to the problem of sexual assault and encourage Service members to take an active role in prevention. Recognized annually throughout the month of April, SAAM offers a chance to build on existing momentum to fight the crime of sexual assault and to promote a culture of dignity and respect within the military community. While the DoD's prevention mission continues year-round, SAAM serves as a conduit for continued awareness as

[49] Additional information about the DMDC Focus Groups and the methodology employed is available in the *DMDC FGSAPR* report, which is Annex 3.

well as a re-emphasis of the seriousness of the crime and the importance of everyone's respective part in combatting and eradicating it from the ranks.

Figure 10 – The 2014 SAAM poster

Synopsis of Progress: The Department has observed SAAM every April since 2005. Throughout the years, DoD SAPRO has designed SAAM materials to support installation and unit sexual assault prevention efforts during the month. The Department also uses SAAM to promote the multi-disciplinary approach to prevention and victim advocacy, specifically services to help victims, implemented by DoD in recent years, including the DoD Safe Helpline, the SVC, and professional and credentialed SARCs and SAPR VAs, among others. For April 2015, the Department will be incorporating prevention into the month's name, terming it Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM). The 2015 theme is, "**Eliminate Sexual Assault. Know Your Part. Do Your Part.**" This focus highlights the fact that everyone in the military has a role in prevention, no matter one's rank, position, or otherwise.

Evidence of Progress:

- Recent Activity: In April 2014, the Department employed the theme "Live Our Values: Step Up to Stop Sexual Assault." Major General Jeffrey J. Snow, Director, SAPRO, visited troops at Fort Belvoir, Virginia to kick off SAAM and encouraged social courage to combat sexual assault. "We all have a critical role in preventing and responding to sexual assault," said Major General Snow. "To be successful, leaders need to lead on this issue and every [Service member] needs to personally demonstrate the kind of social courage it takes to Step Up and Stop Sexual Assault." Major General Snow and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel also visited the DoD Safe Helpline to commemorate SAAM and the third-anniversary of the confidential and anonymous hotline for victims.

- Survey Results: In the *2012 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of the Active Duty*, 67 percent of women and 74 percent of men indicated they were aware of their installation's SAAM programs. These results also indicate an increase in awareness since the prior survey in 2010. This suggests that SAAM activities are continuing to register with a growing majority of Service members.

2. Prevention Innovation Award

Rationale: Efforts to encourage widespread participation in prevention can take many forms. Awards programs are a useful means to promote such participation, especially from those Service members whose duties do not usually include SAPR.

Synopsis of Progress: In July 2014, SAPRO announced the launch of the **Sexual Assault Prevention Innovation Award** to annually recognize a group or individual (military or civilian) from each military component who contributed or developed an innovative idea, concept, methodology, or approach to positively impact sexual assault prevention efforts either on an installation, in a deployed environment, or in a reserve component. This award recognizes individuals or groups whose work has been particularly noteworthy and demonstrates outstanding service in support of Service members. Awardees are recognized each year in October to coincide with numerous crime-prevention awareness efforts underway across the country. A total of six awards were presented to individuals or groups from the Military components.

Service members and civilians pose for a group photo before the start of a 5K Run/Walk in support of SAAM at Kandahar Airfield in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, April 1, 2013.

Evidence of Progress: In October 2014, Major General Snow honored the 2014 recipients.[50] "The 2014 Prevention Innovation awardees deserve recognition for the mark they have made in their military environment by making a personal commitment to eliminate sexual assault," General Snow said. "Earlier this year, Secretary Hagel provided a roadmap for the delivery of consistent and effective prevention strategies, and SAPR personnel are leading the way with innovative ways to incorporate core values and shape the environment in which Service members live and work."

3. Encourage Active Bystander Intervention

Rationale: **Active Bystander Intervention** is a "philosophy and strategy for prevention of various types of violence, including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and intimate partner violence."[51] The approach is based on evidence that "people make decisions and continue behaviors based on…the cultural conditioning and norms [learned] through subtle reactions from others" and the resultant expectations of social interaction.[52] Bystander intervention is unique in that it:

- ***Discourages victim blaming***
- ***Offers the chance to change social norms***

[50] Available at: http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123423.
[51] Referenced on October 20, 2014, and available at: http://wiki.preventconnect.org/Bystander+Intervention.
[52] Ibid.

- ***Shifts responsibility to both men and women*** [53]

Staff Sgt. Camesha Rives, 319th Force Support Squadron, decided to become a SAPR VA while stationed Ghedi Air Base, Italy. Her philosophy on sexual assault prevention is it all comes down to being vigilant.

Synopsis of Progress: The Department has advocated the use of Active Bystander Intervention techniques to prevent sexual assault since the 2008 Prevention Strategy. DoD SAPRO and the Services have created a wide variety of programs and materials that encourage military members to safely intervene when they see situations at risk for sexual assault.

Evidence of Progress: A number of findings indicate that Service members are willing and capable of safely intervening when presented with situations they believe to be at risk for sexual assault.

- Key Survey Findings: The Department developed a question for the DEOCS that assessed Service member experience with Bystander Intervention. On the survey, respondents were asked if in the past 12 months, they had observed a situation they believed to be at risk for sexual assault. If they observed a high risk situation, they were then asked what action they took.
    - Bystander intervention is high (87%) among Service members who observed a situation at risk for sexual assault
    - About 4 percent of monthly respondents indicate seeing a situation at risk
- Focus Groups: In the Focus Groups fielded by DMDC, the researchers asked participants their willingness to intervene in situations that appeared to be at risk for sexual assault. Many focus group participants indicated that they would step in to prevent potential sexual assaults in a social situation (e.g., a bar) if they saw a "red flag"; others indicated that stepping in would depend on the person and the situation. An additional finding was that focus group participants indicated the willingness to step in regardless of how they are perceived. In professional situations, focus group participants indicated they would also step in if they witnessed inappropriate workplace behaviors. Overall, it was evident that the vast majority of Service members participating in the focus group effort were willing to engage in bystander intervention, regardless of whether in a social or professional situation, without concern of how they would be perceived for doing

[53] Ibid.

so. This reflects the commitment of fellow Service members to uphold a climate of dignity and respect. Some quotes include:

- *"If the person looks uncomfortable, you can come up and say, 'hey, are you ready to go?'" (E1-E4 Male)*
- *"Most of us would. If we see a fellow Service member [who] does not want the attention he or she is receiving, most of us would step in and help." (E1-E4 Male)*
- *"Any situation that is unfit and wrong… it's your job to step up and do something about it." (E1-E4 Female)*
- *"I will say one thing, the uniform protects the uniform. They take care of their own." (E3-E4 Female)*

H. Reducing the Annual Occurrence of Sexual Assault

Rationale: Regularly measuring the past-year prevalence (occurrence) of sexual assault is an important means of assessing the extent of the problem in a population. Changes in prevalence over time are also important to follow, as such change may provide some indication of the impact of prevention work. However, given the complex nature of the problem and the many challenges associated with measuring the crime, it is difficult to identify with certainty the exact contribution of prevention programming to changes in sexual assault prevalence.

Synopsis of Progress: The Department has been using the WGRA since 2006 to follow the past year prevalence of USC, the survey term for the crimes that constitute sexual assault in military law. For Active Duty women, the FY 2014 USC rate is statistically lower than the USC rate found in FY 2012 (4.3 percent versus 6.1 percent, respectively). For Active Duty men, the FY 2014 USC rate is statistically the same as the USC rate found in FY 2012 (0.9 percent versus 1.2 percent, respectively) (Figure 11).

Note: Past-year prevalence estimates in this report are primarily drawn from the measure of USC administered in the FY 2012 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of the Active Duty and as part of the FY 2014 RAND Military Workplace Study (RMWS). Also in FY 2014, RAND developed and administered a past-year prevalence estimate of sexual assault that found statistically similar prevalence rates. However, there are some differences between USC and RAND's sexual assault measure. These differences are explained in greater detail in RAND's initial findings (see Annex 1). RAND will be conducting additional analysis this winter and provide greater detail about the similarities and differences of these two measures in DoD's Annual Report to Congress on SAPR, to be released in April 2015.

Evidence of Progress:

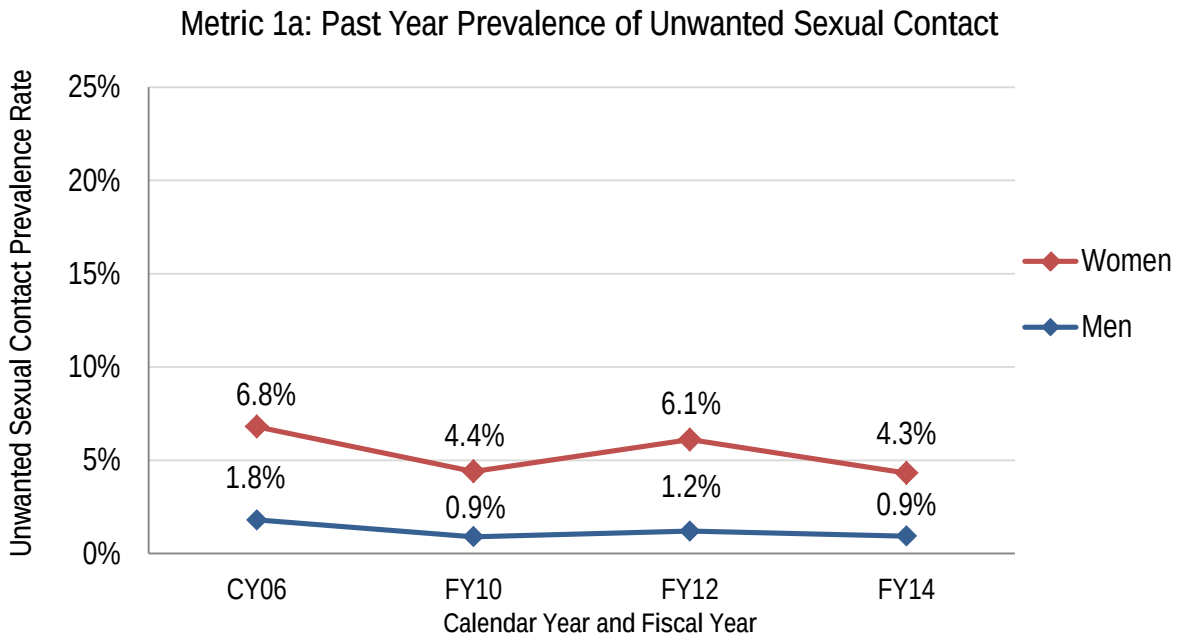


Figure 11 – Metric 1a: Past Year Prevalence of USC

I. Partnerships/Collaborations[54]

Identifying Potential Solutions

Rationale: Sexual assault is a societal challenge that affects more than just the U.S. military. Leveraging partnerships and collaborations across various sectors of society provides significant advantages and allows the Department to remain at the cutting edge of the latest research and initiatives regarding sexual assault prevention.

Synopsis of Progress: DoD proactively solicited information, identified best and promising practices, consulted subject matter experts, and conducted research on this topic to inform its programs and strategies. In the past year alone, the SAPRO Prevention Team held more than 45 sessions with subject matter experts to identify

I am impressed by the scope and focus of DoD's strategy for addressing this important public health problem. Building a strategy based on what works in prevention holds great promise for achieving positive change.

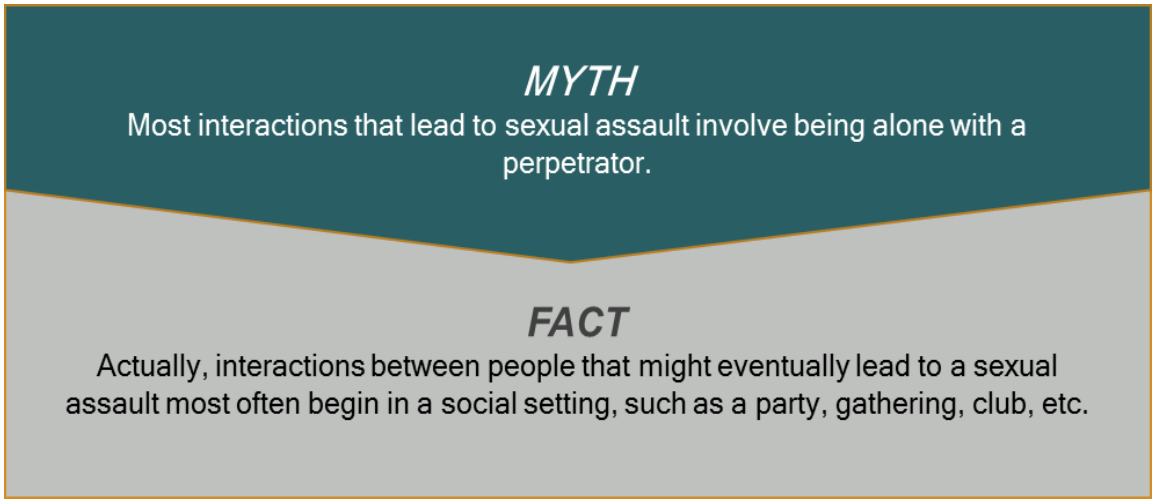
Dr. James Mercy
Acting Director, Division of Violence Prevention
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
on the 2014-2016 DoD Prevention Strategy

[54] Any reference to any non-federal entity is not intended to be an endorsement of that entity by DoD.

proven and successful prevention practices. Subject matter experts included representatives from sexual assault prevention, victim advocacy, and training organizations; large public universities (e.g., Pennsylvania State University, University of Michigan, the University of Maryland); government agencies (e.g., FBI, CDC, the Peace Corps, United States Institute of Peace); and subject matter experts who have experience working in the DoD environment. In addition, various experts across the board have endorsed the prevention approach DoD has developed, to include the revised Prevention Strategy.

The individual Services and the NGB have also reached out to engage with other government and civilian experts to inform their Service-specific programs, and identified best/promising practices to share at the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Roundtable. Further, DoD SAPR professionals participated at numerous events, exchanged information on panels at conferences, and served as consultants on review boards and task forces focused on sexual assault. Most recently, DoD SAPRO was asked to participate in a consulting role on the White House's Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. Over a nine-month period, DoD SAPRO representatives attended meetings and provided recommendations based on DoD best practices to inform the Task Force.

Evidence of Progress: Much of the contributions by prevention experts were incorporated into the *2014-2016 Prevention Strategy* signed by the Secretary of Defense on May 1, 2014.[55] In addition, DoD SAPR program components, climate survey questions, and bystander intervention materials were leveraged by the White House Task Force in "Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault," that was released in April of 2014.[56]



[55] Available at: www.sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/SecDef_Memo_and_DoD_SAPR_Prevention_Strategy_2014-2016.pdf.
[56] Available at: https://www.notalone.gov/assets/report.pdf.

J. Sexual Assault – High Risk Populations

Of particular concern to the Department is the demographic age range of 17-24; the majority of victims and many perpetrators are within this age group. Of the 3,337 Unrestricted Reports of sexual assault in the DoD in FY 2013, 65 percent of the victims and 41 percent of the alleged perpetrators were between the ages of 16 and 24.[57]

While CDC found the rates of sexual assault for military women are no different than rates of sexual assault for women in the civilian sector, it also determined that younger age tended to be a demographic factor that increased risk for sexual assault.[58] U.S. universities and colleges are institutions that also have many people in the 17 to 24 age bracket. They also find themselves grappling with the problem of sexual assault: *The Campus Sexual Assault Study*, prepared for the National Institute of Justice in 2007, found that 19 percent of women reported "experiencing completed or attempted sexual assault since entering college."

The undergraduates attending the Department's three Service academies – the U.S. Military Academy (USMA), the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), and the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) – also tend to be within this high-risk demographic for sexual assault.

Over the past several years, the Department has placed considerable energy and emphasis on the MSAs SAPR programs. A critical aspect of these ongoing efforts is encouraging cadets and midshipmen to embrace a culture of dignity and respect and instilling in these future leaders the social courage to challenge those who do not. Examples of initiatives the Department has launched to address sexual assault at the MSAs include:

- Enhancing strategic planning to align MSA SAPR strategic plan with Department and Service SAPR plans
- Enhancing program effectiveness by involving cadets and midshipmen in command climate surveys and other assessment tools
- Advancing and sustaining appropriate culture by innovating and implementing solutions that address concerns of social retaliation among peers, employ direct engagement with leaders of cadet/midshipmen organizations, and providing cadet and midshipmen influencers with the skills to strengthen their ongoing mentorship programs

[57] Provisional data indicates similar trending for FY 2014.
[58] See the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/research/2010_National_Intimate_Partner_and_Sexual_Violence_Survey-Technical_Report.pdf.

- Enhancing comprehension by developing sexual harassment and assault learning objectives for MSA curricula

- Enhancing alcohol training for cadets and midshipmen

In January 2014, the President and Vice President established the "White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault" in order to develop strategies and recommendations to help prevent campus sexual assault. DoD participated in an advisory role on the Task Force, which featured subject matter experts from the Department of Education, the DOJ, and the White House. In April 2014, the Task Force presented its report, "Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault."

In October 2014, the White House Task Force launched a new public awareness and education campaign known as, *It's on Us.* The *It's on Us* campaign is aimed at encouraging college students and all members of campus communities to be more engaged with campus sexual assault prevention efforts. The Task Force advocates that college students and all members of the campus community have access to confidential reporting, professional victim advocacy, climate surveys, and prevention initiatives featuring bystander intervention. These recommendations are all included in current policy at the MSAs and throughout the entire Department. Further, all three MSA superintendents attended the launch event at the White House on September 19, 2014.

Figure 12 – The White House Task Force *It's On Us* campaign logo

The MSAs have committed to participate in the *It's on Us* campaign to augment their existing prevention programs:

USMA will:

- Use the campaign and Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Summit outcomes to drive the way ahead for the entire U.S. Corps of Cadets, led by cadet leadership and the Cadets Against Sexual Harassment and Assault (CASH/A) Executive Committee

- Promote the campaign in a variety of cadet-focused social events and incorporate *It's on Us* into monthly training for the 4,400 cadets at USMA

- Integrate the tenets of *It's on Us* as key features of the USMA strategic plan and character development strategy

- Incorporate *It's On Us* into *The Pointer View* (the command information paper) on a quarterly basis and promote it on West Point social media pages

USNA will:

- Introduce *It's On Us* to the 4,500-member Brigade of Midshipmen at a Brigade-wide event, as part of an ongoing series of initiatives and events in support of sexual assault prevention

- Integrate *It's On Us* into Midshipmen peer education sessions, facilitated by Midshipmen GUIDEs (Guidance, Understanding, Information, Direction, and Education) to promote the campaign at the Company level (groups of about 150 Midshipmen)

- Modify the USNA website and use social media to promote the campaign to the Brigade of Midshipmen, faculty, and staff

- Create a Midshipmen-led video to promote the campaign, as part of an ongoing sexual assault prevention video series

- Promote *It's On Us* at academy football games to further reach the Brigade, Alumni, and the supporting community

USAFA will:

- Strategically engage senior leaders in the Superintendent's Council to advance *It's On Us* throughout USAFA organizations

- Operationally integrate messaging into character and academic curriculum via the Dean of Faculty's Making Excellence Inclusive Committee, the Respect for Human Dignity Outcome Team, and the Commandant of Cadet's Center for Character and Leadership Development

- Tactically ensure *It's On Us* is woven into the fabric of all ongoing educational and training initiatives by:

    - Launching the campaign in coordination with the cadet leadership and PEERs (Personal Ethics and Education Representatives - cadets selected to address culture, climate, and inclusivity concerns)

    - Marketing promotional materials from the campaign website and providing each cadet with a hard copy of the *It's On Us* Pledge

    - Using the base paper and social media to promote campaign materials including the *It's On Us* logo, educational content, and daily tweets

    - Integrating *It's On Us* into ongoing cadet Active Bystander Intervention training

- Highlighting the campaign during Basic Training, January Anti-Stalking Awareness Month, and April SAAM

K. Conclusion

Prevention Initiatives – Progress at a Glance

	Action	Status
Defining the problem	Complete	●
Defining prevention	Complete	●
Develop a DoD-specific strategy	Complete	●
Implement strategy and solutions	In Progress	⇨
Promote and sustain organizational prevention initiatives	In Progress	●
Encourage Active Bystander Intervention	In Progress	●
Reduce the annual occurrence of sexual assault	In Progress	⇨
Identify potential solutions	Complete	●

● Clear evidence of progress ⇨ Indications of progress ✖ Progress not evident

This deliberate DoD-wide approach to prevention reinforces a climate where sexual assault is seen as unacceptable not just because it is illegal, but because it is counter to core military values. The Department has consistently and steadily augmented the depth and breadth of its approach to the prevention of sexual assault. This conceptual evolution of sexual assault prevention has advanced from essentially a two-dimensional training and awareness campaign to a three-dimensional, adaptable systems approach, synchronized and institutionalized across the Armed Forces, and encompassing multiple elements beyond training. While there is no single "silver bullet" solution, as the President recognized, this innovative prevention strategy allows for new promising practices to be incorporated, assessed, and adapted accordingly.

> *There is no silver bullet to solving this problem. This is going to require a sustained effort over a long period of time.*
>
> *Barack Obama*
> *President of the United States*
> *May 16, 2013*

Prevention is an ongoing effort that must be continued and reinforced across the Total Force, from accession to the last day in uniform. The Department intensified its focus on Primary Prevention to ensure a more comprehensive and strategic approach in its commitment to eliminate sexual assault from its ranks. With a revised Prevention Strategy and the establishment of a collaborative CoP, DoD has demonstrated its commitment to upholding the cultural imperatives of mutual respect and trust, professional values, and team commitment that promote an environment where sexual assault is not tolerated, condoned, or ignored.

Sustained prevention initiatives, along with committed leadership engagement and the acceptance of an ethos of dignity throughout the Department, will help to reduce - with the goal of eliminating - sexual assault in the military. Augmentations and enhancements to the Prevention effort serve to increase the likelihood of a more informed military that is intolerant of offensive behavior and a hostile command climate. That said, if and when an incident of sexual assault occurs, the DoD has established a comprehensive Response System that (1) serves to ensure every Unrestricted Report of sexual assault is referred for investigation, (2) holds offenders appropriately accountable, and (3) supports victims who file either Unrestricted or Restricted Reports throughout the process with first-class care provided by fully-trained response personnel.

The Response System component of SAPR incorporates the three LOEs below that demonstrate the DoD's uncompromised commitment to victim support:

- Investigation (LOE 2)
- Accountability (LOE 3)
- Victim Assistance and Advocacy (LOE 4)

The following three sections will expand on each LOE under the Response System, providing detailed information on the enhancements to the DoD's capabilities to provide victims with the privacy they desire, the sensitivity they deserve, and the professional response this crime demands.

IV. INVESTIGATION (LOE 2)

Objective: Achieve high competence in the investigation of sexual assault.
End state: Investigative resources yield timely and accurate results.

A. Introduction

When a victim files an Unrestricted Report, or a third party reports an allegation of a sexual assault, the matter is referred to the Services' MCIO[59] for a professional and independent investigation. Regardless of the severity of an allegation, MCIOs hold primary responsibility for the investigation of all sexual assault allegations under the jurisdiction of the UCMJ.

> *The DoD has done an incredible amount of work in a short amount of time combatting sexual assault and violence against women. We have never seen that kind of change in a civilian community and I just wish more people would recognize that fact.*
>
> *Joanne Archambault*
> *Executive Director of End Violence Against Women*

Upon receipt of a criminal allegation, an MCIO has three goals in conducting an investigation:

- Identify what crimes have been committed
- Identify who has been victimized
- Identify who may be held appropriately accountable for the crime

Per DoD policy, all reports of sexual assault must be referred to the MCIOs for investigation. DoD policy also prohibits commanders from investigating or evaluating the validity of a sexual assault report themselves. Those commanders who receive information about a sexual assault and fail to provide such information to an MCIO may be subject to disciplinary action.

The Department employs expert investigative capabilities that enable professional, responsive, and accurate investigations independent of the chain of command – MCIOs are not under the command of the leadership of the installation to which they are assigned. In addition, once an investigation has been initiated, only the Secretary of the Military Department involved may close an investigation. In recent years, MCIOs have sought out and applied scientifically-informed investigative techniques that optimize the recovery of physical and testimonial evidence while mitigating the potential for re-traumatizing a victim.

[59] Army Criminal Investigations Division (CID), NCIS, and AFOSI.

This section highlights examples of DoD's significant progress over the past three years with regard to achieving high competence in the investigation of sexual assault and ensuring investigative resources yield timely and complete investigations.

B. Key Highlight

Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) Capability

Rationale: Available research suggests there is a benefit[60] to having a distinct, recognizable group of specially trained investigators, prosecutors, and legal support personnel who collaborate on a regular basis to work sexual assault cases. Given the commonality of criminal behaviors and special investigative techniques required to resolve allegations of child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assault offenses,[61] the Department believes there is substantive benefit to fielding a cadre of experienced professionals that understand the special sensitivities involved in these forms of interpersonal violence.

Synopsis of Progress: As part of the Leadership, Education, Accountability and Discipline (LEAD) Act of 2012 on Sexual Assault Prevention, the Secretary of Defense proposed legislation to Congress that would establish an SVIP capability. This proposal was ultimately incorporated in the NDAA for FY 2013, Section 573, which required the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the Armed Services Committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate describing the plans and timelines for establishing such a capability in each Military Department.

At the request of Undersecretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) (USD(P&R)), SAPRO facilitated a working group to develop plans for the implementation of a Department-wide SVIP capability. This working group included representatives from each Military Department, the MCIOs, the NGB, the DoD OGC, and other components within the USD(P&R), including Health Affairs, Reserve Affairs, the Office of Legal Policy, and FAP. The DoD IG also sent a representative to the working group meetings as a consultant to advise on criminal investigative policy matters.

The Department's SVIP plan was established using the following key principles:

- SVIP will be a capability, not a specific person, unit or team, to provide each of the Military Services flexibility in implementation
- SVIP capability will be standardized and consistent throughout the Department

[60] Greeson, M. and Campbell, R. (2013) Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs): An Empirical Review of Their Effectiveness and Challenges to Successful Implementation. *Trauma Violence and Abuse*, *14*, 83-95.
[61] Sex crimes against children and spouses are not contained in this report because they fall under the purview of DoD FAP.

- SVIP will be available globally where our DoD members serve and where incidents are investigated and prosecuted, as appropriate

In the case of adult sexual assault, the SVIP process is activated when an Unrestricted Report of a qualifying offense is made to law enforcement personnel. Restricted (confidential) Reports of adult sexual assault or domestic violence do not trigger the SVIP, since the commander and law enforcement are not contacted. Although Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) personnel are part of the SVIP capability, SARCs and VAs are not. However, SARCs and SAPR VAs must be notified of every incident of sexual assault involving Service members. When notified, the SARC or a SAPR VA responds and offers the victim access to a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE), advocacy services, as well as facilitates victim access to healthcare (medical and mental health), legal services and victims' counsel, if eligible.

SVIP Team Members
MCIO Investigators
Judge Advocates
Victim Witness Assistance Program Personnel
Paralegal Support Personnel

Personnel who comprise the SVIP capability include MCIO investigators, judge advocates (JA), VWAP personnel, and paralegal support personnel, all of whom receive specialized training according to their role. Each Military Service ensures the personnel selected for SVIP cases receive the requisite specialized training on victims' rights, issues unique to sexual assault, and best practices for navigating victims through the military justice system.

To facilitate the continuity of care and advocacy, SVIP personnel collaborate with SAPR Program personnel, including SARCs, SAPR VAs and victims' counsel when assigned. SVIP legal and investigative representatives participate in monthly sexual assault Case Management Group (CMG) meetings to review individual cases. Further, the specialized training developed for building and sustaining an SVIP program contains a specific focus on the impact of sexual assault trauma on victims, to include its effect on memory and counterintuitive behaviors.

Evidence of Progress: The report required by the NDAA for FY 2013 was provided to Congress on December 12, 2013.[62] The DoD IG developed policy and procedures for the MCIO SVIP capability in DTM 14-002, *The Establishment of SVC within the MCIOs,* which was published on February 11, 2014.[63]

[62] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/DoD_SpecialVictimsCapabilities_Report_20131213.pdf
[63] Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-14-002.pdf. Note: Special Victim Capability has since been re-named the Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) capability so as not to be confused with the Special Victims' Counsel (SVC) program, which provides attorneys to represent the interests of victims of sexual assault in the military justice process.

The SVIP program is a key enhancement in the Response System as it demonstrates a multidisciplinary, coordinated approach to victim support and offender accountability. This capability adds tremendous value to a system where people are more prepared and sensitive to perform their role which, in turn, can lead to increased victim confidence and satisfaction.

C. Role of the Commander

Rationale: Although commanders are essential to the Department's overall SAPR strategy, DoD policy requires the criminal investigative process to be independent of the chain of command. In other words, commanders may not investigate sexual assaults; that is the job of independent MCIOs.

Synopsis of Progress: A commanding officer who receives a report of a sexual assault involving a Service member in his or her chain of command must immediately report it to the assigned MCIO. A commander of a victim or offender may not ignore a complaint or attempt to evaluate its authenticity by conducting his or her own investigation into the matter. These "Commander Directed Investigations" into sexual assault allegations are specifically prohibited by DoD policy.

However, during the course of an investigation, a commander has a duty to ensure both the victim and the offender are connected with the appropriate services. Guidance for commanders is published in DoDI 6495.02, SAPR Program Procedures[64] and available in the DoD SAPR Policy Toolkit.[65] In support of everyone's safety, commanders may issue military protective orders, which are binding on military members. Commanders are also required to meet monthly with the installation's CMG. The CMG, which is chaired by the installation commander or the deputy commander, meets on a monthly basis to review individual cases of Unrestricted Reports of sexual assault, facilitate monthly victim updates, direct system coordination, accountability, and victim access to quality services.

Throughout the course of the investigation, the commander is required to consult with the victim, and ensure the victim is connected with the appropriate support resources. Commanders also have a responsibility to provide victims with monthly updates on the progress of their cases. Commanders also have a similar responsibility to ensure the accused's rights are preserved and to provide for the accused's well-being.

Evidence of Progress: The DoD SES asked respondents about support they received from their commander or unit director. Of the 64 percent of respondents that made an Unrestricted Report and spoke to their unit commander/director about the sexual assault:

[64] Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/649502p.pdf.
[65] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/miscellaneous/toolkit/COMMANDER_CHECKLIST.pdf.

- More than two-thirds agreed the unit commander/director supported them (82%), took steps to address their privacy and confidentiality (80%), treated them professionally (79%), listened to them without judgment (78%), and thoroughly answered their questions (70%)

- About three-quarters (73%) indicated that overall they were satisfied with the unit commander/director's response to the sexual assault

D. Training Enhancements

1. Improving Investigator Training

Rationale: Trained investigators, empowered with the latest research on the impact of trauma on memory and recall, are likely to improve the victim's experience with the military justice system. In addition, highly trained investigators are more likely to benefit from an improved understanding of common offender behaviors and how such behaviors can help them identify important physical and testimonial evidence.

Synopsis of Progress: Each of the Military Services has taken steps to refine the training and resources of criminal investigators supporting sexual assault response since the Department launched the SAPR program in 2005. Each year, thousands of investigators participate in specialized training on how to best engage sexual assault victims. In order to determine whether MCIO Sexual Assault Investigation Training was adequately supporting the Department, the DoD IG conducted a review of the MCIO's sexual assault investigation training.[66]

Findings revealed that each MCIO received the required initial baseline and periodic refresher training. However, between MCIOs, the training hours devoted to initial baseline training tasks varied, and none measured the effectiveness of refresher training. Additionally, the MCIOs were found to be providing advanced Sexual Assault Investigation Training to assigned criminal investigative personnel who may conduct sexual assault investigations. As a result of the review, the DoD IG recommended the MCIOs form a working group to review (1) initial baseline sexual assault investigation training programs to establish common criteria and minimum requirements, (2) periodic refresher sexual assault investigation training programs to establish common criteria and minimum requirements for measuring effectiveness, and (3) advanced sexual assault investigation training programs to further capitalize on efforts to leverage training resources and expertise. These recommendations have been implemented.

Evidence of Progress: The MCIOs are now providing improved sexual assault investigator training in support of their fielding of the SVIP capability. All three MCIOs deliver substantive sexual assault investigation training, among other training focus areas, as part of their foundational investigator courses including advanced training for investigating special victim offenses. All MCIO basic investigator course attendees take

[66] Available at: http://www.dodig.mil/pubs/documents/DODIG-2013-043.pdf.

several written examinations on areas of instruction and must demonstrate a minimum level of mastery in order to graduate. While many of the skills necessary for the investigation of special victim cases are the same as those needed for other criminal investigations - preserving crime scenes, collecting evidence, testifying at trial - SVIP offenses require additional proficiencies, advanced training and techniques, and heightened sensitivity to victims' needs. MCIO investigators assigned to their Service's SVIP capability are specifically trained to respond to and investigate all SVIP covered offenses.

The selection of MCIO investigators for the SVIP capability is contingent on their completion of specialized training. At a minimum, DTM 14-002 requires this training to cover the following competencies:

- Legal jurisdiction for conducting criminal investigations
- Elements of proof for SVIP covered offenses
- Crime scene management
- Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) collection requirements
- Identifying, obtaining, preserving, and transporting forensic evidence
- Rights of crime victims and available victim and witness assistance, support, and counseling services available
- Sensitivities associated with child abuse victims, including but not limited to interviewing techniques, SAFE kits, risk factors, and protective orders
- Sensitivities associated with victims of sexual assault, including but not limited to interviewing techniques, impact of trauma, SAFE kits and medical treatment, counseling, victim support, establishing victim trust and transparency, impact of alcohol and drugs, and protective orders[67]

After individual investigative agents have completed all the required training, they are certified by their respective MCIO to conduct investigations meeting the SVIP criteria.

Additional evidence of progress can be found in the fact that all three MCIOs now train their agents to use **trauma-informed interviewing techniques**. At the U.S. Army Military Police School (USAMPS), Criminal Investigation Command (CID) agents and Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) agents learn a technique called the Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview (FETI). This new interview technique draws on established practices of child forensic interview protocols, critical incident stress

[67] Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-14-002.pdf.

management, and motivational interviewing techniques to help agents work with victims to obtain more information about crimes, potentially leading to improved offender accountability. The principles of the training provide agents with the knowledge and skills to better understand fundamentals of neuroscience, trauma, and effective victim interviewing. Since 2009, more than 1,397 special agents and prosecutors from Army and Navy have taken FETI training as part of the Special Victims Unit Investigations Course.

Also, at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) agents learn a technique called Cognitive Interviewing (CI), which has a long and established research history based on laboratory-tested principles of memory retrieval, knowledge representation, and communication. AFOSI has been using CI to enhance victim recall since the mid-1990s as an alternative to forensic hypnosis. CI instruction and practice has been a part of AFOSI's Advanced Sexual Assault Investigations course since 2013. AFOSI is also working with one of the founding CI researchers to further update and improve training techniques and its application to sexual assault investigations.

MYTH

If a victim has really been sexually assaulted, he or she should be able to recall the event in great detail.

FACT

Recent research shows that while victims can and do store details about sexual assault in their memories, trauma often interferes with the encoding and recall of those memories. As a result, victims' recall about an incident may appear disorganized or incomplete, which is incorrectly interpreted as being deceitful. Use of alcohol at the time of the incident increases memory problems. Special interviewing techniques, currently being taught to military criminal investigators and attorneys, have been shown to help victims improve their recall of traumatic events.

2. *Improving Investigative Sufficiency*

Rationale: It is the Department's intent to achieve high competence in criminal investigation. Ultimately, these efforts are intended to produce better quality criminal investigations that encourage greater victim participation.

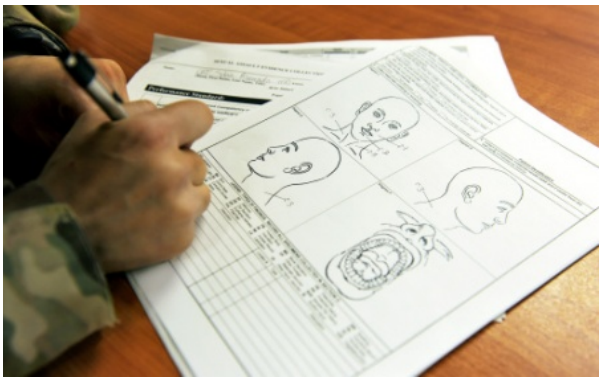
Synopsis of Progress: Over the past three years, DoD has implemented a variety of initiatives to improve the investigative process. Directives by the Secretary of Defense, NDAA legislation, policy upgrades, and strategic tasks have resulted in substantive investigative enhancements.

Evidence of Progress:

Independent Investigations for Sexual Assault Cases. DoD IG policy, published in January of 2013, requires MCIOs to investigate all Unrestricted Reports of sexual assault under the jurisdiction of military law, regardless of the severity of the allegation.[68]

Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) Capability. As detailed above, policy for the SVIP capability was published in January 2014.[69] The SVIP capability improves investigative sufficiency by requiring a collaborative approach from the initial investigative response. The assigned MCIO investigator must be knowledgeable of SVIP priorities, working collaboratively with specially-trained personnel consisting of JAs, VWAP personnel, and administrative paralegal personnel.

Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE). The Department utilizes pre assembled SAFE kits that include tools to ensure the physical examination process and the collection, handling, analysis, testing, and safekeeping of any bodily specimens and evidence meet the requirements necessary for use as evidence in criminal proceedings. Within the last few years, the Department has revised all aspects of the SAFE to include the contents of the kits, the exam's availability in Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs), and local agency agreements for military installations without a resident MTF capability. In addition to revising the SAFE Kit, the Department also revised the DD Form 2911, DoD SAFE Report,[70] and DoD SAFE Kit instructions for both the victim exam[71] and the suspect exam[72] to be in line with 2013 DOJ standards.[73]



A Service member annotates the evidence of assault following an examination of a simulated victim during SAFE training.

Document Retention. As directed by the Secretary of Defense and legislated by Congress, DoD implemented a policy to expand retention of investigative documentation. Current law requires investigative documentation to be held for 50 years for Unrestricted Reports of sexual assault. Previously, documentation retention times varied between Services. While the primary reason for expanding retention time was to provide a means for victims to obtain information about a sexual assault they reported, it may also improve the Department's ability to investigate "cold" cases should new evidence later become available. On July 11, 2014, the DoD IG concluded a

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[68] Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/550518p.pdf.
[69] Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-14-002.pdf.
[70] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/miscellaneous/toolkit/dd_form_2911.pdf.
[71] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/miscellaneous/toolkit/DD_Form_2911-Victim_Instructions.pdf.
[72] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/miscellaneous/toolkit/DD_Form_2911-Suspect_Instructions.pdf.
[73] Available at: https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ovw/241903.pdf.

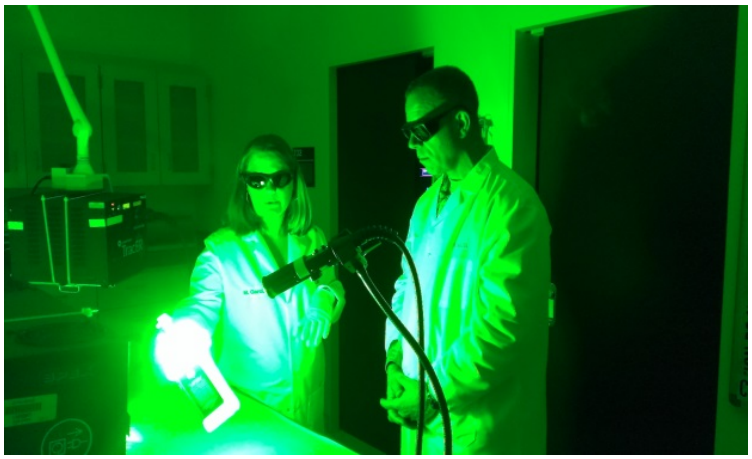
review of the MCIO's progress in implementing DoD policy on records retention and access to evidence and found the Services to be compliant.[74]

Evaluation of MCIO Adult Sexual Assault Investigation Policies. On September 16, 2014, the DoD IG concluded an evaluation of the MCIOs' adult sexual assault investigation policies.[75] The purpose of the DoD IG evaluation was to determine whether MCIO policies aligned with DoD and Military Service requirements, with Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) Quality Standards for Investigations (QSIs), and with accepted law enforcement investigative techniques.

The DoD IG found that the MCIOs' adult sexual assault investigation policies and procedures support each agency's needs for a thorough sexual assault investigation. The MCIOs have incorporated DoD and Service adult sexual assault investigative requirements into their policies. Although not mandated by DoD, the MCIOs have also incorporated, directly or indirectly, the pertinent CIGIE QSIs relating to conducting criminal investigations, including sexual assault, and those that facilitate a detailed and well-written report of the investigation. The MCIOs' policies address almost all pertinent International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) recommended investigative actions.

The DoD IG also observed policy areas to be considered for improvement related to the use of forensic science agents and addressing victim collateral misconduct during investigations. The DoD IG further recommended the MCIOs evaluate the IACP actions not currently aligned in their policies for their relevance and applicability and consider incorporating them or enhancing those only partially addressed.

DNA Collection Requirements for Criminal Investigations. The Department is required to provide DNA samples from service members upon apprehension (the military equivalent of "arrest") and submit them to the United States Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory (USACIL). USACIL is a fully accredited facility that provides forensic laboratory services to the MCIOs, other DoD investigative agencies, and other Federal law enforcement agencies. USACIL subsequently submits these DNA samples to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), a database managed by the FBI that is responsible for exchanging information and comparing forensic DNA evidence from violent crime investigations.



Major General Jeffrey J. Snow, SAPRO Director, visits the USACIL lab, Forest Park, Ga., May 2014.

[74] Available at: http://www.dodig.mil/pubs/documents/DODIG-2014-082.pdf.
[75] Available at: http://www.dodig.mil/pubs/documents/DODIG-2014-108.pdf.

The DoD IG found the MCIOs had an overall 92 percent compliance rate in submitting required DNA samples to USACIL during the period of June 1, 2010, through October 31, 2012. As a result of the review, the DoD IG recommended the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the USCG take action in accordance with DoDI 5505.14, *DNA Collection Requirements for Criminal Investigations*,[76] to improve their compliance rates for DNA sample submission.

Evaluation of DoD Compliance with the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA). On August 29, 2014, the DoD IG concluded an evaluation[77] of the Department's compliance with the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), established by Title I of the "Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006" (Public Law (P.L.) 109-248). It also evaluated whether the Department effectively accounted for registered sex offenders with access to DoD facilities. The DoD IG found the Department was compliant with SORNA registration requirements. However, DoD IG recommended a number of actions to improve reporting, accountability, and monitoring of registered sex offenders within the Department. Overall USD(P&R) and the Secretaries of the Military Departments agreed with the recommendations and are currently in the process of creating and updating related policy.

Review of Investigative Sufficiency of Sexual Assault Investigations. On July 9, 2013, the DoD IG concluded an evaluation of the MCIOs' sexual assault investigations completed in 2010 to determine whether they completed investigations as required by DoD, Military Service, and MCIO guidance.[78] The evaluation focused on whether the MCIOs investigated sexual assaults as required by guiding policies and procedures. The DoD IG found most MCIO investigations (89 percent) met or exceeded the investigative standards. The DoD IG has now agreed to review the MCIOs' sexual assault investigation on a recurring basis. The review currently underway is looking at MCIO sexual assault investigations completed in 2013.

Investigation Length. In support of this report, the Department developed a metric to track the average and median length of a sexual assault investigation, measured from the day the MCIO opens the criminal investigation until the day it provides its final report of investigation to command for legal review (Figure 13). The Department found that in FY 2014 criminal investigations took an average of about four and a half months to complete, up from an average of four months in FY 2013. A shorter investigation is not necessarily a better investigation. Investigation length is dependent upon a number of factors, including the complexity of the crime, the number and location of witnesses to be interviewed, the amount and kinds of evidence to be processed, and the number of agents available to conduct an investigation.

[76] Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/550514p.pdf.
[77] Available at: http://www.dodig.mil/pubs/documents/DODIG-2014-103.pdf.
[78] Available at: http://www.dodig.mil/pubs/documents/DODIG-2013-091.pdf.

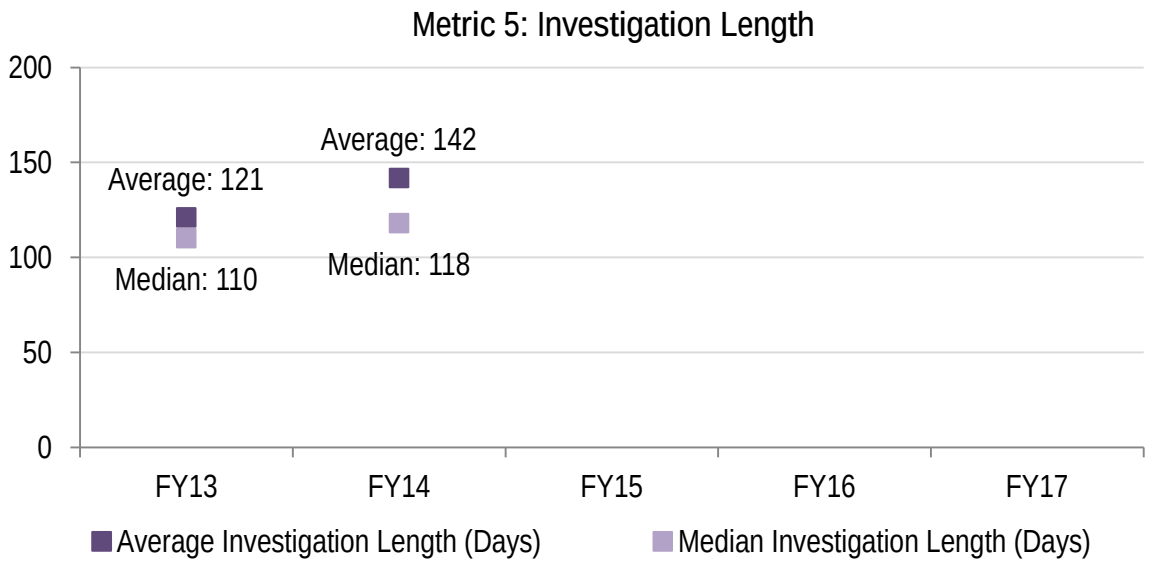


Figure 13 – Metric 5: Investigation Length

E. Oversight

Department of Defense Inspector General

The DoD IG provides independent, relevant, and timely oversight of the DoD in support of the warfighter and promotes accountability, integrity, and efficiency. It also advises the Secretary of Defense and Congress while keeping the public informed.

Figure 14 – The DoD IG Seal

The DoD IG is committed to continually improving the quality of the Department's sexual assault and other violent crime investigations. The DoD IG provides oversight for the Department's programs and operations related to the investigation of violent crime (including unattended death, sexual assault, serious aggravated assault, and robbery).

A cadre of highly trained and experienced criminal investigators assesses effectiveness and efficiency, compliance with policies and procedures, and the need for new or revised policies applicable to the Department's investigative response to violent crime.

F. Partnerships/Collaborations

Collaboration with internal and external agencies and experts is key to ensuring the Department is aware of and taking advantage of new research and promising investigative practices in use elsewhere. While criminal investigations do not fall under the oversight of the DoD SAPR Program, SAPRO works with the Comptroller to reprogram funds to other DoD organizations to support investigative efforts.

The following key partnerships enhance and inform the Department's Investigation LOE:

- ***US Army Military Police School (USAMPS)*:** The Department reprogrammed funds to support additional capacity for USAMPS to provide advanced sexual assault training to criminal investigators and prosecutors from across the DoD and the USCG.

- ***Defense Forensic Science Center (DFSC):*** DFSC provides full-service forensic support (traditional, expeditionary, and reach-back) to DoD entities worldwide, and oversees the U.S. Army Criminal Investigations Laboratory (USACIL). DoD SAPRO works with DFSC to ensure that Service SAPR programs are fully informed of the laboratory's capabilities and programs that support sexual assault. DoD SAPRO also collaborated with USACIL scientists to update the DoD SAFE Kit.

G. Conclusion

Investigation Initiatives – Progress at a Glance

	Action	Status
Field an SVIP Capability in Each Service	Complete	●
Keep victims informed of their case progress	In Progress	⇨
Enhance investigative training	In Progress	●
Improve investigative sufficiency	In Progress	●
Conduct timely investigations	In Progress	⇨

● Clear evidence of progress ⇨ Indications of progress ✖ Progress not evident

In the continued effort to hold offenders appropriately accountable, the Department incorporated best and promising practices that were adopted and/or adapted as a result of collaborations with external organizations.

Over the past two years, the Department has substantially enhanced its investigative capabilities. At the direction of the Secretary of Defense, the Department created one of the most important resources related to the Investigation LOE: the SVIP capability. This multidisciplinary approach has fundamentally reshaped and improved the Department's ability to properly investigate allegations of sexual assault, domestic violence, and child abuse. Drawing from the latest research from both government agencies and civilian organizations, the MCIOs have also implemented scientifically-informed investigative techniques that optimize the recovery of physical and testimonial evidence. All three MCIOs now teach and employ trauma-informed interviewing techniques to mitigate the potential for re-traumatizing the victim.

While in other sections this report details the significant role of the commander in addressing sexual assault, it is important to note that DoD policy explicitly forbids commanders from directing or influencing the criminal investigative process. This policy, in addition to the other initiatives previously detailed, represents the Department's unrelenting commitment to the identification and apprehension of sexual assault offenders. The next LOE, Accountability, will demonstrate the steps the Department has taken to hold offenders appropriately accountable.

V. ACCOUNTABILITY (LOE 3)

Objective: Achieve high competence in holding offenders appropriately accountable.
End state: Perpetrators are held appropriately accountable.

A. Introduction

Over the past three years, the DoD and Congress have launched several initiatives to ensure offenders are held appropriately accountable for sexual assault, to include increased penalties for convicted offenders, elevating initial disposition authority, mandating administrative separation processing of any member convicted of a sexual assault, and creating an overall better response system for victims. Through these efforts and others, the Department has sent a clear message that the military has no place for sexual assault.

> *A command where the victims will be taken care of and the report will be taken seriously is what we call a non-permissive climate. Offenders in that climate know things are going to be difficult. They're going to be held appropriately accountable.*
>
> *Major General Gary Patton, former SAPRO Director*

Accordingly, the Department has taken significant and comprehensive steps to address victim safety and confidence when participating in the military justice system. The Department has also been actively engaged to identify areas of improvement and implement enhancements throughout the legal process to reassure victims they will be treated with dignity and respect as they navigate the military justice process. As a result, more victims are stepping forward to report their assaults than ever before, suggesting increased confidence in newly established Department initiatives aimed at the justice system.

B. Key Highlight

Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel (SVC/VLC)

Rationale: Victim participation and engagement throughout the military justice process is key to holding offenders appropriately accountable. However, sexual assault victims are often reluctant to report and engage the system. As a means to provide advice and advocacy, as well as empower victims to participate in the justice system, the Department created the groundbreaking SVC/Victims' Legal Counsel program (VLC).[79] SVCs are Military Service JAs who provide independent legal advice and representation to victims of sexual assault and other serious criminal offenses, protecting their rights and empowering them to successfully navigate the military justice system in order to bring perpetrators to justice.

[79] The Air Force and Army use the term Special Victims' Counsel, while the Navy and Marine Corps use VLC. In the interest of clarity, the DoD section will refer to the SVC/VLC as simply "SVC."

These specialized attorneys are assigned to victims to represent the rights of the victim and act independent of the prosecutor.

Synopsis of Progress: Launched as a pilot program by the Air Force in January 2013, the SVC initiative provided Airmen, and other eligible individuals who reported they were a victim of sexual assault, the opportunity to be assigned a military attorney for legal and emotional support - at the Air Force's expense and at no cost to the victim. The SVC's role was to advise victims on the investigative and military justice processes, protect the rights afforded to these victims, and empower them to participate in the military justice process. The pilot program was a tremendous success, and resulted in the Air Force being recognized by the DOJ with the Federal Service Award, which honors individuals and organizations for their direct service to victims of federal, tribal, and military crime.[80]

U.S. Air Force Special Victims' Counsel Program receives the 2014 Federal Service Award.

Due to the overwhelmingly positive feedback from victims involved in the pilot program, the Secretary of Defense directed the Secretaries of the Military Departments in August 2013 to establish a Special Victims' Advocacy Program in each of their Departments.

> *Witnesses who had been assigned special victim counsel told the Panel that their special victim counsel were critical to their ability to understand the process and participate effectively as witnesses against their accuser.*
>
> *Report of the Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel*
> *June 2014*

Each of the remaining Services established initial operating capability to provide similar legal services to victims by November 1, 2013, and all Service programs were fully operational with their respective programs by January 1, 2014. Independently, the USCG Judge Advocate General (JAG) established an SVC program for the USCG on July 12, 2013. Section 1716 of the NDAA for FY 2014, enacted on December 26, 2013, required SVC programs across the Department, ensuring the requisite funding and resourcing to sustain the capability. Victims of sexual assault are now assigned an SVC within 48 hours (when practicable) of the SVC program office receiving a request.

[80] DoJ website https://ovcncvrw.ncjrs.gov/Awards/AwardGallery/gallerysearch.html

Evidence of Progress. The SVC program continues to receive support from the victims it was created to serve, as well as endorsements from Service members who hear about the new program.

- DoD SES:[81] The 2014 SES asked respondents a variety of questions about their experiences and satisfaction with SVCs.
  - Of the 68% of respondents who used a SVC:
    - A large majority (93%-97%) agreed the SVC treated them professionally (97%), listened to them without judgment (96%), supported them (96%), and thoroughly answered their questions (93%)
    - The majority (90%) indicated they were satisfied with the services provided by the SVC

Survivor regarding SVC: "My SVC told me he would protect my rights and DID. He kept me informed, was very capable and really great."

- SAPR Focus Groups: Focus group participants indicated SVCs might be a helpful resource for sexual assault survivors:
  - *"Because they have somebody to talk to and understand and help them through it legally and emotionally. Somebody that's on their side regardless." (E1-E4 Female)*
  - *"I think it will help people from feeling lost because there's someone there that can answer those questions legally. The emotional support is a great thing, but if you decide to prosecute, you're going to have so many questions, you're going to have so much there that is unanswered and how stressful that could be. And just to have someone there dedicated to answering those questions, tell you where this could go or could not go is a great resource." (E3-E4 Male)*
- In an assessment of the SVC program, the Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel (RSP), an independent federal advisory committee mandated by Congress, found the SVC program to go "far beyond any currently found in civilian jurisdictions, state or federal."[82] In interviews with military survivors of sexual assault, the RSP found that "witnesses who had been assigned an SVC told the Panel that their SVC were critical to their ability to understand the process and participate effectively as witnesses against their accuser."[83] When comparing the military's full range of systems and procedures

[81] The complete methodology and analysis of responses for the DoD SES are attached as Annex 2 to this report.
[82] RSP pg. 7; Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf
[83] RSP pg. 27; Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.

to support and protect sexual assault victims to civilian systems, the RSP found that the "military uses best practices in its support of victims and that these systems compare favorably with the civilian systems."[84]

The SVC program has also received accolades from subject matter experts in the field, as they recognize the important role the SVC plays in offender accountability. It has promoted respect and dignity for sexual assault victims while also facilitating their meaningful participation in the military justice system. SVCs have an incredible impact on the lives of the victims they work with.

After a lengthy investigation process and trial where my client had to take the stand and talk about this incredibly personal and invasive thing that happened to her…her husband approached me. He told me how much having me there meant to his wife. That she felt she had a voice in the system and the court listened to her, that she had someone to call with questions, that someone was in her corner. He thanked me, then took a step back and saluted me, not because customs and courtesies required it, but as a sign of gratitude. It was an incredibly moving moment and it was then that I realized this program isn't about outcomes, it is about people – victims' rights are not about ensuring a conviction, they are about promoting respect, dignity, and meaningful participation in the justice system.

Captain Sarabeth Moore, SVC assigned to Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash.[l]

As the Department continues to take steps to address sexual assault in the military, the SVC program exists as compelling evidence that Department initiatives are having meaningful results. While the SVC program has existed for less than a year, the positive impact it has had on survivors has been highly encouraging. Nonetheless, the Department recognizes the SVC program is still evolving. In order to better address the needs of victims, the Department must build on the program's initial success and ensure every SVC is properly trained with sufficient legal experience.

C. Fielding a Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) Capability

Rationale: As noted in the preceding section, the Department believes there is substantive benefit to fielding a cadre of experienced professionals who understand the special sensitivities involved in interpersonal violence.

Synopsis of Progress: The preceding Investigation LOE section described the development of the SVIP between the years 2012 and 2014. Special training

[84] Ibid.

requirements also apply to judge advocates, VWAP personnel, and paralegals working in the SVIP capability.

Evidence of Progress: The report required by the NDAA for FY 2013 was provided to Congress on December 12, 2013.[85] The Office of Legal Policy developed policy and procedures for SVIP legal personnel in DTM 14-003, *DoD Implementation of SVC Prosecution and Legal Support,* which was published on February 12, 2014.[86]

D. Training Enhancements

The DoD has dedicated significant resources to provide legal personnel involved in the military justice system with training to enhance their ability to work with victims of sexual assault, understand impact of trauma on memory, and to practice courtroom skills often used in support of sexual assault cases. Enhanced SAPR training for attorneys, paralegals, and victim-witness assistance personnel incorporates these important elements along with the traditional SAPR-related training components, thus ensuring a more prepared and skilled cadre of legal professionals.

E. Role of the Commander

Under the Accountability LOE, the role of the commander is to hold all offenders appropriately accountable and uphold the integrity of the military justice system.

1. Elevation of Initial Disposition Authority

Lower level unit commanders do not have authority to decide what, if any, disciplinary action should be taken in the most serious sexual assault crimes. The senior commanders who do have such authority will often have no personal knowledge of either the accused or the victim.

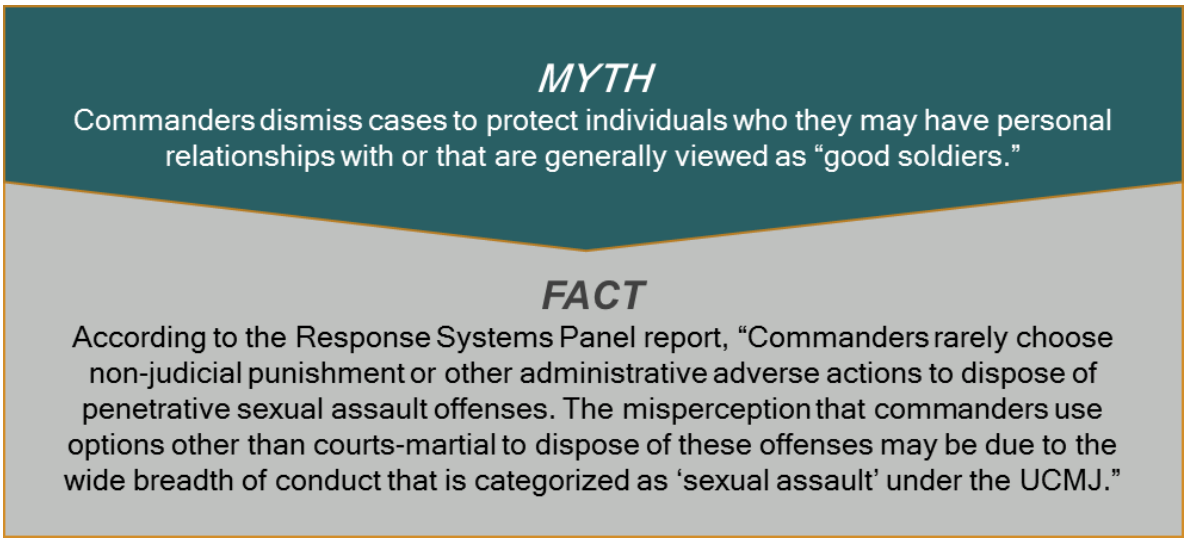
Rationale: In 2012, to strengthen the role of the commander, as well as to provide additional checks in balances, the Secretary of Defense directed that initial disposition authority for the most serious sexual assault cases be given only to commanders in the grade of O-6 or higher, who possess at least Special Court-Martial convening authority.

Synopsis of Progress. Upon completion of a criminal investigation, the MCIO conducting the investigation provides a report documenting its evidentiary findings to the subject's military commander and the servicing staff JA for review and legal action, as appropriate. However, for the crimes of rape, sexual assault, nonconsensual sodomy, and attempts to commit these crimes, a convening authority who is at least a special court-martial convening authority and in the grade of O-6 or higher retains initial

[85] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/DoD_SpecialVictimsCapabilities_Report_20131213.pdf.
[86] Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-14-003.pdf.

disposition authority. This means that lower level unit commanders do not have authority to decide what, if any, disciplinary action should be taken in the most serious sexual assault crimes. The senior commanders who do have such authority will often have no personal knowledge of either the accused or the victim.[87] This policy allows more seasoned officers to make the initial decision regarding case disposition, and ensures sexual assault cases receive the high-level attention they deserve.

Evidence of Progress. On April 20, 2012, the Secretary of Defense signed a memorandum putting this policy into effect beginning on June 28, 2012.[88] The policy put forth in the memo was subsequently incorporated into the March 28, 2013 re-issuance of DoDI 6495.02, *SAPR Program Procedures*.[89]



2. *Improving Victim Confidence in the Military Justice System*

Rationale: Victims of crime play a central role in the military justice system. As such the Department has a responsibility to demonstrate that, when a victim makes a report of sexual assault, the matter will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and adjudicated based on the available evidence.

Synopsis of Progress: At the direction of the Secretary of Defense, the Department has been actively engaged in a series of initiatives to build victim confidence in the military justice system, improve reporting of sexual assault, and provide for opportunities for victims to take a more active role in the justice process. Congress has also legislated its own changes to the military justice system with provisions in the NDAAs for FYs 2012, 2013, and 2014.

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[87] RSP page 126; Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.
[88] Available at: http://www.dod.gov/dodgc/images/withhold_authority.pdf.
[89] See page 42 of the Instruction at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/instructions/DoDI_649502_20140212.pdf.

Evidence of Progress: In addition to the previously described SVC Program and the withholding of initial disposition authority for sexual assault crimes, there have been a number of initiatives enacted to further improve victim confidence in the military justice system. For example, in the NDAA for FY 2014 there were 16 separate military justice provisions, reflecting the most sweeping change to the UCMJ since 1968. New military justice initiatives enacted since 2012 include:

- **Assessing Response Systems:** The RSP delivered a report on June 27, 2014,[90] and made a total of 132 recommendations in the areas of victim services; victim rights; the role of the commander in the military justice process; and the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of sexual assault. The Department is currently reviewing the 132 recommendations to determine an appropriate action for each one.

- **Ensuring Victims' Rights:** The Secretary directed[91] the Services to develop a method, in coordination with the Joint Service Committee (JSC) on Military Justice, to incorporate the rights afforded to victims through the Crime Victims' Rights Act into military justice practice, to the extent appropriate. Congress provided assistance on this initiative in Section 1701 of the NDAA for FY 2014, by amending the UCMJ to include crime victims' rights. The Department is on track to recommend to the President the appropriate changes to the Manual for Courts-Martial by late December 2014. Additionally, victims will have the right to have trial counsel or victim counsel present when being interviewed by the defense (Section 1704), and the right to submit post-trial matters for consideration by the convening authority (Section 1706).

- **Enhancing Pretrial Investigations**: The Secretary of Defense directed[92] the Secretaries of the Military Departments to require that judge advocates serve as investigating officers for all Article 32 hearings on sexual assault offense charges. On December 3, 2013, the Secretaries of the Military Departments reported they had enacted policy to comply with this directive. Section 1702 of the NDAA for FY 2014 further limited the scope of the Article 32 hearing, and retitled it as a "preliminary hearing." This change takes effect for offenses committed on or after December 26, 2014. Section 1702 also limited a convening authority's discretion to disapprove findings, and to disapprove, commute, or suspend, in whole or in part, the sentence adjudged in a court-martial. The investigating officer, whenever practicable, will be a JA and equal or greater in rank to the other counsel involved in the case. All victims (military and civilian) will have the right to decline to testify.

[90] Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.
[91] See SECDEF Memorandum at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/news/SECDEF_Memo_SAPR_Initiatives_20130814.pdf.
[92] See SECDEF Memorandum at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/news/SECDEF_Memo_SAPR_Initiatives_20130814.pdf.

- **Additional military justice provisions legislated by the FY 2014 National Defense Authorization Act include:**

  - Section 1703 – Added sexual assault to the list of offenses with no statute of limitations (rape was already an offense without a statute of limitations).

  - Section 1705 – Required that only a general court-martial be used for certain sex offenses, and mandated a dishonorable discharge or dismissal if convicted of those sex offenses.

  - Section 1708 – Eliminated the accused's character and military service as factors to be considered by the commander when making a case disposition decision under the UCMJ.

  - Section 1744 - Required the Service Secretaries to review sex offense cases in which a Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) recommended referral to court-martial, but the convening authority elected not to do so. Even in cases in which the SJA and convening authority agree the case should not be referred to court-marital, the next higher convening authority must also review the case.

  - Section 1745 - Requires personnel records be annotated if a Service member was convicted by a court-martial, received non-judicial punishment, or adverse administrative action for a sex-related offense. Whenever the Service member transfers into a new unit, the new commander must then review this information.

- **SES Information**: Of the 64% of respondents who made an Unrestricted Report and spoke to their unit commander/director in response to the sexual assault:

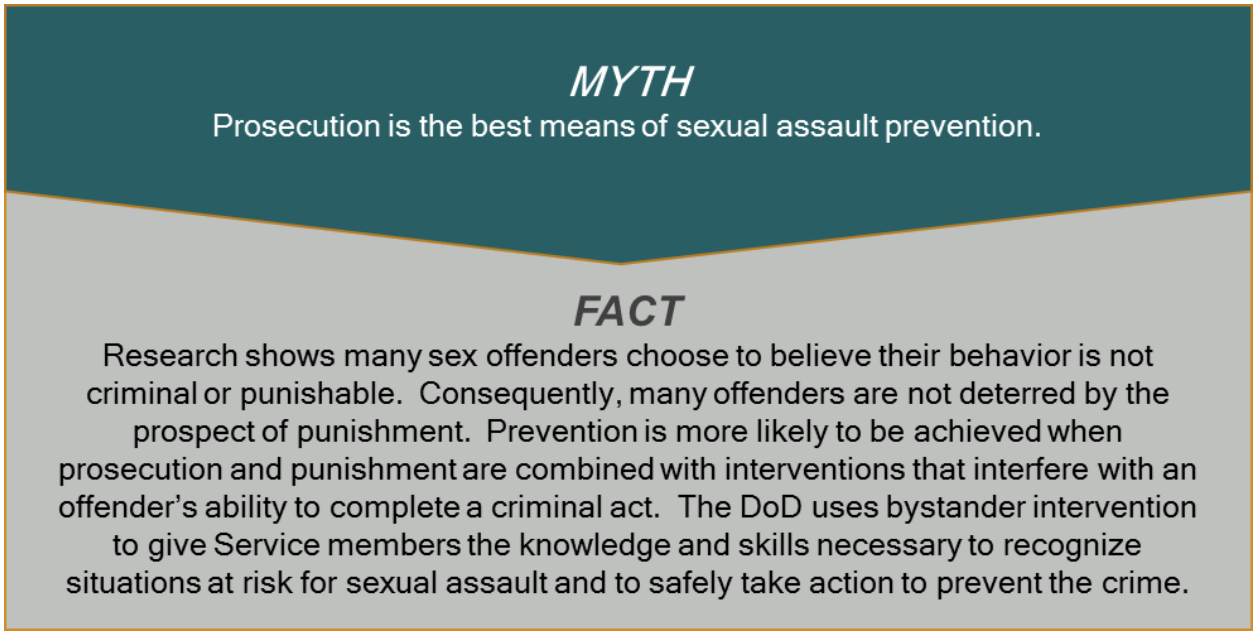
  - More than two thirds *agreed* the unit commander/director *supported them* (82%), *took steps to address their privacy and confidentiality* (80%), *treated them professionally* (79%), *listened to them without judgment* (78%), and *thoroughly answered their questions* (70%)

  - About three-quarters (73%) indicated that overall they were *satisfied* with the unit commander/director's response to the sexual assault

- **SAPR Focus Group Information**: Focus group participants indicated there has been a positive shift in DoD's handling of sexual assault and harassment:

  - "Across the board, we get inspections, Equal Opportunity (EO) officers who've been put into place that help us understand SARC training, where, in the past, that didn't happen." (*E7-E9 Mixed Group)*

- "Our last leader said, 'anything like this happens, it's going up to the General/Admiral level.' I see all over the media, they're afraid things are just getting swept under the rug in-house with commanding officers. But that's kind of the policy now is it goes up, it's going to be above him so he doesn't make that decision." (*E5-E6 Male)*



3. Impacts of UCMJ Reform Proposals

The commander's authority to refer charges to court-martial is an essential component of holding offenders appropriately accountable. However, recent legislative proposals have called for a reduction in the Commander's ability to prosecute these crimes. In analyzing such proposals, the RSP found that:

> ***Congress should not further limit the authority of convening authorities under the UCMJ to refer charges for sexual assault crimes to trial by court-martial beyond the recent amendments to the UCMJ and DoD policy. After reviewing the practices of Allied militaries and available civilian statistics, and hearing from many witnesses, the Panel determined the evidence does not support a conclusion that removing convening authority from senior commanders will reduce the incidence of sexual assault, increase reporting of sexual assaults, or improve the quality of investigations and prosecutions of sexual assault cases in the Armed Forces.***[93]

[93] RSP page 6-7; Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.

While many of the initiatives launched by the Department still need time to be completely integrated into the SAPR strategy and also must be thoroughly evaluated, preliminary evidence is proving that properly trained commanders are ensuring offenders are held appropriately accountable.

4. *Handling of Sexual Assault Cases*

Since FY 2009, the number of sexual assault cases where courts-martial charges were preferred increased by 81 percent, from 21 percent of cases in 2009 to 38 percent of cases in FY 2014 (Figure 15). Also, the proportion of cases where command action was not possible decreased from 43 percent to 27 percent over the same period. While more time is needed to identify the specific initiatives that have led to these positive trends, they reflect a concerted effort by the Department to ensure that all levels of leadership have the resources, training, and capabilities needed to better address and respond to sexual assault allegations.

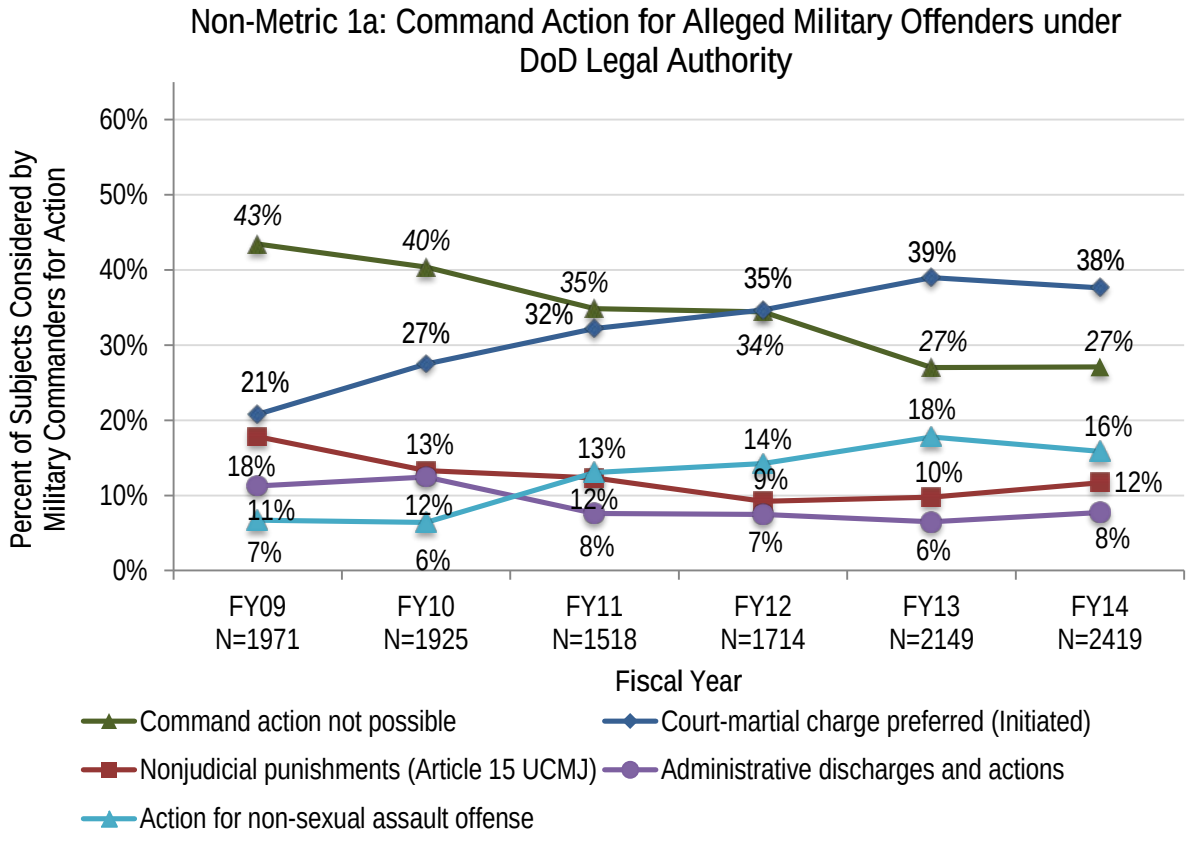


Figure 15 – Non-Metric 1a: Command Action for Alleged Military Offenders under DoD Legal Authority

F. Partnerships/Collaborations

The vast majority of the men and women serving in the Armed Forces have never committed a crime, and even fewer have ever committed a crime as serious as sexual assault. For individuals who do commit or attempt to commit sexual assault, the Department has worked aggressively to provide commanders with the resources they

need to hold them appropriately accountable, and has worked closely with civilian organizations and other government agencies to improve offender accountability, as appropriate.

1. Collaboration with Civilian Organizations

The Department's responsibility for holding offenders appropriately accountable does not end after disposition. Instead, the Department has made several efforts to ensure that sexual offenders do not have the opportunity to repeat their offense. These efforts include:

- Publicizing the punishments for misconduct or criminal offenses
- Processing for administrative separation any member convicted of a sexual assault but not adjudged a punitive discharge as part of their sentence
- Revision of the list of UCMJ offenses for which sex offender notification is required
- Managing sex offender registration and notification upon discharge from DoD confinement facilities

For offenders held in a military correctional facility who are required to register as a sex offender, the Department provides written notice five days prior to their release to the chief law enforcement officer of the State, territory, or local jurisdiction in which the prisoner will reside, as well as to the State or local agency responsible for the receipt or maintenance of a sex offender registration in that area. The Department also notifies the United States Marshals Service Sex Offender Targeting Center.

2. External Observations of the Military Justice System

While the DoD has taken a significant interest in measuring the effectiveness of its strategy for preventing and responding to instances of sexual assault, the Department has also worked with independent entities in order to validate its approach.

a. Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel (RSP)

One of the RSP's primary responsibilities was to compare civilian and military rates of sexual assault cases. During its review, the RSP found that in some civilian jurisdictions, responding police officers or detectives can determine an allegation is "unfounded," that is, false or baseless, and close a case before a prosecutor ever receives it. In such instances, the case closed as "unfounded" is not accounted for in civilian prosecution rates. In contrast, the Services track every reported sexual assault from report through disposition, including reports to authorized officials who are not affiliated with law enforcement agencies. Further, the RSP stated that "because the military collects much more detailed data on every reported sexual assault than civilian

jurisdictions, attempting to compare military and civilian prosecution rates for sexual assaults is difficult at best, and misleading at worst."[94]

b. Academic Analysis

Another outside observer to speak favorably regarding the Department's efforts is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the George Washington University Law School, and retired judge advocate colonel in the Army, Dr. Lisa M. Schenck. When comparing the military and civilian justice systems in an analysis of the Department's SAPR program, Dr. Schenck writes:

> ***Using inflammatory language and misleading statistics some attack the prosecution and conviction rates in the Military Services without realizing that other prosecution entities such as the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, and the three largest states by population do not use survey data to calculate such results. When the same criteria are used for calculation of prosecution and conviction rates, the military justice system's rates are comparable to major civilian prosecution entities for the same types of offenses.***[95]

Dr. Schenck also discusses the importance of having commanders retain the responsibility of convening authority in sexual assault cases. Specifically, Dr. Schenck argues that those who call for removing the convening authority's power to punish military personnel who commit sexual assault do not "consider what the Supreme Court recognized forty years ago – 'the military has… by necessity, developed laws and traditions of its own during its long history.'" Further, Dr. Schenck summarizes the issue by saying, "Critics should understand that the focus should not be on prosecution rates when the facts involving the particular offense at issue are unknown."[96]

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[94] RSP page 4; Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.
[95] Available at: http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/students/groups/osjcl/files/2014/06/7.-Schenck2.pdf.
[96] Ibid.

G. Conclusion

Accountability Initiatives – Progress at a Glance

	Action	Status
Field an SVC/VLC Program	Complete	●
Field an SVIP Capability in Each Service	Complete	●
Withhold Initial Disposition Authority for the Most Serious Sexual Assault Cases to Senior Commanders	Complete	●
Improve Victim Confidence the Military Justice System	In Progress	⇨

● Clear evidence of progress ⇨ Indications of progress ✖ Progress not evident

Holding offenders appropriately accountable promotes unit cohesion, trust, and values that define the U.S. military. The Department's policy to elevate initial disposition authority enables disciplinary decisions to be made by more experienced commanders. This helps to ensure that cases are adjudicated based on relevant evidence, and not on any previous "good standing" or personal relationships. Furthermore, having these cases remain within the chain of command allows the Department's leaders to retain responsibility and accountability for addressing this critical issue.

The Department also recognizes the vital role survivors play in maintaining good order and discipline within the force. However, participating in criminal proceedings can be exceedingly difficult for survivors, given that recalling memories about a sexual assault can sometimes be as traumatic as the crime itself. For this reason, the Department has taken several steps to afford victims with a network of professionals for support and protection. The Department's groundbreaking SVC program provides survivors with a dependable resource that is specially trained to represent their legal interests – a service with overwhelmingly positive survivor reviews.

The highest levels of leadership within the Department, from the Secretary of Defense to the Joint Chiefs, are working to promote a command climate free from sexual assault. Commanders at all levels have the responsibility to propagate that climate and encourage every member of the military to embrace their role in promoting safety. The Department's success is largely measured by its ability to hold offenders appropriately accountable, but just as important is the Department's ability to provide quality care for the survivors of this heinous crime. The next LOE, Advocacy and Victim Assistance, will describe the various resources that the Department provides to survivors.

VI. ADVOCACY/VICTIM ASSISTANCE (LOE 4)

Objective: Deliver consistent and effective victim support, response and reporting options.
End state: DoD provides high quality services and support to instill confidence and trust, strengthen resilience, and inspire victims to report.

A. Introduction

Until sexual assault is eliminated from our ranks, DoD is dedicated to supporting and empowering victims of sexual assault to heal, restore their lives, and participate as desired in the military justice process. Given that many sexual assaults in the military occur between fellow Service members, professionals throughout DoD work diligently with survivors to overcome the violation of trust and destruction of confidence brought about by the crime. The full spectrum of available support and care gives victims options about how they choose to heal – physically, emotionally, and professionally.

> *The victims are not only human beings; they're fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines. We cannot let them down.*
>
> *Chuck Hagel*
> *U.S. Secretary of Defense*

While the number of sexual assault reports to DoD remains outnumbered by the number of incidents estimated to occur annually, a record number of victims in FY 2013 and FY 2014 came forward to make reports. Given that the past-year prevalence (occurrence) of sexual assault decreased from FY 2012 to FY 2014, the Department views this increased reporting behavior as an indicator of growing confidence in the DoD response system. DoD SAPR policies are designed to help victims exercise their rights, as well as provide them with a professional response, effective treatment, legal support, and a voice in the military justice process.

The Department's programs and initiatives are setting new expectations about what should be the national standard for victim services and assistance. DoD requires that medical care and SAPR services be gender-responsive, culturally competent, and recovery-oriented. Particularly noteworthy program enhancements over the past three years include:

- The establishment and expansion of the Safe Helpline, which provides 24/7 anonymous support to the DoD community worldwide
- The establishment of the SVC and incorporation of victims' rights into military law
- The professional certification of all DoD SARCs and SAPR VAs

These initiatives were not only designed to help victims become more confident in the response system, they were developed to be responsive to victim feedback. Unprecedented leadership support of the SAPR program over the past three years has made clear the expectation that each victim of sexual assault is to be treated with respect, dignity, and sensitivity.

Establishing a Robust Sexual Assault Response System

Rationale: The Department established the initial response system in 2005 with the creation of the SAPR Program. The DoD has since modified the system several times to remain responsive to victim needs and feedback, to comply with legislated changes, and to verify that the system works as it was designed. Civilian research indicates that victims who report their sexual assault are more likely to engage in care and services. Consequently, making victims confident that the response system will work for them is an important aspect of the Department's approach: a system serves no one if its users are reluctant to engage it. According to survivors, the primary barrier to reporting a sexual assault is the concern of having their privacy compromised. A victim's confidence that his or her privacy will be respected begins with hearing from leadership at all levels that those who report a sexual assault will be taken seriously and treated with dignity.[97] Using victim feedback and expert advice, the Department works continuously to formulate policies and initiatives that protect victim privacy, provide a variety of reporting methods, address safety, and make support resources readily available.

Use of Terms "victim" and "survivor"

Although many advocates prefer to use the term "survivor" to describe an individual who has been sexually assaulted, the term "victim" is also widely used. This document uses the terms interchangeably and always with respect for those who have been subjected to these crimes.

Synopsis of Progress: In response to expert recommendations in the 2004 Care for Victims of Sexual Assault Task Force, DoD instituted a policy in 2005 that offered a confidential reporting option for military victims who wanted to maintain their privacy and still seek help and services following an assault. As a result, military victims of sexual assault have two reporting options: Restricted and Unrestricted (see Figure 16).

Providing reporting options was a significant step towards empowering victims to make decisions about their own recovery process, as well as the ability to pursue justice according to their individual preference and comfort level.

[97] More information in the Role of the Commander section on page 107.

Figure 16 - Reporting option available to sexual assault victims.

Restricted Reporting. This option allows victims of sexual assault to report the crime to specified individuals who can connect the victim with medical care, victim advocacy, counseling, and legal advice without notifying command or law enforcement officials of the victim's identity. SARCs, SAPR VAs, and healthcare personnel can receive a Restricted Report. Additionally, victims' communications with SARCs, SAPR

VAs, mental health counselors, chaplains, and SVC are also privileged under military law. For purposes of public safety and command responsibility, the SARC/SAPR VA notifies the senior installation commander that an assault has occurred and provides details about the incident while preserving the identity of the victim. This gives the command an opportunity to adjust policies and procedures to improve public safety.

Restricted Reporting provides victims with personal space, time, and increased control over the release and management of their personal information. It empowers them to seek relevant information and support to make informed decisions about whether to participate in a criminal investigation. Even if the victim chooses not to pursue an official investigation, this additional reporting avenue gives commanders a clearer picture of sexual assault allegations within their command.

Further, it enhances commanders' ability to address the safety, well-being, and mission readiness of all unit members. If a victim decides to pursue an investigation, he or she always has the option to convert from a Restricted to Unrestricted Report. For this purpose, a victim may also elect to undergo a SAFE for documentation and collection of evidence of the crime. If the victim hasn't converted a report from Restricted to Unrestricted within a year, the SARC contacts the victim and notifies him or her that the SAFE materials will be kept for an additional four years. The victim also has the ability to convert the report at any time.

Unrestricted Reporting. This option is the traditional approach to crime reporting. An Unrestricted Report allows the victim to obtain all available care and support, as well as immediately participate in the military justice process. Unrestriced Reports also initiate mandatory investigations. Medical care, victim advocacy, counseling, and legal advice can be accessed, but the victim also participates in an official investigation of the allegation and any military justice action that may follow.

An Unrestricted Report can be made with any of the following:

- SARC
- SAPR VA
- Health care personnel
- Chain of command
- Law enforcement

Upon notification of a Restricted or Unrestriced Report of a sexual assault allegation, the SARC will immediately assign a SAPR VA. At the victim's discretion or request, he or she may undergo a SAFE. If an Unrestricted Report is filed, DoD policy requires that commanders brief victims monthly on the status of the case throughout the course of the investigation. In addition, commanders are required to keep details regarding the incident limited to only those personnel who have a legitimate need to know.

Evidence of Progress:

- Reporting Data (Figure 17).[98] Reporting data is drawn from DSAID. It reflects information about reports of sexual assault received in FY 2014. Data for FY 2013 and preceding years is drawn from the DoD's Annual Reports to Congress.
    - Reports of Sexual Assault over Time. The Department put policies in place in 2005 to encourage greater reporting of sexual assault. However, it wasn't until recently, with the unprecedented leadership attention to the crime that the number of sexual assault reports increased substantially. Starting in FY 2013 and continuing through FY 2014, the Department has seen an unprecedented increase in the level of sexual assault reporting. The total number of reports received in FY 2013 (5,518) and FY 2014 (5,983) are over 50% greater than the number of reports received in FY 2012 (3,604). Given the underreported nature of sexual assault, the Department believes this increase in reporting is likely due to greater victim confidence in the response system. Some may be concerned that the increase in reporting may be due to an overall increase in crime. While this is possible, it is unlikely. In fact, the estimated past-year prevalence (occurrence) of USC[99] decreased for women and stayed about the same for men between FY 2012 and FY 2014. Using a new measure of sexual assault that more precisely aligns with the language in the UCMJ, the RMWS confirmed that overall past-year prevalence rates of sexual assault decreased for women and stayed about the same for men between FY 2012 and FY 2014.

[98] Additional information about sexual assault reporting can be seen in both the Statistical Data section of this report, as well as the Metrics Section, which are Appendix C and B, respectively.
[99] USC is the Workplace and Gender Relations Survey term for a range of sexual crimes - that include sexual assault - in SAPR policy.

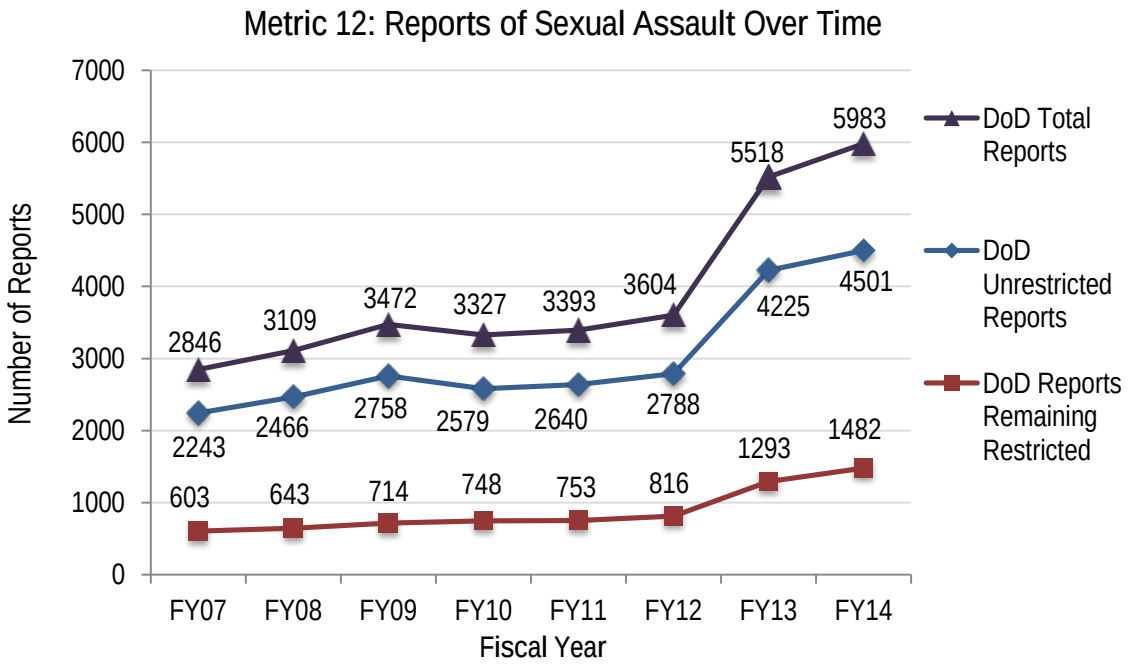


Figure 17 – Metric 12: Reports of Sexual Assault, FY 2007 to FY 2014.

- Reports for Matters Occurring Before Military Service. Each year, the Department receives several hundred reports from military members about an incident they experienced before entering service. Similar to FY 2013, about 9% of the reports received by SARCs and SAPR VAs in FY 2014 were for pre-service incidents. In years FY 2012 and prior, a very small proportion of reports were in this category. Reports from these survivors indicate they felt sufficiently confident in the response system to help them with something from their past.

- Conversions from Restricted to Unrestricted Reports. Survivors who make a Restricted Report may convert their report to an Unrestricted Report at any time and may participate in the military justice process. This year, a record 19% of Restricted Reports received in FY 2014 converted. An additional 47 Restricted Reports initially made in FY 2013 and prior years also converted to Unrestricted Reports during FY 2014. On average, victims took about 34 days to convert their reports.

- SES. Respondents (just over 150) were asked to provide information on their awareness of SAPR resources prior to his/her report of sexual assault. The

majority of respondents were aware of the resources DoD SAPRO offers sexual assault survivors.[100]

- More than three-quarters of respondents indicated that prior to the assault, they were aware of SARCs (82%), chaplain services to survivors of sexual assault (78%), Uniform Victim Advocates (UVAs)/VAs (78%), and mental health counseling/care for survivors of sexual assault (77%)
- Approximately half of respondents indicated that prior to the assault, they were aware of SAFEs (62%), the DoD Safe Helpline (54%), and their installation 24-hour helpline (49%)
- About one-third of respondents indicated that prior to the assault, they were aware of the local civilian 24-hour helpline (33%) and SVC or VLC (29%)[101]
- The vast majority of respondents (99%) indicated they interacted with a SARC and/or a UVA/VA (SARC 95% and UVA/VA 82%) as a result of the sexual assault
- More than two-thirds of respondents indicated, as a result of the assault, they spoke to a mental health provider (71%)
- Approximately half of respondents (49%) indicated they interacted with a medical provider. Of the 24% of respondents who received medical care at a military medical treatment facility: A large majority agreed the provider maintained their confidentiality (94%), explained the steps in the exam to them (90%), supported them (89%), treated them professionally (89%), did not rush them to make decisions (86%), thoroughly answered their questions (85%), performed exams appropriate for the reason for their visit (84%), and listened to them without judgment (80%).
- Less than one-third of respondents (31%) indicated they interacted with a chaplain as a result of the assault
- For those respondents who made an Unrestricted Report, about two-thirds indicated, as a result of the assault, they spoke to their immediate supervisor (66%), their senior enlisted advisor (65%), or their unit commander/director (64%)
- One of the ways the Department measures progress is whether respondents who report a sexual assault would recommend others report as well. Nearly three quarters of all respondents (73%) indicated, based on their overall experience of reporting, that yes they would recommend others report their

[100] As survey eligibility was based on the timeframe of the report, not the timeframe of the assault, some sexual assault resources may not have been available to a survivor at the time of his/her sexual assault. Data presented excludes those who indicated a resource did not exist at the time of the assault.

[101] This new resource provides legal counsel for a military survivor of sexual assault and was established across DoD in FY 2014.

sexual assault, whereas 14% of respondents indicated no and 13% were unsure if they would recommend others report their sexual assault.

- DoD Focus Groups. Some focus group participants indicated that survivors might choose to make an Unrestricted Report because they believe their report would be handled appropriately and the perpetrator would be held accountable.

  - *"I think especially with all the awareness, people are more confident that their reports are going to be taken seriously. If you go report something, it's going to be taken seriously and seen through the end and thoroughly investigated."* (O2-O3 Male)

  - *"I think the more everyone talks about it the easier it is for people to get help."* (E3-E4 Female)

  - *"It's not some hush-hush topic anymore and I believe that a lot of the commanders are moving in a positive way with actually protecting the individual instead of making them feel as if they're like a troublemaker or they put unnecessary action or unnecessary paperwork or attention towards the unit."* (E3-E4 Female)

- DEOCS Analysis. While there is no item that specifically addresses victim confidence on the DEOCS, respondents are asked to rate on a four-point scale their unit leadership's support for the SAPR program, their leadership's encouragement for victims to report a sexual assault, and their leadership's efforts to create an environment where victims feel comfortable reporting.

  For analysis purposes, ratings for these three items are combined into a four-point scale index. On average across the Department in FY 2014, service members consistently rated their leadership's support for sexual assault quite favorably.

  Men (3.6 on a 4.0 scale) tended to rate their leadership higher than women (3.4 on a 4.0 scale). Junior enlisted members and NCOs (3.5 on a 4.0 scale) tended to rate their leadership lower than did the more senior ranks (3.7 on a 4.0 scale).

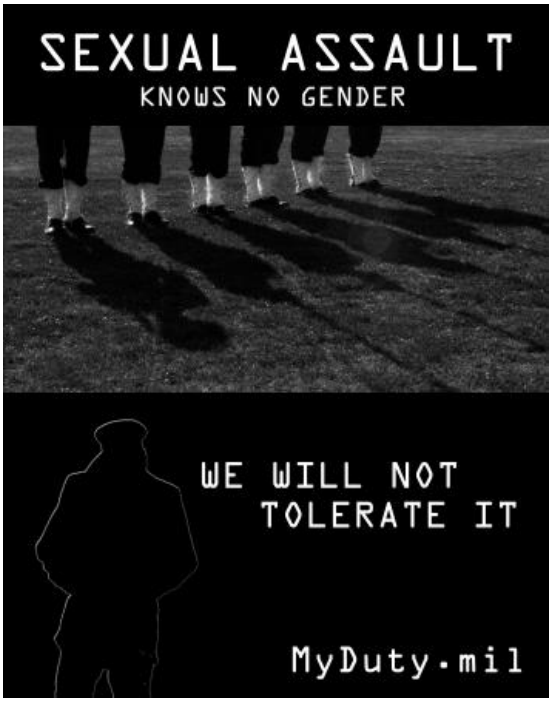


Figure 18 – An informational poster about SAAM.

MYTH

Most of the victims of sexual assault in the military are women.

FACT

Just as in the civilian sector, estimated rates of sexual assault in the military are higher for women than men. However, because the military is approximately 85 percent male, population estimates of male victims often equal or outnumber population estimates of female victims. As a result, the Department does not view sexual assault as a gender-based issue, but rather as a readiness issue that can impact anyone. The Department works to correct cultural misperceptions of victim weakness or character flaw as the "cause" for sexual assault by emphasizing offender culpability. Reports of sexual assault from male victims are invaluable to developing this fact-based counter narrative.

Underreporting of sexual assaults affects the Department's ability to provide services to the victim, as well as hinders the ability to take action against an alleged offender. Each year the Department publishes its annual report that assesses the number of reported sexual assaults and the number of subjects with victims who decline to participate in the justice process (Figure 19).

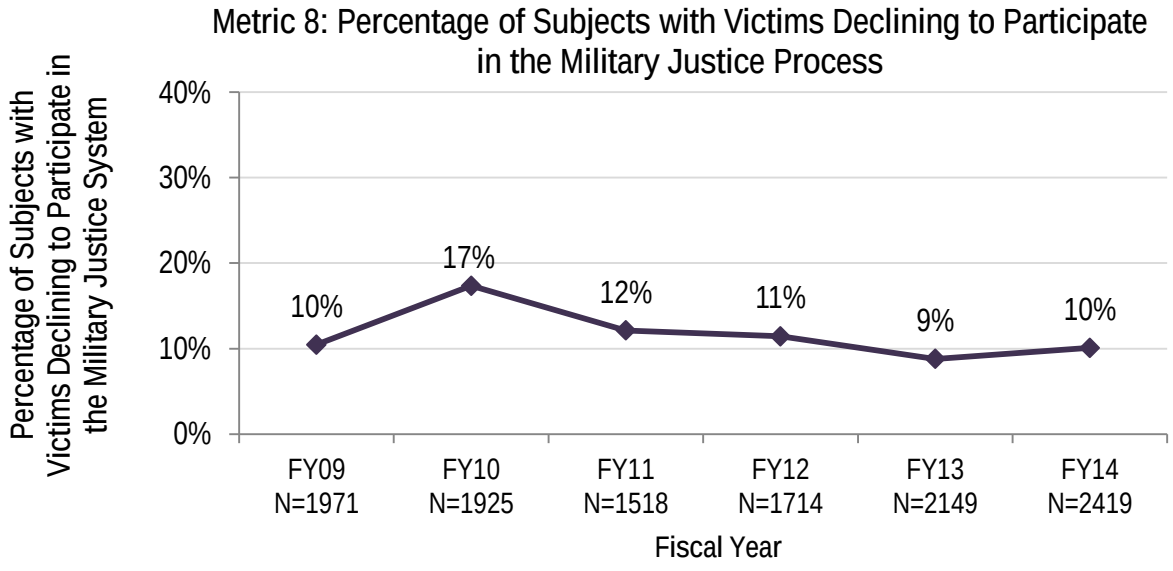


Figure 19 – Metric 8: Percentage of Subjects with Victims Declining to Participate in the Military Justice Process

B. Key Highlights

1. **DoD Safe Helpline**
2. **Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel (SVC/VLC)**
3. **DoD Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program (D-SAACP)**

Of the many initiatives and programs instituted over the past three years in support of victims, three are noteworthy for their innovation and victim-centric premise:

- **World-wide, 24/7 Victim Support (DoD Safe Helpline, Safe Helproom and Self-Care Mobile App)**. This support network is available 24/7 to victims and survivors of sexual assault via a website, online helpline, chatroom, telephone helpline and mobile app.

- Personalized and specialized legal support known as the **Special Victims' Counsel (or Victims' Legal Counsel)**. In this innovative program, lawyers play more than an advisory role. In addition to providing legal advice, they also represent victims through a confidential attorney-client relationship throughout the investigation and prosecution process.

- Professionalization and certification of victim first responders. In close collaboration with National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP), DoD created a credentialing program for SARCs and VAs known as **D-SAACP**.

1. DoD Safe Helpline

Creating a Crisis Support Capability

Rationale: Some victims of sexual assault - especially male victims - find it easier to first confide in an anonymous person rather than a loved one. A crisis support line allows a survivor to speak to someone who is impartial and trained to listen and help. In addition, an online presence allows help-seekers to learn about available support and services without having to directly engage anyone.

Synopsis of Progress: In April 2011, the Department launched the **DoD Safe Helpline** as part of its commitment to deliver consistent and effective victim support and response. As a support service for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault, the Safe Helpline provides live, one-on-one crisis intervention and information to the worldwide DoD community. Safe Helpline offers confidential, anonymous, secure help via five distinct services (website, online helpline, chatroom, telephone helpline, and mobile app), which are available worldwide — providing victims with the help they

need anytime, anywhere. DoD Safe Helpline is operated through a DoD contract by the non-profit organization RAINN.[102]

Safe Helpline takes a victim-centered, trauma-informed approach to all aspects of its service provision. Services provided include a broad range of support to the user, whether it is immediately following an assault or years after. The DoD Safe Helpline staff members receive highly specialized training on topics including crisis intervention, the neurobiology of trauma, working with survivors in the military and meeting the unique needs of male survivors.

> *I was feeling very down and depressed tonight but after talking with your staff I'm feeling a thousand times better… I honestly believe your staff just helped save my life.*
>
> *Safe Helpline user*

Many men find talking to staff first makes it easier to tell friends and family later. Additionally, the Safe Helpline website provides a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) designed to answer issues specific to male victims of sexual assault. To provide appropriate referrals to all survivors, Safe Helpline maintains a robust referral database. The database includes information for each Service's SARCs, military police, legal personnel (e.g., JAG and SVC), medical and mental health providers, and chaplains. It also contains referral information for civilian affiliate sexual assault service providers and DVA resources. The database has also been enhanced for those planning a transition out of military service, providing VA, DoD, Department of Labor (DOL), and civilian resources for counseling, benefits, housing, transitions and employment.

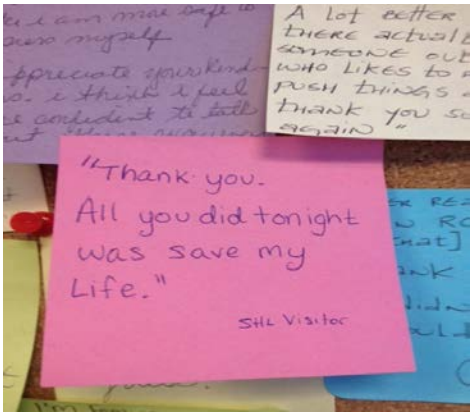
RAINN Director Scott Berkowitz, gives Secretary of Defense Hagel a tour of the Safe Helpline facility, April 2014.

Safe Helpline is built on an innovative communications infrastructure that integrates security and anonymity at every level of operation. Several features have been built in to provide this unique support. Before using online Safe Helpline services, users are provided an easy-to-read statement of the privacy policy and terms of service. Users are required to "Accept" this statement before entering the site. Relevant information on privacy and technology safety are layered throughout online sessions, ensuring users take the necessary steps to

[102] Safe Helpline can be accessed at: www.safehelpline.org and by mobile at m.safehelpline.org for mobile devices. RAINN is the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. In 2006, RAINN launched the nation's first secure web-based support service, the National Sexual Assault Online Hotline. Their Hotline provides users with live, one-on-one help online through an instant-messaging type format. The Justice Department named the Online Hotline as a model for using technology to help victims. Since 1994, RAINN's hotlines have helped over two million people affected by sexual violence.

protect communications, as desired.

In 2012, Safe Helpline expanded its capabilities by fielding the Safe Helpline Mobile Application (app), designed specifically for military sexual assault survivors. Available to adult Service members of the DoD community, including transitioning Service members (TSMs),[103] the app enables mobile device users to access critical resources and manage the short and long-term effects of sexual assault. The new app offers four key features:



Safe Helpline employees save quotes from phone calls to post on their quote board and share with one another.

- *Find Support* - Users connect with live sexual assault professionals via phone or anonymous online chat from their mobile devices. Users can also navigate transition-related resources for Service members leaving the military (e.g., disability assistance, medical benefits, housing help, and employment assistance), or search for resources near their base or installation.

- *Learn* - Users learn key concepts in sexual assault prevention and recovery. Users can learn what to do in the event of a sexual assault, the common mental health effects of sexual assault, and risk reduction tips.

- *Plan* – Users receive assistance in creating and implementing a recovery plan. Users are provided with a means to assess their current symptoms and can create self-care plans. Based on responses, the user is provided with a customized self-care plan with a list of suggested resources and exercises.

- *Exercises* – Users are led through breathing, stretching, and visualization techniques that can reduce anxiety, stress, depression, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

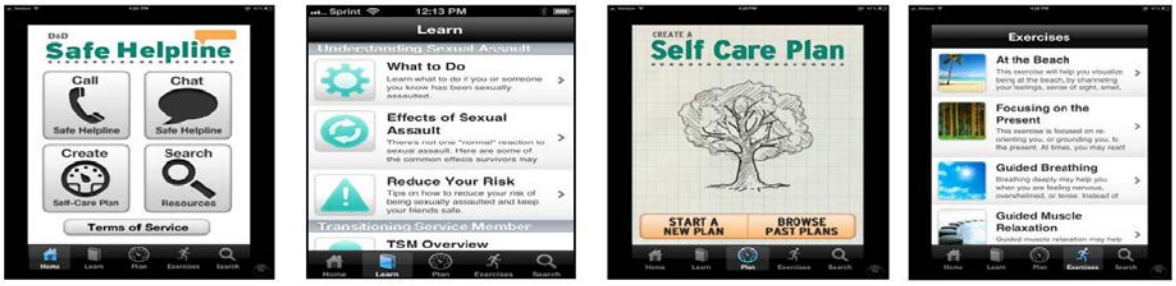


Figure 20 – Safe Helpline Mobile App Screen short - from left to right, main navigation screen, "Learn" screen, "Create a Self Care Plan" screen, and "Exercises" screen

[103] A TSM is defined by the DOL as an individual in active duty status (including separation leave) who registers for employment services and is within 24 months of retirement or 12 months to separation.

In 2013, DoD added a groundbreaking online victim support resource to Safe Helpline called the Safe HelpRoom. This chatroom allows military sexual assault survivors to connect with one another in a moderated and secure online environment. Moderators are trained to facilitate the interactions in the Safe HelpRoom, as well as to ensure participants receive the information and/or help they seek. The benefits of accessing peer support include survivors feeling less lonely, isolated, or judged. Speaking with peers can lead to improved coping skills, a greater sense of adjustment, and reduced stress. Survivors report that they appreciate receiving practical advice and information about treatment options from peers. Also, an online forum overcomes barriers to assistance that some victims face because it is free, anonymous, and available anywhere there is an internet connection.

Evidence of Progress: Since its creation in April 2011, Safe Helpline has worked closely with Services and SARCs to increase visibility on bases and installations. Several indicators point to increased visibility and use of Safe Helpline.

- **New Website Visitors.** The Safe Helpline website uses Google Analytics to measure usage. This data indicates the safehelpline.org website had a 45% increase in new website visitors from FY 2013 – FY 2014 (Figure 21), and a 251% increase from FY 2012 to FY 2014. Analyses of statistical findings indicate that Safe Helpline's leveraging of technology and its online presence makes it particularly responsive and accessible for users. Increased visibility is essential so that victims can access help and get information when and where they need it. Website visitors may directly search the Safe Helpline database of SARCs and other first responders in order to find referral and contact information. The number of searches increased by 264% from FY 2012 to FY 2013, and by 214% from FY 2013 to FY 2014. Across all three FYs, there were a total of 45,446 database searches. This increase indicates the service is a reliable source of valuable information, and the DoD is meeting a critical need.

- **Increased Online and Telephone Helpline Usage.** From FY 2013 to FY 2014, the total number of Safe Helpline phone user contacts increased by 70.5%, and the total number of online user contacts increased by 31%. In FY 2014, 5,990 phone users and 2,636 online users contacted Safe Helpline. The most frequently discussed topics for both male and female users were reporting options, emotional and social consequences of the assault, and mental health services. In FY 2014, nearly half of users who discussed a sexual assault event also discussed

The 2013 President's Innovation Award given to the DoD Safe Helpline App.

some barriers to reporting. The most frequently discussed barriers included not wanting anyone to know, feeling uncomfortable making a report, and fear of retaliation.

- **Award for Safe Helpline Mobile App.** The Safe Helpline Mobile App received the 2013 American Telemedicine Association's Presidential Innovation Award for best use of technology.

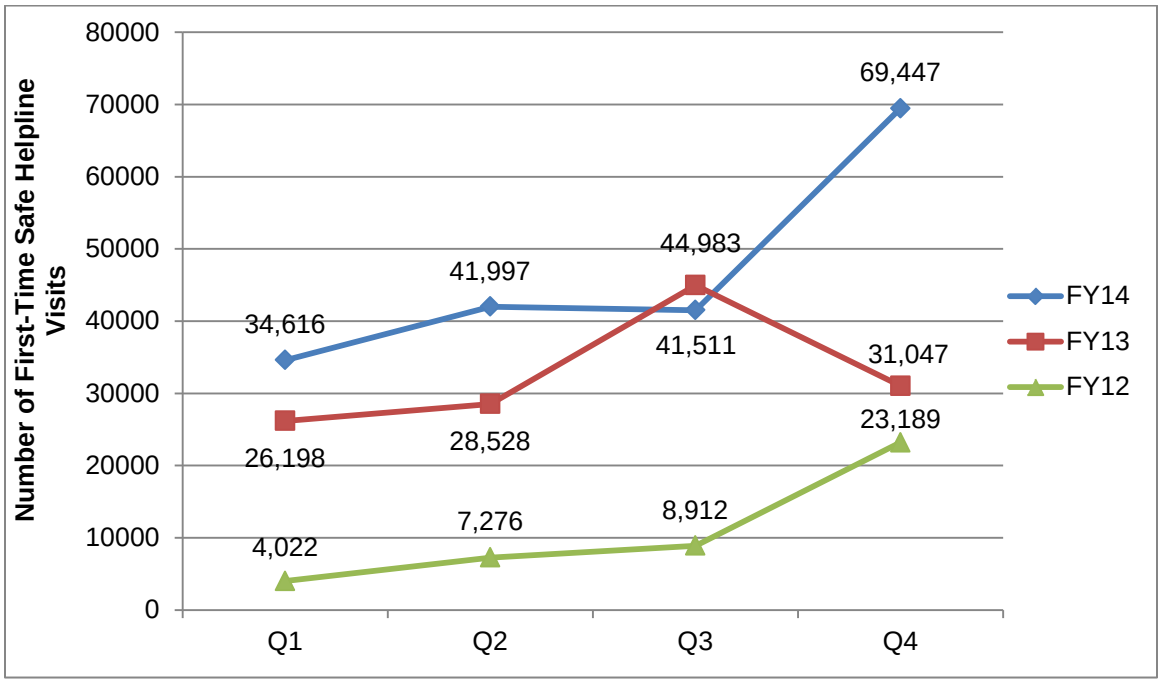


Figure 21 – Quarterly, first-time Safe Helpline website visits, FY 2012 to FY 2014.

Note: Safe Helpline may be accessed worldwide by anyone. The number of quarterly website visits does not have any correspondence or relationship to the number of victimizations in a given quarter. Fluctuations in visit numbers varies with Safe Helpline publicity, with most visits coming after a national advertisement or public service announcement airing.

2. *Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel (SVC/VLC)*

As a fundamental change in protecting the rights of the victim throughout the legal process, the SVC program trains military lawyers to represent sexual assault victims through the full spectrum of legal issues they may face, including the investigation and military justice processes. There are currently more than 185 SVCs providing support to victims across the Services.

As mentioned previously in the Accountability LOE, the SVC program was launched as an Air Force pilot program in January 2013. It was quickly instituted by the other Services by January 2014. As a direct support mechanism for victims, the SVC is

> *The men and women who volunteered to serve this great nation deserve the very best and the focus of our program is to give that level of care to our Airmen.*
>
> *Lieutenant General Richard C. Harding*
> *former Judge Advocate General of the Air Force*

the first of its kind to provide Service members and their family members who are victims of sexual assault their own attorney, free of charge.

The Air Force JAG and his staff created the SVC with input from civilian advisors, in particular Meg Garvin, the Executive Director of the National Crime Victim Law Institute.

"The SVC program is a tremendous step forward. The system is difficult enough to navigate for professionals; asking survivors to navigate it in the midst of trauma is simply nonsensical. And yet we know that being heard, securing privacy and reclaiming agency are each critical to recovery from an assault. So, if survivor's rights are to have meaning and the system is to be just, providing rights to victims and providing attorneys to protect those rights are critical first steps," says Garvin.

Survivors who completed the SES reported the extent to which they were satisfied with the services provided by their SARC, VA, UVA and Special Victim's Counsel/Victim's Legal Counsel (SVC). As illustrated in Figure 22, the vast majority of survivors expressed satisfaction with the services provided by their SARCs, VAs/UVAs, and SVCs.

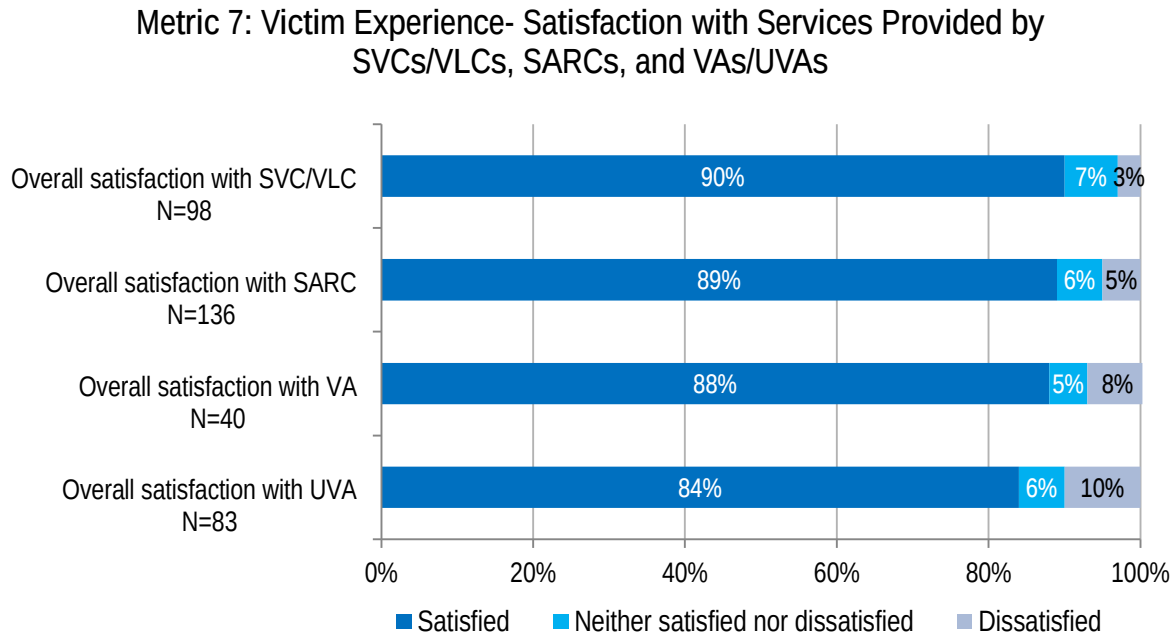


Figure 22 – Metric 7: Victim Experience – Satisfaction with Services Provided by SVCs, SARCs, and VAs/UVAs

a. Survivor Satisfaction with Reporting, Investigation and Prosecution Process

As a primary objective for the Department, survivor satisfaction is paramount. The Department continuously monitors feedback provided by victims and survivors.[104] Based on survivor feedback, the Department takes appropriate action to remedy gaps in

[104] Feedback is captured through climate surveys, the SES, SARC/VA anecdotal feedback, bi-annual Survivor Meeting with the SAPRO director and the Workplace and Gender Relations Survey.

the process. If a systemic issue is identified, action is initiated to generate policy or enhance existing policy. As displayed in Figure 23, 69% of victims who completed the SES reported that they were, to a large or moderate extent, kept informed of their case's progress.

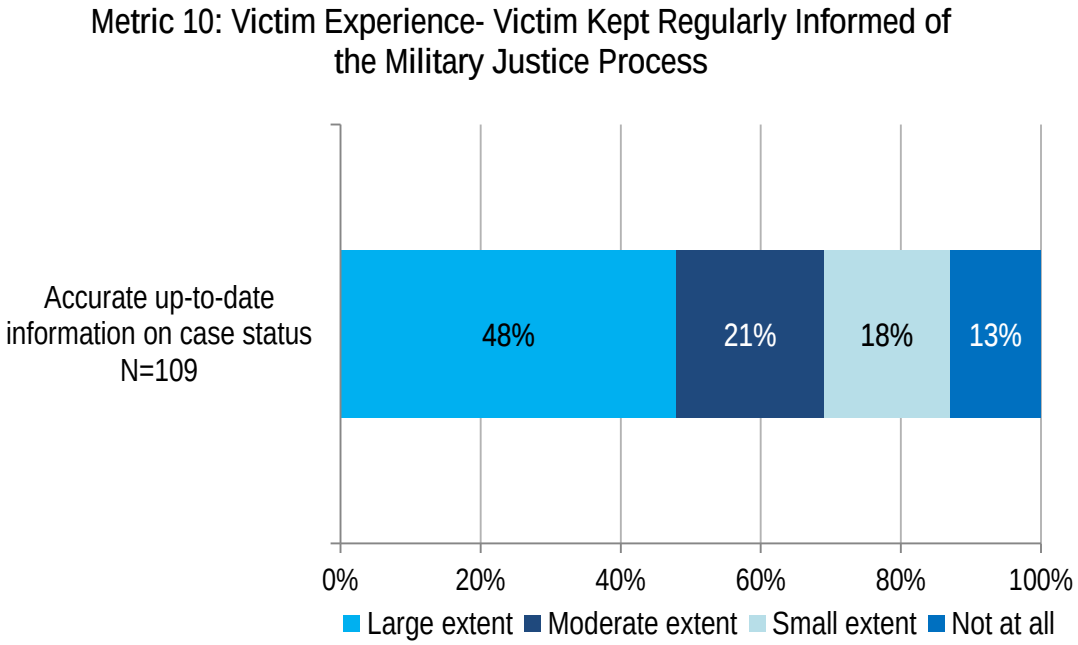


Figure 23 – Metric 10: Victim Experience – Victim Kept Regularly Informed of the Military Justice Process

3. DoD Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program (D-SAACP)

Professionalizing Sexual Assault Victim Advocates

Rationale: Critical to successful advocacy and victim assistance are trained and knowledgeable professionals who are known and available to Service members and whose services and programs inspire victim reporting. Since 2005, each person covered under DoD SAPR policy who reports a sexual assault is offered the assistance of a SARC and SAPR VA. SARCs and SAPR VAs address victims' safety needs, explain the reporting options, describe the services available, and assist with accessing resources as well as navigating the military criminal justice process. SARCs and SAPR VAs offer a specialized skill set and expertise to prepare victims for the road ahead and will advocate on behalf of a victim at every step along the way. Further, SARCs and SAPR VAs advise commanders and assist with sexual assault prevention and awareness training. SAPR professional certification signals to survivors that SARCs and SAPR VAs have the requisite level of knowledge and training to assist them in their recovery.

Synopsis of Progress: Starting in FY 2011, the Department[105] contracted with NOVA, which collaborated with the NACP[106] to develop a formalized certification process to

[105] In accordance with section 584 of the NDAA for FY 2012

standardize the expectations and capabilities of SARCs and SAPR VAs across the Services. The Department incorporated industry best practices while working with NACP to address the unique needs of military victims. D-SAACP ensures that regardless of a victim's location, he or she will have access to the same high-level standard of support. This program consists of three prongs: a credentialing infrastructure for SARCs and SAPR VAs; a research-based Competencies Framework; and the evaluation and oversight of SARC and SAPR VA training. D-SAACP professionalization addresses several areas, including:

- *Improving the quality of response to sexual assault victims*. Certification communicates to Service members and external stakeholders that the Department has a victim response approach consistent with national victim advocacy standards.

- *Recognizing how SARCs and SAPR VAs contribute to unit readiness by creating a climate of trust and mutual respect*. Certified SARCs and SAPR VAs address victim recovery needs and often assist commanders with restoring a healthy climate, thereby mitigating sexual assault's negative effects on a unit.

- *Communicating to military leadership that victim advocacy is a specialized skill set*. By involving them in the selection of SARCs and SAPR VAs, commanders better understand the role and importance of the sexual assault advocacy function, and they gain confidence in the capabilities of their SARCs and SAPR VAs.

- *Demonstrating to Service members that victim advocacy leads to professional development*. Maintaining a certification requires SARCs and SAPR VAs to engage in continuing education and development that enhances teamwork and interpersonal skills, which in turn can increase their readiness to participate in a broader range of missions.

Evidence of Progress:

- **Certifications Completed.** Since the program was launched in FY 2012, over 22,000 SARCs and SAPR VAs have been

To date, over 22,000 DoD SARCs and SAPR VAs have been D-SAACP certified.

[106] NACP is a voluntary, national credentialing body for victim rights advocates and providers of crime victim services. Subject-matter experts from national and state victim assistance organizations in the NOVA extensive network, built on 40 years of work in the field of advocacy, bring specialized knowledge and years of hands-on victim service experience to the credentialing body in order to best meet the needs of the field. NOVA administers the D-SAACP through a contract with DoD. NOVA is the oldest and largest national organization of its kind in the world. Established in 1975, NOVA's mission is to champion dignity and compassion for those harmed by crime and crisis. NOVA was central and catalytic to the launch of the NACP in 2003 and is the secretariat for this allied professional credential today. NOVA coordinates a network of best-practice subject-matter expertise on crime victimization and trauma mitigation training. This coordination includes identifying certification standards and requirements. NOVA also facilitates the processing, review and approval of national advocate credentialing applications for NACP.

certified through the D-SAACP process. This program raises the bar of sexual assault victim advocacy and exceeds industry standards in its requirements, which results in high quality victim assistance and increases victims' confidence in their access to professional SARCs and SAPR VAs. The SARCs and SAPR VAs play a vital role in supporting a victim from reporting through recovery, and proper training and professionalization of their role improves the quality of victim support and response.

- **SES.** Respondents who indicated they spoke to/interacted with a SARC or a UVA/VA as a result of the sexual assault were asked about their satisfaction with these resources.

  - Experiences with the SARC. The majority of respondents agreed their SARC treated them professionally (96%), thoroughly answered their questions (95%), supported them and listened to them without judgment (both 94%), did not rush them to make decisions (91%), and advocated on their behalf when needed (89%).

  - Experiences with the SAPR VA. Of the 27% of respondents who interacted with a SAPR VA, the majority of respondents agreed their VA treated them professionally and supported them (both 92%); listened to them without judgment, thoroughly answered their questions, and advocated on their behalf when needed (all 90%); and did not rush them to make decisions (87%).

  - Experiences with the Unit VA (UVA). Of the 58% of respondents who interacted with a UVA, the majority of respondents agreed their UVA treated them professionally (93%), supported them and listened to them without judgment (both 92%), did not rush them to make decisions (88%), thoroughly answered their questions (86%), and advocated on their behalf when needed (84%).

  - Extent of Assistance Provided by the SARC or UVA/VA. Of the 99% of respondents who used a SARC or a UVA/VA, more than half indicated, to a large extent, that the SARC or UVA/VA assisted them with referral to other services (62%), managing other services and concerns related to sexual assault (61%), keeping them informed throughout the process (59%), follow-up services or case status (58%), and dealing with mental health services (56%). Between 15%-20% indicated they were assisted to a moderate extent, between 9%-14% indicated they were assisted to a small extent, and between 10%-13% indicated they were not at all assisted.

  - Satisfaction with Services Provided by SARC and UVA/VAs. Overall, the large majority of survivors (between 84%-89%) were satisfied with the services they received from their SARC, UVA, and VA and would likely recommend other survivors meet with these individuals after experiencing a sexual assault.

- Of the 95% of respondents who interacted with a SARC, 89% indicated that overall they were satisfied with the services provided by the SARC, and 91% indicated they would be likely to recommend another survivor meet with one
- Of the 27% of respondents who interacted with a VA, 88% indicated that overall they were satisfied with the services provided by the VA
- Of the 58% of respondents who interacted with a UVA, 84% indicated that overall they were satisfied with the services provided by the UVA
- Of the 82% of respondents who interacted with a UVA or a VA, 83% indicated they would be likely to recommend another survivor meet with one

C. Role of the Commander

Engaging Leaders in Victim Assistance

Rationale: Commanders' behaviors, priorities, counsel, and initiatives set expectations and tone for the entire unit. Commanders are responsible for ensuring all Service members under their command are fully informed of the reporting avenues and resources available to victims of sexual assault. In order to effectively promote and engage in the SAPR program, commanders require preparatory training and clearly defined roles.

Synopsis of Progress: Since 2005, DoD policy has identified a number of command responsibilities to ensure the SAPR Program functions as designed. As the SAPR Program has expanded during the ensuing years, so have the commander's responsibilities. However, victim feedback gathered by DoD SAPRO indicated military commanders differed significantly in the level of knowledge and understanding of their programmatic responsibilities. In FY 2012, the Secretary of Defense directed that DoD SAPRO conduct an assessment of the Services' pre-command SAPR training programs for officers and senior enlisted members selected for command or leadership positions. The assessment found the quantity and

Survivor Summits with the SAPRO Director

Since 2010, SAPRO's Director has invited survivors of sexual assault to participate in small-group discussions about their experiences, known as Survivor Summits. In one-on-one conversations, the director hears first-hand experiences about the challenges and successes experienced by sexual assault survivors.

The meetings are a priority of SAPRO's Director and have become a semiannual event. Participation in the meetings is completely voluntary; the personal information of attendees is not shared. Military Services send a survivor representative to D.C. to engage in one-on-one discussion about how the process can be improved and what roadblocks can be cleared for victims.

quality of training varied greatly among the Services. Given these findings, the Secretary directed the Services to work collaboratively with DoD SAPRO to develop common criteria and learning objectives during FY 2013 for pre-command SAPR courses. In FY 2014, DoD SAPRO reviewed the revised pre-command courses and will be reporting its findings to the Secretary in early FY 2015.

Because commanders are responsible for good order and discipline within their units, victim assistance is an inherent part of their leadership responsibilities. Continued and expanded leadership involvement in the SAPR Program sends a clear, two-part message: Sexual assault has no place in the US Armed Forces; however, should it occur, command encourages victims to select one of the reporting options and get the help they need.

Evidence of Progress: Some of the ways that DoD policy requires commanders to directly support victim assistance include:

- Select SARCs/SAPR VAs. Commanders are responsible for identifying and selecting mature, responsible, and trustworthy personnel to serve as unit SARCs and SAPR VAs. The Department created the D-SAACP Commander's Guide[107] to explain SARC and SAPR VA roles and duties, demonstrate the value of their specialized skill sets, and guide careful selection of personnel.

- Evaluate requests for expedited transfer of a victim and/or the accused. The Department implemented policy across the Services to provide commanders with balanced options to eliminate victims' continued contact with their accused offenders through expedited transfers. A commander is able to administratively reassign or transfer Service members who have been victims of sexual assault or who are accused of committing a sexual offense based on a credible report.[108]

- Initiate the SAIRO Report. On September 30, 2014, the Department issued DTM 14-007 – SAIRO Report. The SAIRO Report provides general officer or flag officer (GO/FO) level commanders with oversight within eight calendar days over the local response to an Unrestricted Report. It is triggered by the filing of a DD Form 2910 (by a SARC) or an independent investigation (initiated by NCIS) of a sexual assault. The report details steps taken to address victim care, safety, and other matters. The report was developed as a means to increase visibility of incidents to senior leaders and enhance system accountability.

- Issue Military Protective Orders. Should the accused pose a threat to the victim, the commander may issue a protective order requiring the accused to stay away from the victim.

[107] Available at: http://sapr.mil/public/docs/d-saacp/D-SAACP_Commanders_Guide_20140514.pdf
[108] Section 582 of NDAA for FY 2012; Section 1712 and 1713 of the NDAA for FY 2014

- Attend CMG Meetings. Commanders with victims or subjects involved in Unrestricted Reports of sexual assault must meet monthly with the installation commander and representatives from helping agencies, criminal investigators, and judge advocates to discuss progress in the case. Commanders must then provide victims with monthly updates in their cases.

D. Training Enhancements

Expanding Training to Gain and Maintain Proficiency

Rationale: New and evolving policies require the acquisition of new skill sets and bases of knowledge. In addition, first responders and service providers need initial and refresher training to keep their skills at a high level of proficiency.

Synopsis of Progress: The Department sets training requirements in policy. The Military Services determine how to implement and train on those requirements. In addition, the Department can develop and provide no cost proficiency training for SAPR personnel.

Evidence of Progress:

- **Sexual Assault Healthcare Provider Training.** In 2013, the Department issued policy requiring the Surgeons General of the Military Departments to use the DOJ's *A National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations* as the standards for forensic examination of victims of sexual assault.[109] The Surgeons General must also implement processes that provide sexual assault patients with priority treatment as emergency cases in military treatment facilities. Periodic training and education on the standards for healthcare personnel on safeguarding a victim's Restricted Report are also being established.

- **Advanced Training Course for Certified SARCs and SAPR VAs.** DoD SAPRO and the Military Services collaborated with the DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP), OVC during 2013 to develop an advanced training course for SARCs and SAPR VAs. The 20-hour online course, Advanced Military Sexual Assault Advocate Training (AMSAAT), provides advanced sexual assault victim advocacy skills training by leveraging gaming technology to produce an interactive, online environment designed specifically for a military audience. This training is housed at OVC. Course participation authorization is limited to D-SAACP-certified SARCs and SAPR VAs as the course is intended to expand upon skills learned during initial training. The AMSAAT curriculum is based on OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) learning development best practices and DoD policy, and incorporates key elements of the DoD's SARC and SAPR VA Training Competencies Framework (see "Improved Victim Services: Developed Standardized Core Competencies and Learning Objectives

[109] DOJ (2004). A National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations. Washington, DC: DOJ.

Specifically for SARCs and SAPR VAs," below). Specifically, course participants learn how to:

- Better comprehend a survivor's perspective
- Understand the intricacies in his/her role as an advocate for victims of sexual assault in a military setting
- Provide crisis management support in complex or particularly sensitive cases
- Fully understand the ethical implications of an advocacy role
- Train other Service members for sexual assault awareness

The course provides an advanced training option for SARCs and SAPR VAs that counts toward the DoD certification requirement for continuing education credits.

- **Standardized Core Competencies and Learning Objectives Specifically for SARCs and SAPR VAs.** DoD SAPRO, in conjunction with the Military Services, developed standardized core competencies and learning objectives specifically for SARCs and SAPR VAs in 2013. Each core competency is based upon mandates from DoDI 6495.02 and incorporates the D-SAACP framework. DoDI 6495.02 requires that SAPR training leverage adult learning theory, which includes interaction and group participation.[110] DoDI 6495.02 also requires SAPR VA training be scenario-based, interactive, and provide for instructor-critiqued role play wherein a trainee SAPR VA offers crisis intervention to a sexual assault victim.[111] The SARC and SAPR VA core competencies include:

  - Apply the SAPR program to aid victims of sexual assault
  - Demonstrate awareness of the impact of sexual assault on victims
  - Respond to victim reports and manage crises effectively
  - Coordinate services and advocate for victims
  - Conduct prevention activities
  - Communicate effectively
  - Facilitate education and training
  - Uphold ethical standards
  - Manage the SAPR program at the installation level

  Learning objectives are defined for each of the above core competencies. Considerations and recommendations applying adult learning theory concepts and learning strategies are also included for each of the nine core competencies. The core competencies and learning objectives fulfill the requirements outlined in the guidance issued by the Acting USD(P&R) in September 2013 directing the Military Departments to implement standardized core competencies and learning objectives in courses conducted in FY 2014. The core competencies and

[110] DoDI 6495.02, Enclosure 10, 2.a.(2), "SAPR Program Procedures," Incorporating Change 1, February 12, 2014. Available at http://www.sapr.mil/index.php/dod-policy/directives-and-instructions.
[111] DoDI 6495.02, Enclosure 10, 7.b.(2), "SAPR Program Procedures," Incorporating Change 1, February 12, 2014. Available at http://www.sapr.mil/index.php/dod-policy/directives-and-instructions.

learning objectives also meet the NDAA for FY 2012 requirements (sections 584 and 585) that the Military Departments provide consistent SAPR training to all members of the Armed Forces and DoD civilian employees.[112]

E. Partnerships/Collaborations

Improving Outcomes for Survivors

Rationale: In order to provide victims with comprehensive care, DoD researches and collaborates with external organizations, government agencies, civilian advocacy organizations, and renowned experts in the field of sexual assault and trauma to incorporate best practices and improve response capabilities.

Synopsis of Progress: Since the 2004 Care for Victims of Sexual Assault Task Force, the Department has actively employed collaboration with other federal agencies and organizations as a means to enhance policies and programs.

Evidence of Progress:

- **DOJ's OVC.** The "Strengthening Military-Civilian Community Partnership to Respond to Sexual Assault Training Program" is a two-day interactive and collaborative training program sponsored by the DOJ's OVC that encourages civilian rape crises centers to establish partnerships with local military installations in order to more effectively respond to the needs of sexual assault victims in the military. The course development was a collaborative effort between the DOJ/OJP/OVC, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR), the Military Services, and DoD SAPRO. The training was initially developed by PCAR with grant funding by OVC and has been expanded over the last three years by OVC. In FY13, OVC TTAC revised and updated the training materials, conducted a train-the-trainers event in Washington, DC to develop a cadre of 50 local VAs to present the training program in communities across the United States, and conducted three initial regional trainings in areas

> *This groundbreaking partnership between the Office for Victims of Crime and the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office makes state-of-the-art training available to sexual assault response coordinators and victim advocates who serve victims on military installations.*
>
> *Joye E. Frost*
> *Director, DoJ's Office for Victims of Crime*

[112] The complete reference of core competencies and learning objectives for SARCs and SAPR VAs can be found at http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/prevention/SAPR_SARC-VA_20130808.pdf.

near military installations (San Diego, CA; Columbia, SC; and Salemburg, NC). With the knowledge gained through this training process, civilian VAs will be able to serve as knowledgeable resources for military victims who choose to seek services off the military installations throughout the United States. Training participants gain information and skills related to:

- On-installation resources, including the SARC, the military's point of contact for coordinating care
- Military culture and the unique needs of military victims
- Steps towards successful collaborations, including the importance of writing Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between their community-based program and local military installations to define roles, formalize agreements, and ensure the longevity and continuity of such agreements

- **DVA.** The DoD signed an agreement with the DVA to establish procedures to telephonically transfer sexual assault victims at risk for self-harm from the Safe Helpline to the Veterans Affairs Suicide Prevention Hotline. DoD and DVA also work to provide for a thorough and coordinated transfer process for survivors transitioning from active military service to the VA's Veterans Service Coordinators. A critical component of an effective transfer is accurate and complete sexual assault documentation sharing and victim access. The SARCs are also responsible for reminding victims of sexual assault resources available to them during separation.[113]

- **CDC.** As previously noted in the Prevention LOE, the CDC played a central role in helping the DoD develop the 2014-2016 Prevention Strategy. In addition, the CDC and the DoD are jointly developing the 2016 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, to better understand risk and protective factors for sexual assault posed by military service or affiliation.

- **The Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences, Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP).** DoD SAPRO instructs deploying mental health providers at bi-monthly courses held by the CDP on how to work with the SAPR program in deployed environments.

F. Preventing Retaliation and Ostracism of Victims Making Sexual Assault Reports

Rationale: Victims who are considering filing an Unrestricted Report of sexual assault often look to the experiences of other survivors as an indicator of how they will be treated. In order to encourage continued reporting and engagement with the response

[113] DoDI 6495.02

system, victims must be confident that they will be treated with respect and not blamed or retaliated against as a result of reporting a sexual assault.

Synopsis of Progress: In FY 2014, each Service implemented new regulations against retaliation and ostracism associated with reporting crime.[114] Retaliation includes taking or threatening to take an adverse personnel action or withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action, with respect to a member of the Armed Forces because the member made a protected communication (e.g., filed a report of sexual assault). Additionally, retaliation includes social ostracism and such acts of maltreatment committed by peers of the victim or by other persons because the member made a protected communication. Violation of Service regulations could result in criminal prosecution under the UCMJ under *Article 92 - Failure to Obey Orders or Regulation*. In addition, victims can avail themselves of the following resources to report retaliation or ostracism:

- Report to their commander, facilitated by SARC or SVC
- Request an Expedited Transfer
- Request a Safety Transfer, if they fear violence
- Request a Military Protective Order
- File a Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Complaint
- Report to a SARC at a different installation, facilitated by DoD Safe Helpline
- Report to a commander outside their Chain of Command
- Report to the DoD IG, invoking whistle-blower protection

Evidence of Progress:

DEOCS Results. Respondents were asked to rate their unit climate on a four-point scale with regard to whether unit members would label a person making a sexual assault report a troublemaker, the alleged offender(s) or their associates would retaliate against the person making the report, or if the career of the person making the report would suffer. These items are combined into a four-point index for analysis, with 1 being less favorable and 4 being most favorable. Overall, DEOCS respondents had favorable impressions of their command climates, in that they did not perceive these indicators of retaliation to be very likely in their units. On average, men (3.5 on a 4.0 scale) rated their command climates more favorably than women (3.4 out of 4) (Figure 24), and junior enlisted members and NCOs (3.4 out of 4) rated their climates less favorably than all other more senior ranks (3.7 out of 4) (Figure 25). While these ratings are rather favorable, they may not be fully representative of the entire force as the monthly DEOCS results are drawn from the convenience sample of respondents taking the survey each month. In addition, these results likely reflect the perceptions of the majority of Service members who have not experienced a sexual assault. As indicated

[114] ALNAV 030/14, "Subj: Retaliation Against Members of the Armed Forces Reporting a Criminal Offense"; Air Force Guidance Memorandum to AFI 36-2909, Professional and Unprofessional Relationships; Army Directive 2014-20 (Prohibition of Retaliation Against Soldiers for Reporting a Criminal Offense).

by the results of the RMWS and the SES that follow, a significant portion of victims perceived some kind of social and/or professional retaliation associated with reporting.

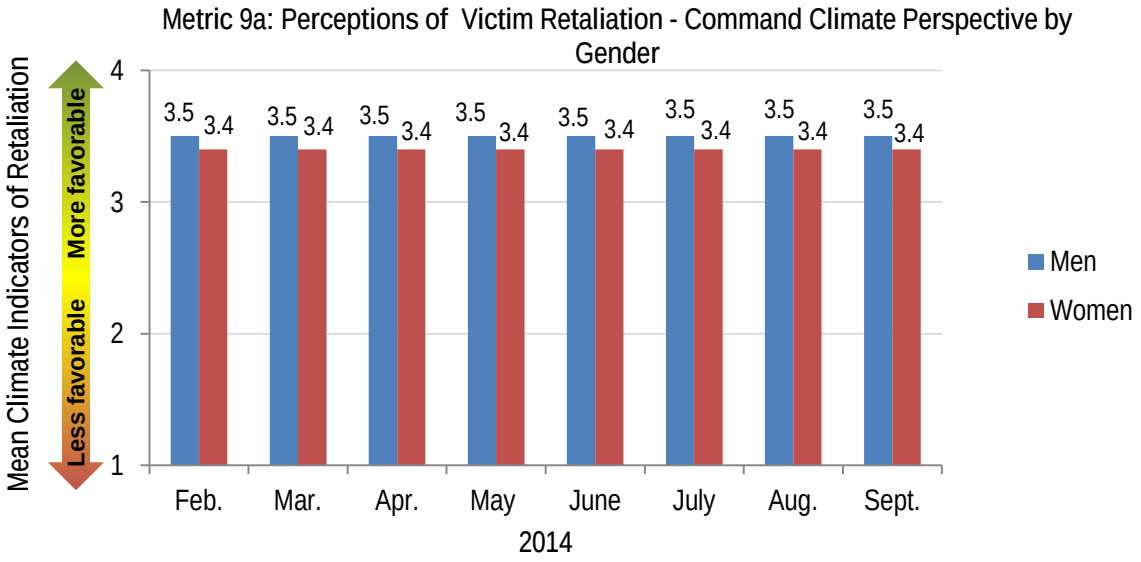


Figure 24 – Metric 9a: Perceptions of Victim Retaliation - Command Climate Perspective by Gender

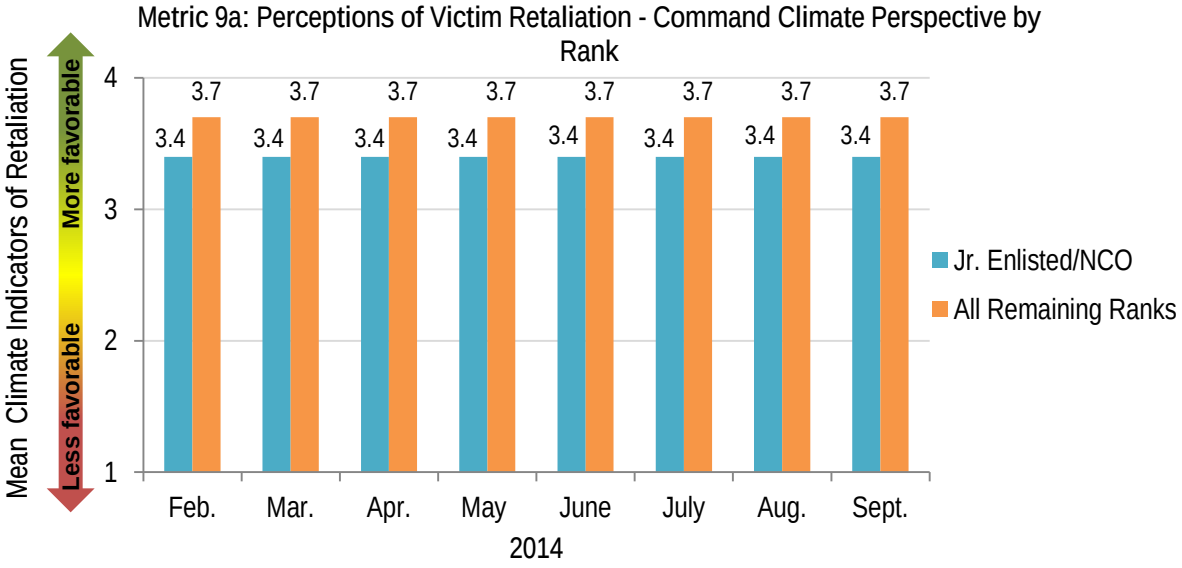


Figure 25 – Metric 9a: Perceptions of Victim Retaliation - Command Climate Perspective by Rank

- DoD Surveys of Active Duty Personnel. In FY 2012, the Workplace and Gender Relations survey found that of the women who experienced USC and reported it

to a military authority, 62% indicated they perceived some form of retaliation as a result of reporting the situation.[115] Specifically:

- 31% perceived social retaliation only
- 26% perceived a combination of professional retaliation, social retaliation, administrative action, and/or punishments
- 3% perceived professional retaliation only
- 2% perceived administrative action only
- 38% did not perceive any retaliation

- In FY 2014, the RMWS found that of women who experienced a sexual assault and reported it to a military authority, 62% indicated they perceived some form of retaliation as a result of reporting the situation (Figure 26). Specifically[116]:

  - 53% perceived social retaliation
  - 32% perceived professional retaliation
  - 35% perceived administrative action
  - 11% perceived a punishment for infraction
  - 38% did not perceive any retaliation

The Department is extremely concerned about the persistent high rate of perceived retaliation endorsed by these survey respondents. Because the survey is confidential and the identities of the respondents are not known to the Department, there is no way to determine if the behavior being perceived by respondents is in fact directly related to the reporting of a sexual assault or for some other reason not known to the respondent. Nevertheless, these results indicate that even though the Department has taken specific action to assess and address this problem, more must be done to prevent retaliation.

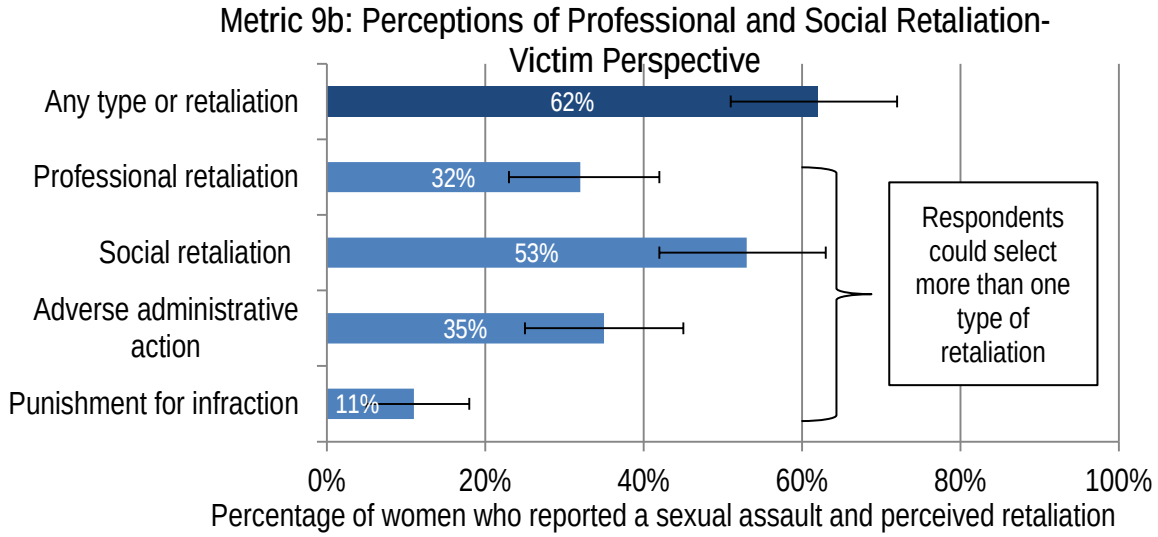


Figure 26 – Metric 9b: Perceptions of Professional and Social Retaliation – Victim Perspective

[115] Data were not reportable for men.
[116] Respondents to the RMWS study could perceive more than one type of retaliation.

- **SES.** The Department continues to express concern over the potential for retaliation against survivors who make reports of sexual assault, the Department fielded several questions on this topic in the SES. Respondents were asked about their experiences with two types of retaliation: social retaliation (e.g. ignored by coworkers, blamed for situation) and professional retaliation[117] (e.g., loss of privileges, transferred to less favorable job) (Figure 27).[118]

  - Of the 80% of respondents who made an Unrestricted Report, 59% indicated they *perceived social retaliation* and 40% indicated they *perceived professional retaliation* since they reported their sexual assault[119]

  - However, despite a large portion of survivors perceiving either social or professional retaliation, nearly three quarters of all respondents (73%) indicated, based on their overall experience of reporting, that *yes*, they would recommend others report their sexual assault, whereas 14% of respondents indicated *no* and 13% were *unsure* if they would recommend others report their sexual assault

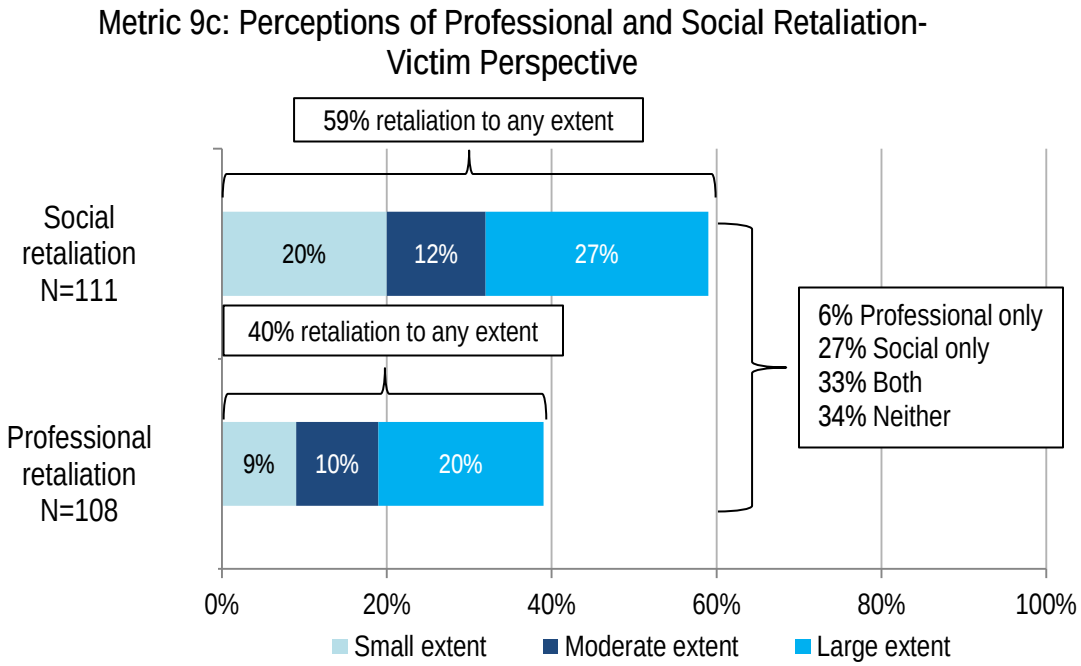


Figure 27 – Metric 9c: Perceptions of Professional and Social Retaliation – Victim Perspective

[117] This measure captures behaviors aligned with professional retaliation and is of concern to the Department policy office. This may not directly align with the legal definition of "retaliation." In addition, this measure does not allow for identification of who perpetrated the retaliation (e.g., commander, immediate supervisor, etc.). Additional information will be collected in 2015 to better understand the experiences of survivors who experience social and/or professional retaliation.

[118] Results from DMDC's 2012 WGRA indicated some respondents did not want to report their sexual assault because they were afraid of possible social and/or professional retaliation.

[119] Due to rounding to the nearest point, some percentages in Figure 27 may not add up to 100%.

While the results of the SES cannot be generalized to all victims of sexual assault, there is considerable consistency between these results and the findings from the RMWS, noted previously. These findings are further evidence that despite significant effort from the Department, social and professional retaliation remain an area of concern for survivors. As this appears to be an aspect of the SAPR program that has not improved over the past few years, the Department will take specific action to address this problem more fully in FY 2015.

G. Expanding Existing Policies to Better Meet Victims' Needs

Rationale: Victim assistance policy must evolve to remain relevant to survivors.

- **Synopsis of Progress:** Since 2005, DoD has expanded existing policies with the goal of providing comprehensive care and wraparound support for victims. While many of the policy enhancements were based on feedback from victims, other additions were made at the direction of DoD leadership and Congress. One means by which SAPRO obtains feedback is through Survivor Summits with the SAPRO Director (previously mentioned in the " Role of the Commander" section).

Evidence of Progress:

- Extended Records Retention Period. With the reissuance of the DoDI 6495.02 in FY 2013, the Department implemented policy for the extended retention of DD Form 2910, *Victim Reporting Preference Statement*, and DD Form 2911, *DoD SAFE Report*, when requested by a victim making a Restricted Report.[120] However, Congress expanded this requirement in the FY 2014 NDAA, by mandating the retention of these forms for 50 years in all Restricted Reports, regardless of whether it is requested by the victim. The Department's SAPR policy is currently being updated to reflect this requirement.[121]

- Updated Security Clearance Guidance Supporting Victims of Sexual Assault. In 2013, the Director of National Intelligence issued new guidance to support victims of sexual assault who hold or wish to hold a government security clearance. Question 21 on Standard Form 86, "Questionnaire for National

[120] DoDI 6495.02, Paragraph 4.p.(2), "SAPR Program Procedures," Incorporating Change 1, February 12, 2014. Available at http://www.sapr.mil/index.php/dod-policy/directives-and-instructions.
[121] Section 586 of the NDAA for FY 2012, Section 577 of the NDAA for FY 2013, and Section 1723 of the NDAA for FY 2014.

Security Positions," asks whether the applicant has in the last seven years consulted a health care professional regarding an emotional or mental health condition or if they were similarly hospitalized. The following language was added to Question 21.2: *"Please respond to this question with the following additional instruction: Victims of sexual assault who have consulted with a health care professional regarding an emotional or mental health condition during this period strictly in relation to the sexual assault are instructed to answer No."* The added exemption came after a comprehensive review, in consultation with the members of Congress, DoD, other Federal agencies, and victim advocacy groups. Prior to this guidance, some victims may have been reluctant to seek mental health counseling for fear they may have had to disclose the counseling on their security clearance application.

- Sensitive Position Screening. In September 2013, the Services conducted a Sexual Assault Stand-down[122] to review the credentials and qualifications of current-serving recruiters, SARCs, and SAPR VAs. The Services completed that review, with some Services expanding the review beyond the required categories of personnel and the specified criteria. As a measure to ensure appropriate personnel are assigned to sensitive positions, Secretary Hagel issued a directive in April 2014 to establish rigorous screening standards for personnel in sensitive positions. Proposed recommendations for future standards for SARC and SAPR VA screening and selection were approved by Secretary Hagel in June 2014 and policy changes are underway. Secretary Hagel determined a position is "sensitive" if it puts one in close proximity to a vulnerable person, e.g. a trainee or sexual assault victim.

- Involuntary Separation**.** In 2013, the Department updated instructions for enlisted and officer separations that allow a victim, who made a report of sexual assault and is subsequently recommended for involuntary separation, to request GO/FO review of the circumstances of and grounds for the involuntary separation. This affords victims with a thorough explanation for why they are being removed from military service, a matter of particular importance for victims who believe their involuntary separation was initiated in retaliation for making a report of sexual assault.

[122] A "stand-down" is a day that minimal mission operations are maintained but the primary focus of the day is defined and prioritized by leadership.

H. Conclusion

Advocacy & Victim Assistance Initiatives – Progress at a Glance

	Action	Status
Establish a robust response system	Complete	●
Create a crisis support capability	Complete	●
Field a SVC/VLC Program	Complete	⇨
Professionalize Sexual Assault VAs	Complete	●
Engage Commanders in Victim Assistance	In Progress	⇨
Expand existing policies to better meet victim needs	In Progress	●
Expand training to gain and maintain proficiency	In Progress	●
Leverage partnerships and collaboration to improve survivor outcomes	In Progress	●
Prevent retaliation and ostracism of victims making reports	In Progress	✖

● Clear evidence of progress ⇨ Indications of progress ✖ Progress not evident

While there is more work to be done, the Department has made significant and lasting progress in expanding the services for survivors of sexual assault. This has been done through a significantly strengthened commitment to provide assistance wherever and whenever the victim may need it, most notably through the DoD Safe Helpline, the SVC program, and the professionalization of SARCs and SAPR VAs. The Department works diligently to expand the types of resources available to survivors, and has greatly enhanced the training for healthcare providers, SARCs, chaplains, and other support personnel who work directly with victims of sexual assault. Commanders are being held accountable for improvements to command climates that further victim trust and confidence.

Additionally, the Department is actively coordinating victim assistance efforts with other federal agencies and civilian organizations to expand and improve available support options. The Department has collaborated closely with the DOJ's OVC to provide advanced SAPR training for SARCs and SAPR VAs, and with the NACP to develop a standardized certification process to further professionalize SAPR program personnel. These collaborations exist not just to create consistency for the Department's victim assistance efforts, but to better provide services for survivors of sexual assault across the world.

The Department is focused on providing the resources and flexibility needed to ensure every survivor of sexual assault has access to the services they require. Each survivor has different needs, expectations, and distinctive and deeply personal methods of recovery. To address survivors' individual needs, the Department has developed a wide range of services and resources. Understanding the effectiveness of these

services and identifying shortfalls is a critical aspect of the Department's strategy, and is covered in more detail under the next LOE: Assessment.

VII. Assessment (LOE 5)

Objective: Effectively standardize, measure, analyze and assess program progress.
End state: DoD incorporates responsive, meaningful, and accurate systems of measurement and evaluation into every aspect of SAPR.

A. Introduction

The objective of the Assessment LOE is to incorporate responsive, meaningful, and accurate systems of measurement and evaluation into every aspect of the Department's SAPR program. This includes effectively standardizing, measuring, analyzing, and assessing program progress. DoD SAPRO is the single point of responsibility for policy and oversight of the SAPR program within the Department. DoD SAPRO employs both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods, including scientific research, data analysis, focus groups, and on-site assessments to evaluate the Department's SAPR program and monitor its effectiveness.

> *Sexual assault in the ranks is going to make – and has made – the military less effective than it can be. It is dangerous to our national security and it strikes at the heart and core of who we are.*
>
> *Barack Obama*
> *President of the United States*
> *May 16, 2014*

Just as SAPRO serves as the overarching authority on assessment across the Department, each Service also performs its own set of internal assessments and inspections. SAPRO also supports outside assessments of the SAPR program by other agencies, such as the GAO, the US Commission on Civil Rights, and the DoD IG. Over the past several years, the Department has made several efforts to streamline the assessment process, culminating in two significant initiatives: a revolutionary new data management system, DSAID, and the first standardized survivor experience survey ever conducted by the Department.

B. Key Highlights

1. **The Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID)**
2. **Survivor Experience Survey (SES)**

1. Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID)

The NDAA for FY 2009 directed the DoD to develop a centralized, case-level database for the collection and maintenance of information regarding sexual assaults involving a member of the Armed Forces.

DSAID
DEFENSE SEXUAL ASSAULT INCIDENT DATABASE
Case Management | Business Management | Reporting

In accordance with this directive, the Department created DSAID, a secure, web-based database designed for reporting and case management of sexual assaults committed by or against Service members.[123] DSAID captures case information input by Military Service and NGB SARCs about both restricted (without Personal Identifying Information (PII)) and unrestricted sexual assault reports, enhances a SARC's ability to provide comprehensive and standardized victim case management, enables properly trained legal officers to input and validate case disposition data, supports Service SAPR program management, provides improved oversight of how sexual assault cases are managed, and enables the Department to meet Congressional reporting requirements.

While MCIO databases remain the systems of record for Unrestricted Reports, the MCIO systems "push" information into DSAID via a secure interface to ensure data standardization across the Department. DSAID may only be accessed by D-SAACP certified SARCs, Service legal officers, and PMs. DSAID's internal architecture prevents anyone but Service SARCs and PMs from seeing active sexual assault cases.

a. Recent DSAID Enhancements

When DSAID achieved initial operating capability in FY 2012, the first users were the Air Force and the NGB. DSAID became fully operational in FY 2013 and added Navy and Marine Corps SARCs. In FY 2014, Army SARCs were brought into the system. The Department will integrate USCG SARCs into DSAID in FY 2015.

Other enhancements to DSAID since FY 2013 include:

- Expanding expedited transfer functionality to capture more information and allow for the tracking of multiple transfers
- Modifying functionality for SARCs to upload a scanned image of a DD Form 2910, *Victim Reporting Preference Statement,* for Unrestricted Reports, enhancing availability of documentation to assist survivors in obtaining a record copy of the form
- Implementing a reporting functionality for Service SAPR PMs to generate quarterly and annual Service reports, MSA reports, and customized data queries
- Implementing a web-based, self-guided training solution for SARCs and SAPR PMs consisting of simulations demonstrating DSAID's capabilities

Given the great interest in case outcome information, the Department created a centralized case disposition module to streamline the capturing and reporting of case outcomes across the Military Services. Implemented by the Department in FY 2014, this enhancement enables Service legal officers to validate subject case dispositions entered by SARCs, track subject case outcomes, and record subject punishment information as applicable. The Department aggregates and analyzes this data to

[123] Available at: http://responsesystemspanel.whs.mil/Public/docs/Reports/00_Final/00_Report_Final_20140627.pdf.

support Department metric and non-metric information, and inform SAPR policy. This module also assists in the reporting of the several thousand case synopses appended to the Department's Annual Report to Congress each year, as required by legislation.

The Department has certified DSAID for compliance with all security requirements and is accredited for operation by the Designated Approval Authority Representative. SAPRO continues to enhance DSAID according to internal and external requirements, while collaborating with the system developer and the Military Services throughout the full system development lifecycle.

b. Future Plans for DSAID

While DSAID is not designed to be a criminal intelligence database or a threat detection system, the data captured by DSAID and the system's capabilities can be used for trend analysis and other informational purposes. In furtherance of this additional functionality, the Department has designed an enhanced reporting capability and a means for the secure storage and retrieval of DD Form 2910 and 2911 in Restricted Reports for deployment in FY 2015.

2. Survivor Experience Survey (SES)

While the Department has worked diligently to improve its sexual assault support and services, until recently it had no standardized means for obtaining feedback from survivors using those resources. In creating the SES, the Department worked hard to ensure survivors were able to provide anonymous assessments of their experience with the Department's SAPR resources. In developing this first survivor survey, the DoD worked jointly with the DoD IG and the Service SAPR programs, two of which had previously piloted victim survey efforts in their Services. Survivors of sexual assault are asked to provide feedback on their experiences with SAPR victim assistance personnel, the military health system, service providers, and other areas of support. The SES is designed to be an on-going, voluntary, anonymous survey that will be deployed to survivors in two phases.

a. Phase I: The Survivor Experience Survey (SES)

The first phase of the SES was facilitated by SARC invitations to survivors 30-150 days after filing either a restricted or Unrestricted Report. Only results from SES Phase I are included in this report. SES Phase I is designed to assess the needs of survivors in the first few months after reporting, their satisfaction with services received, and their evaluation of the interactions they had with responders (e.g., SARCs, VAs, medical personnel). SES Phase I is also designed to capture perceptions of command climate, confidence in the response system in general, and how their needs could be better met.

b. Phase II: The Military Justice Experience Survey (MJES)

Currently under development for fielding in FY 2015, the MJES will invite survivors making Unrestricted Reports to provide feedback about their experience with the military justice process after their case has reached final disposition. This will allow the Department to hear about survivor experiences with the investigative process, court proceedings, if applicable, and other items not addressed in the SES.

C. Key Assessment Tools

1. Scientific Surveys of the Military Population

Conducting and reviewing sexual assault-related research is a crucial part of the assessment LOE. The following surveys conducted by the Department and other Government Agencies helps identify factors pertaining to sexual assault and can also serve as the data source and foundation for future sexual assault program enhancements.

a. The Workplace and Gender Relations Surveys (WGRS)

DMDC is responsible for conducting two Department-wide Workplace and Gender Relations Surveys (WGRS) to gather data related to military sexual assault: the WGRA and the Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Reserve Component Members (WGRR). For both the WGRA and the WGRR, DMDC subscribes to survey methodology best practices promoted by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, and the techniques used by DMDC are those commonly used by other organizations that conduct surveys, such as the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Gallup.[124] As mandated by Congress, the WGRA and WGRR are each conducted biennially, with the WGRA occurring in even years and the WGRR in odd years.[125]

The WGRS process is used by the Department to collect useful public health information in order to evaluate readiness, assess the health of the force, identify patterns and trends in behavior, understand barriers to reporting and factors related to retaliation, direct prevention and response efforts to sexual assault and sexual harassment, and assess victim satisfaction. The 2012 WGRA[126] consisted of 94 questions on all facets of job satisfaction and gender relations, including a number of questions regarding unwanted gender-related behaviors, gender discriminatory behaviors, and USC.[127] In order to calculate the estimated past-year prevalence rate for sexual assault, USC was defined in the WGRA as intentional sexual contact that was against a person's will or which occurred when the person did not or could not consent, and includes completed or attempted sexual intercourse, sodomy (oral or anal sex), penetration by an object, and the unwanted touching of genitalia and other sexually-related areas of the body.

The WGRA was originally designed in the 1990's as a public health survey to research attitudes and perceptions about gender-related issues, estimate the level of sexual harassment and USC, and identify areas where improvements are needed by surveying a random population of Active Duty personnel. Since 2006, the Department has

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[124] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/research/WGRA_Survey_Fact_Sheet.pdf.

[125] Pursuant to the requirement in section 570 of the FY 2013 NDAA, the WGRA and WGRR will be conducted alternatively every two years beginning in FY 2014.

[126] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/research/2012_workplace_and_gender_relations_survey_of_active_duty_members-survey_note_and_briefing.pdf.

[127] Note: The RAND Corporation administered part, but not all, of the WGRA survey questions in 2014. See Annex 1.

incorporated questions and calculated survey data about USC, using such questions to estimate past-year prevalence rates of USC, unwanted gender related behaviors (i.e., sexual harassment and sexist behavior), and gender discriminatory behaviors and sex discrimination. Knowing these trends, the survey results provide the DoD with insight into the overall readiness and health of the force.

Given the significant interest in the results of the 2012 WGRA, the leadership of the Senate Armed Services Committee requested that Secretary Hagel externalize the 2014 WGRS for an outside review. Consequently, the Department contracted with the RAND Corporation to conduct an independent assessment, and if necessary, update of the Department's survey methodology and to administer the 2014 WGRS.

b. The RAND Corporation Military Workplace Study (RMWS)

In early 2014, DoD asked the RAND National Defense Research Institute to conduct an independent assessment of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination in the military. The RMWS invited close to 560,000 service members to participate in a survey fielded in August and September of 2014.

RAND created and simultaneously administered two versions of the survey. One version employed DMDC's prior form questions about sexual assault (USC) and sexual harassment, allowing for some level of comparison with previous years' survey data. The other version used a newly developed measure to estimate past year prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

These newer items were designed to closely track with the legal language describing the crimes that constitute sexual assault in the UCMJ for Article 120 and Article 80 crimes. The survey measures of sexual harassment and gender discrimination, which together are referred to as sex-based equal employment opportunity (EEO) violations, use criteria drawn directly from the UCMJ and federal civil rights law.

Specifically, the RMWS measures:

- Sexual assault, which captures three mutually exclusive categories: penetrative, non-penetrative, and attempted penetrative crimes
- Sex-based EEO violations, which consist of:
    - Sexually hostile work environment—a workplace characterized by pervasive, unwelcome sexual advances, verbal or physical conduct that offends service members
    - Sexual quid pro quo—incidents in which someone misuses their power or influence within the military to attempt to coerce sexual behavior in exchange for a workplace benefit

- Gender discrimination—incidents in which service members are subject to mistreatment on the basis of their gender that affects their employment conditions

Recognizing that DoD is also interested in trends in sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination, RAND fielded a portion of the 2014 surveys using the same measures as previous DoD surveys on this topic. RAND's top-line results for both measures are included as Annex 1 to this report. These results are likely to generate many questions about the details regarding the sexual assaults and EEO violations estimated to have occurred in FY 2014, as well as about differences in estimates produced by the prior form and the new questionnaire. The RAND team will continue to analyze these and other topics in the winter of 2014–2015. Reports summarizing the findings from these analyses will be released in late spring 2015.

c. The Service Academy Gender Relations Survey (SAGR)

The Service Academy Gender Relations Survey (SAGR) is conducted by DMDC every two years, as required by Section 532 the NDAA for FY 2007, and is administered at all three of the Military Service Academies. The survey is completely voluntary, anonymous, and covers topics such as the estimated past-year prevalence of USC and sexual harassment, reporting and training, and the characteristics of unwanted sexual and gender-related behaviors. Given the large number of surveys administered to cadets and midshipmen each year, Congress agreed to help the Department minimize cadet and midshipman survey fatigue by alternating surveys with focus groups, every other year.

During the survey years, DMDC uses scientific, state of the art statistical techniques to draw conclusions from random, representative samples of the MSA student populations. A cornerstone of DMDC's methodology is the use of complex sampling and weighting procedures to ensure accuracy of estimations to the full student population at each MSA. The use of scientific sampling and weighting methods to construct population estimates are the same methods used by all federal statistical agencies (e.g., the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics), private survey organizations (e.g., RAND, WESTAT, and RTI), and well-known polling organizations (e.g., Gallup, Pew, and Roper).[128]

d. DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS)

The DEOCS provides commanders with a unique opportunity to receive feedback from their unit on a wide variety of topics, including the unit's perceptions of command support of the SAPR program. The DEOCS is a confidential, command-requested organization development survey focusing on issues of EO and organizational effectiveness (OE).[129] The questionnaire focuses on four primary areas: MEO, Civilian EEO, OE, Perceptions of Discrimination/Sexual Harassment, and SAPR. A team of analysts, located at DEOMI, receives the raw DEOCS data from service members on a

[128] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/research/2013_SAGR_Focus_Group_Report.pdf.
[129] Available at: https://www.deocs.net/DocDownloads/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsJuly2014.pdf.

continuous basis, with approximately 300,000 individual survey responses obtained from about 2,000 units per month. The results from the survey are provided to the requesting Commander and the Commander's supervisor.

In FY 2013, DoD SAPRO worked with the Services and DEOMI to field SAPR climate questions on the DEOCS. The most recent version of the DEOCS, known as DEOCS 4.0 and launched in January 2014, contains seven measures assessing SAPR climate:

- Perceptions of Safety refers to members' feelings of safety from being sexually assaulted where they currently live and perform their work/duties
- Chain of Command Support refers *to* members' perceptions of the extent to which command behaviors are targeted towards preventing sexual assault and creating an environment where members feel comfortable reporting a sexual assault
- Publicity of SAPR Information refers to the extent to which members perceive that SAPR-related information and resources are publicly displayed and openly communicated
- Unit Reporting Climate refers to the extent to which members perceive that the chain of command would take appropriate actions to address an Unrestricted Report of sexual assault and the extent to which social and professional retaliation would occur if a sexual assault were reported
- Perceived Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault refers to the type and frequency of barriers to reporting sexual assault that individuals perceive within their unit/organization
- Unit Prevention Climate refers to individuals' intentions to act if they were to observe a situation that may lead to a sexual assault
- Restricted Reporting Knowledge measures individuals' knowledge of the Restricted Reporting option

The DEOCS has been available to commanders for several years as a tool to help assess their unit climate. However, prior to FY 2013, there was no standardized approach to the administration of the DEOCS across Services. In addition, not all Services used the DEOCS. However, this changed in FY 2013 when the Secretary of Defense directed military commanders to conduct an annual climate assessment of their units, or within 120 days of assuming command. Congress codified this requirement in Section 572 of the NDAA for FY 2013. Results from the DEOCS play a primary role in assisting commanders with the assessment process. Additionally, in an effort to enhance commander accountability and improve insight into command climate, the Secretary of Defense further directed that the results of the surveys be provided to the next level up in the chain of command within 30 days of receipt of results. While the

requirement to conduct the survey is not optional, taking the survey is voluntary for military and civilian personnel.

The Department is using consolidated DEOCS results from across the Services to determine assessment methodologies of SAPR program effectiveness. The DEOCS generates significant data that are helpful at the unit level. However, while significant, the sum total of DEOCS results from across the Services is not representative of the entire military population, and therefore, the Department is cautious about generalizing DEOCS results to the total force. Nonetheless, the DEOCS and climate assessments have become integral to a continuous feedback process the Department has instituted to drive organizational change. Additionally, SAPRO and DEOMI have collaborated to include SAPR-related resources in DEOMI's Commanders Toolkit[130] to address survey-identified shortcomings and provide strategies for improvements.

2. Focus Groups

Focus Groups are integral to the assessment of the Department's overall SAPR program. They provide important qualitative feedback that enhances the understanding of quantitative trends seen in surveys. The DoD leverages focus groups to better capture how Service members in the field perceive policies and programs.

a. Bi-Annual Military Service Academy (MSA) Focus Groups

Similar to DMDC's survey methodology that follows accepted industry practices, DMDC's focus group methodology employs a standard qualitative research approach to collect subjective details from participants on a limited number of topics. The methodology used in the most recent MSA focus groups, conducted in 2013, follows the same principles used in the previous three focus group cycles. The methodology for the 2013 focus groups was replicated for each session at each Academy. Although the results cannot be generalized to the population of the MSAs, they provide insights into issues and ideas for further consideration.[131]

b. 2014 Department of Defense Report of Focus Groups on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (2014 FGSAPR)

The goal of this focus group effort was to engage military members across the Department in small group discussions on issues related to sexual assault to inform this report to the President. These discussions were designed to capture sentiments regarding how recent changes in sexual assault policies and programs have impacted military members and their workplace environments, as well as address the military's climate of sexual assault response and prevention. Participants in the study were not asked to talk about personal experiences of sexual assault, but rather to share their insights and perspective on these important issues. This is the only formal qualitative assessment of this population across the entire Department, including Active Duty and Reserve component members.

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[130] DEOMI's Commander's Toolkit available at: http://www.deomi.org/CommDirectorInfo/index.cfm.
[131] Available at: http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/research/2013_SAGR_Focus_Group_Report.pdf.

DMDC's focus group methodology employs a standard qualitative research approach to collect subjective details from participants on a limited number of topics. The methodology for the 2014 FGSAPR was consistent across locations. Although the results cannot be generalized to the population of military members, they provide insights into issues and ideas for further consideration. Participation in the 2014 FGSAPR was voluntary and participants were selected at random at each installation. Additional information about the FGSAPR methodology is included in DMDC's report, which is Annex 3 to this report.

3. Annual Reports

Part of SAPRO's responsibility in assessing the Department's SAPR program is to publish reports that present information on recent progress, initiatives, and summaries of SAPR efforts. While this document marks the first time the Department has provided a report directly to the President, the Department annually publishes two reports in order to inform Congress, stakeholders, the public, and the men and women in uniform about progress in sexual assault prevention and response.

Since 2004, the Department has consolidated sexual assault statistical data and programmatic information from the Military Services in the ***Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military***. Since 2009, at the recommendation of the GAO, the Department has used the Annual Report as its means to conduct oversight of Service policies and programs. Consequently, the data provided in the Annual Report serve as the foundation and catalyst for future progress in sexual assault prevention, training, and victim care. The Annual Report is also fundamental to measuring the accountability goals of the Department, as they require detailed information from each of the Military Services regarding their respective SAPR efforts.

The Department provides the Annual Report to Congress each year, as mandated by section 577 of the NDAA for FY 2005, as amended by section1602 of the NDAA for FY 2011. While Congress has established a number of reporting requirements that address statistical data about reports of sexual assault by and against Service members and the outcomes of those cases, the Department also requires the Services to report on their activities and policy enhancements made during the year. The Department also chooses to include the results of the latest research to provide a fuller picture of progress in sexual assault prevention and response. The Department reports on the FY cycle (October 1 – September 30) and is required to provide the report to Congress no later than April 30 each year. The FY 2014 Annual Report will be provided to Congress in April 2015.[132]

a. Assessment of Sexual Harassment and Violence at the U.S. Military Service Academies

Section 532 of the NDAA for FY 2007 requires an assessment by academic program year on the effectiveness of the policies, training, and procedures at USMA, USNA, and USAFA with respect to sexual harassment and violence involving Academy personnel.

[132] Published Annual Reports are available at: http://www.sapr.mil/index.php/annual-reports.

This annual report provides data on reported sexual assaults involving cadets and/or midshipmen, as well as policies, procedures, and processes implemented in response to sexual harassment and violence during the academic program year. The Department has published an MSA report each of the past eight years.[133]

D. Conclusion

Assessment Initiatives – Progress at a Glance

	Action	Status
Develop and administer a DoD-wide survey for sexual assault survivors	Complete	●
Align all Military Service sexual assault data into one common database	Complete	●
Validate & improve survey methodology and analysis of yearly sexual assault data	In Progress	⇨
Expand sexual assault questions on DEOCS to capture installation-level feedback	Complete	●

● Clear evidence of progress ⇨ Indications of progress ✖ Progress not evident

The continual assessment of the Department's SAPR program is essential to identifying effective programs and initiatives as well as areas that need improvement. Through surveys, focus groups, and other qualitative and quantitative methods of assessment, the Department collects important data that are used to enhance the SAPR program at all levels.

For the very first time, this assessment includes data from the DoD SES, which offered military survivors of sexual assault the opportunity to provide their perspective and opinions on how well the Department responded. The Department's investment in DSAID, the centralized database that collects and stores case information and outcomes, enables the Services and SAPRO to capture data and provide enhanced case management in a standardized way.

The Department is also committed to increasing transparency through its Assessment LOE. By annually publishing details of the Department's SAPR efforts, along with statistics on the number of cases of sexual assault, the Department wants to clearly convey that reducing sexual assault – with the goal to eliminate it – is a priority for the Department. As new programs, initiatives, and policies are implemented, the

[133] Published Assessments are available at: http://www.sapr.mil/index.php/annual-reports. Note: Cadets from the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) are dispersed throughout colleges and universities around the United States. Until they enter active duty, ROTC cadets and midshipmen do not fall under the SAPR program. However, each of the Services has included SAPR as part of its ROTC training curricula.

Department will maintain and expand its assessment functions in an effort to better evaluate the SAPR program and ultimately refine its effectiveness.

VIII. CONCLUSION & WAY AHEAD

The Department's goal is to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, sexual assault from the Armed Forces. The crime is a detriment to the welfare of men and women in uniform and is antithetic to military values. Because there is no single "silver bullet" solution, combatting it requires sustained persistence and innovation, coupled with a multidisciplinary approach across the DoD SAPR five LOEs.

DoD is committed to the prevention of sexual assault and has worked diligently to define the scope of the problem and take appropriate steps to field solutions that will affect lasting organizational change. As illustrated over the past three years in the implementation of more than 100 SAPR NDAA requirements; the ongoing implementation of 41 SAPR initiatives directed by the current and prior Secretaries of Defense; and the enduring measurement and evaluation of SAPR reforms in meeting intended outcomes, the Department has demonstrated significant progress in its unequivocal commitment to eradicating sexual assault.

While these accomplishments are notable, the DoD's work is not complete, as leadership and Service members alike realize there's still much to be done. To this end, the Department remains focused on sustaining a climate in which sexual assault is seen as unacceptable not just because it is a crime, but because it is counter to the Department's core values.

Through innovative practices and emphasis on primary prevention the Department continues its commitment to excellence in response to and care for survivors. The Department is resolved to increasing satisfaction and confidence in the system and lessening the stigma associated with reporting. In addition, DoD is dedicated to maintaining the advancements employed regarding timely, thorough, and efficient investigative and legal processes in its aim to hold offenders appropriately accountable.

Senior leaders have provided unprecedented leadership engagement on sexual assault prevention and response, employing a proactive communication posture with clear and consistent messaging. Through approaching survivors for feedback, collaborating with external partners and experts, working with Congressional and White House leaders, and sharing best and promising practices throughout the Services, DoD continues to seek inventive and inspiring methods to inform and augment the DoD SAPR program. This approach has allowed DoD to put the problem of sexual assault into sharp focus. Unfortunately, that same level of clarity in prescribing lasting solutions has evaded all who have sought it out to date.

Nonetheless, the Department is advancing the national conversation on sexual assault prevention. Additional research and evaluation are necessary in order to refine and optimize existing approaches, as well as discover opportunities for improvement. Ultimately, DoD will uphold an environment intolerant of sexual assault, where all members are leaders who take prompt action to correct behaviors counter to the core

military values of trust, dignity, and respect. Beyond 2014, the Department will continue its concerted endeavor to sustain and enhance ongoing and new SAPR efforts, and to identify and close gaps.

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