Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services
(DACOWITS)

2004 REPORT

A Soldier is welcomed home by family members in Asheville, N.C., after more than 15 months deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Soldier is assigned to the 210th Military Police Company, North Carolina Army National Guard.

Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Laresa Buxton makes an adjustment on the Demand Assigned Multiple Access (DAMA) console aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75).

Staff Sergeant. Angelica M. Figueroa, personnel support detachment First Sergeant and armory chief, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, scans the horizon of the open desert. **Photo by:** Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte

Captain Kimberly Isaac holds her daughter one last time before deploying to Iraq on Aug. 30. About 160 Airmen from the 59th Medical Wing at Wilford Hall Medical Center here left to staff a field hospital in Iraq. **U.S. Air Force photo by**: 1st Lt. Benjamin Silva

San Juan, Puerto Rico (May 7)--Cadets aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Eagle go through many daily training routines such reading positions with sextants. Second class Cadets sail on Eagle as part of their summer training. **USCG photo by:** PAC Robert D. Wyman

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

9 Dec 04

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) advises the Department of Defense (DoD) on policies and matters, including family issues, that affect the recruitment, retention and well-being of highly qualified military women. At present, women comprise 16 percent of the enlisted ranks and 19 percent of the officer corps. More than half of Active duty, National Guard and Reserves forces are married, and while the decision to enlist is often a personal one, the decision to remain is usually a family decision. Today, these decisions ar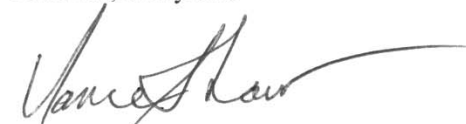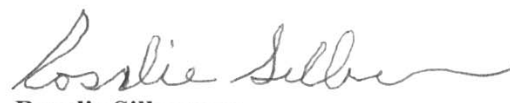e made in a war context in which the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) has intensified the demands and dangers of military life. DACOWITS seeks to provide DoD with recommendations on how to recruit, retain and provide for the well-being of the highly qualified military necessary to defend our nation in light of changing demographics and the important role women and families play in today's military.

In 2004, DACOWITS continued its 2003 review of policies and matters in the areas of retention and deployment and added a third area of immediate concern: sexual assault in the military. To facilitate the development of informed and timely recommendations, DACOWITS conducted focus groups at military installations worldwide, drawing on data and research from academic literature, military survey research, and briefings and presentations from military and civilian subject matter experts. The Committee's recommendations are summarized below and addressed in greater detail in the report.

PERSONNEL RETENTION

In the 2004 focus groups, the Committee discussed the extent to which the military is losing personnel eligible to be retained, identifying factors contributing to the loss of eligible personnel, and factors influencing decisions to remain in the military. DACOWITS also extensively reviewed DoD research efforts, including the most recent Status of Forces Survey and the Best Practices of Private Sector Employees identified by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Both male and female officers showed discrepancies between their actual retention rates and their reported intentions. For example, married officers with children are more likely to report an intention to remain in the military than officers without children, but the real retention rates for male and female officers with children are actually lower. Examining retention rates further, married female officers have the highest rate of separation overall, and female officers with children separate at a higher rate than male officers with children.

The imbalance of work/family life, including the inflexibility of workload and schedule, was the factor most frequently cited by Active duty, National Guard and Reserve participants as influencing their intention to leave the military. Participants in 71 percent of the Active duty focus groups regarded work/family imbalance as a main reason to leave the Service. To minimize this conflict, DACOWITS recommends the implementation of incentive programs, such as the development of Leave of Absence/Sabbatical programs, and allowing families the option of remaining at assigned installations during periods critical to family life. Due to the overarching childcare needs repeatedly identified, DACOWITS recommends that DoD, working

with state legislatures if necessary, streamline qualification requirements to greatly expand the pool of in-home care providers available for Service members' children.

Job related factors, including job satisfaction and stability and career opportunities, also affect retention. The presence of "organizational support," consistent with the New Social Compact's "reciprocal relationship between the Service member and the military," contributes to retention. The Services should continue to examine the use of "optional career paths," particularly for officers. DACOWITS also recommends a continuous review of existing programs and policies regarding career opportunities and counseling throughout the Services.

Factors identified as contributing to a decision to remain in the military were similar to those found in the 2003 focus groups. Enjoyment of the military, pride in service, benefits and compensation, and career opportunities rated as the most salient factors to members' remaining in military service. Yet, the stress of increased mobilization and deployment needs to be closely monitored for its affect on retention.

DEPLOYMENT

Because of the increased frequency and length of deployments, and the impact of deployments on recruiting and retention, DACOWITS made deployment a priority for both 2003 and 2004. Preparedness of both the Service member and family arose as a theme in 2004, with Guard and Reserve personnel encountering particular challenges. DACOWITS recommends that the Services establish policies requiring sufficient time be incorporated into pre-deployment training schedules for members to attend to personal affairs.

In 2004, DACOWITS studied the impact of deployment on children and childcare needs, and recommends that the Services be encouraged not to deploy both parents of minor children simultaneously. DACOWITS also recommends that training regarding the effects and stresses of parenthood, especially single parenthood in military service, be evaluated for its effectiveness. Although efforts have been made to increase the availability of childcare, DACOWITS reiterated the 2003 report recommendations for DoD to increase its efforts to meet its goal of providing the currently estimated need for childcare spaces as identified by the office of Children and Youth, and that the Services address the need for greater childcare availability during times of increased demand.

Because communication continues to be an issue during all phases of deployment, DACOWITS recommends that leadership strongly support programs that promote family readiness. To ensure that families of all deploying Service members receive information about anticipated deployment schedules, support programs, points of contact for legal affairs, financial issues, childcare options, psychological counseling and other available resources, we urge that letters be mailed home. The effectiveness of online sources of communication and information currently in use such as the Military One Source and similar Service programs should be assessed. The development and use of unit internet resources should be encouraged to promote access to family support services, and all service branches should continue outreach to family members, especially during deployment.

Regarding reunion and readjustment, DACOWITS recommends that administrative requirements for returning personnel be kept to a minimum. Reunion and readjustment programs should

include adequate time off for family and personal needs, and authorized leave for Guard and Reserve members should not be denied. Existing policies requiring mental health screenings for all personnel upon return from contingency deployments should be enforced.

DACOWITS recommends that additional employer incentive programs be created to encourage the hiring and support of National Guard and Reserve members, with potential incentives to include tax benefits. Mobilized Guard and Reserve members whose civilian jobs were eliminated during deployment should be given priority to remain on Active status when possible.

As in our 2003 report, DACOWITS again recommends that the Department provide guidance to the Services to maintain relevant standardized data for effective personnel policy. Data collection and analyses should include information on the reasons for non-deployment and evacuation, as well as statistics on non-deployable members and early returnees by rank and gender.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Because the problem of sexual assault is a command issue that negatively affects unit cohesion, morale, performance, readiness and, most importantly, mission accomplishment, DACOWITS researched this topic in 2004. In addition to examining research on the prevalence of sexual assault in the military, DACOWITS members asked focus group participants about their awareness of incidents of sexual assault, the adequacy of resources for victims, whether incidents are being reported and, if not, why not.

DACOWITS found that Service members were generally aware of the extent of the problem as well as the availability of resources available for victims of assault. The reported reasons for the high incidence of non-reporting included lack of trust in the system to punish the offenders, and fear that there would be negative repercussions to the victim.

Based on widespread agreement as to the need for a clear, consistent definition of sexual assault, DACOWITS recommends that the new definition of sexual assault established by the Task Force for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) be quickly incorporated into the UCMJ and used consistently in training, in data collection, and by military law enforcement authorities. To further successful prosecution, DACOWITS recommends that the UCMJ be revised to clarify and be consistent with the official definition of sexual assault, ensuring a clear and consistent legal standard, distinct from sexual harassment and other sex-related offenses. DACOWITS strongly recommends that these revisions be included in the 2006 legislative proposals, and that the standard for consent in the UCMJ be reviewed and revised to facilitate successful prosecution of sexual assault cases. These essential revisions should be implemented expeditiously.

In order to increase the level of trust in the system, DACOWITS recommends establishing a protocol, including a victim advocate independent of the chain of command, that encourages the victim to seek treatment and to report the crime with the assurance that, once the crime is reported to law enforcement, privacy will be protected to the maximum extent possible and the victim kept informed of the progress of the case. DACOWITS recommends that comprehensive training on sexual assault should be an integral and ongoing part of Professional Military Education (PME) for all levels, enlisted through General Officers, especially in commander and leadership courses with special effort made to reach the junior ranks. Training should emphasize

that sexual assault is a crime that will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and the training should be delivered in the context of the core values of military service and the mission requirements of unit cohesion and readiness. Single-sex training to facilitate forthright discussions should emphasize the importance of Service members taking responsibility for their own and each other's safety and well-being, as well as the serious risk factor of alcohol. Training, particularly at the junior grades, should cover the procedures and resources available to victims following a sexual assault. Service members should be instructed to seek immediate medical attention after an assault, both for their own care and to enable authorities to collect the evidence necessary for prosecution. The full range of civilian and military resources should be clearly delineated, so that Service members understand that they can seek help at civilian hospitals and from civilian law enforcement in addition to their options within the military.

Educational awareness efforts should include an information campaign utilizing posters, pocket cards, and other media to convey specific programs, agencies, names, addresses and phone numbers offering assistance to victims of sexual assault.

CONCLUSION

In 2004, DACOWITS extended our review and research in the areas of retention and deployment. We sought additional and more detailed information on whether we were retaining personnel in both the quantity and quality necessary to fulfill the military's mission, and if not, why not. We reviewed the effects of current deployment policies and practices on Service members and their families. Additionally, we added our voice and those of our focus group participants on how to best prevent sexual assault in the military, to treat the victims of assault, and to prosecute the perpetrators. Although we did not specifically address recruitment issues— the goals in 2004 were generally being met with some exceptions—the concerns raised in retention, deployment and sexual assault will inevitably affect recruitment.

In nearly all of our focus groups, and particularly among female officer groups, the challenge of balancing military and family life was the number one factor in the decision to leave the military. Service members voiced deep concerns about managing the frequency, duration and uncertainty of deployments and the effects on their families, particularly their children. If we are to recruit and retain the quantity and quality of personnel to meet the nation's future military needs, manpower and personnel policies must be assessed in terms that speak to these concerns. We make our recommendations cognizant of the primacy of mission in this time of war. Our recommendations are intended to improve the military lives of Service members and their families, and to ensure that they believe their sacrifice is worthwhile and appreciated. We can never fully compensate them for their service, however there are things we can do to improve their quality of life and their ability to fulfill their mission.

DACOWITS members feel privileged and grateful to have met so many extraordinary Service members and their families, toured so many excellent installations, and benefited from so many fine briefings. We appreciate the significant contributions of the DACOWITS staff, Points of Contacts, gracious host installations and knowledgeable briefers.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The DACOWITS charter authorizes the Committee to advise DoD, through the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) [PDUSD (P&R)], on policies and matters, including family issues, which affect the recruitment and retention of highly qualified military Service members. (See Appendix A for the current charter.) The changing demographics of today's armed forces and the important role that women and families play in the military provide both opportunities and challenges as DoD continues to plan and prepare for the military of the future.

The members of DACOWITS (See Appendix B) conducted installation visits and focus groups designed to ascertain, first hand, attitudes across the whole spectrum of the military and family communities. The Committee acts as a direct conduit, expressing the concerns of the Service members and their families to the senior DoD leadership. Although the Committee does not presume to generalize focus group perceptions into service-wide opinions, we found in many cases that what we heard closely reflected the published data of much larger surveys. This report provides insights from Service members that may help explain the "why" behind the survey data and provides quotes that will illuminate their perspectives and humanize the data.

From a list of potential focus group sites provided by the Services, 14 were selected to encompass a mixture of installations, geographically and organizationally, including Reserve and National Guard members. The Committee first tested its focus group protocol, revised and augmented from 2003, at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. (See Appendices D, E, F, G, and H for protocols.) Beginning in April, DACOWITS members, in groups of two, visited installations in the United States and Japan over a period of five months. Five focus groups were conducted at each installation, four consisting of Service members and one of military spouses. Divided by gender and rank groupings, the focus groups included a wide spectrum of military personnel. The strictly confidential nature of DACOWITS' focus groups allows military and family members to speak freely and honestly about their views and experiences. Many of the participants had returned from deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, among other locations critical to the GWOT, emphasizing the real-life, real-time perspective necessary to illuminate the issues at hand.

Caliber Associates, an independent contractor, compiled the data from all focus groups and provided current research on the relevant issues, from sources both within and outside of DoD. Additionally, DACOWITS received comprehensive briefings by senior officials of DoD and the Services, covering their policy and program priorities relevant to DACOWITS' topics.

The Committee would like to thank the DACOWITS staff and Caliber Associates, senior officials of DoD and the Services, as well as the civilian speakers for their valuable assistance in this effort. We also thank the Commanders and their staffs from the installations DACOWITS visited for graciously hosting Committee members. Most importantly, DACOWITS extends thanks to the men and women of the Armed Services and their families who participated in the focus groups. Their views provided the foundation for the Committee's Findings and Recommendations. (See Chapter V.) Every member of DACOWITS has expressed how honored we have been to work with so many outstanding men and women from the Armed Services and

with their families. The Committee acknowledges the enormous sacrifices Service members make for our nation and for our way of life, and extends its deepest appreciation. DACOWITS hopes this report will result in tangible improvements to their military lives.

II. RETENTION

A. INTRODUCTION

In 2003, DACOWITS examined the possible reasons for differential retention rates for Service personnel – especially among female, junior Active duty officers. Retention remained a primary topic for DACOWITS in 2004 as it further considered Service members' retention in light of DoD's mission to retain highly qualified personnel in sufficient numbers with requisite skills to meet its mission demands and readiness.

In 2003, the Committee made recommendations in three areas that Service members identified as impacting retention decisions: access to benefits, availability of personal/family time, and participation in military culture/lifestyle. The most dominant area discussed by Service members in 2004 was work/family balance. Most of the Committee's recommendations in 2004 addressed this issue.

Over the last several years, DoD has initiated many policies and legislative actions that have addressed the concerns heard by DACOWITS in the 2003 and 2004 focus groups. Among DoD's recent efforts is the publication of the *Social Compact*, a document which outlines the Department's overall human resource strategy for the 21st century. The areas addressed in the *Social Compact*— childcare, commissaries, military exchanges, DoD Education Activities, financial readiness, fitness, healthcare, housing, off-duty voluntary education, spouse education, and employment and support services— were identified as being of great importance to military members and their families.[1] Because of these and other DoD efforts, Service members currently serving in the military have greater access to pay raises, increased retention bonuses, expanded education benefits, and reduced out-of-pocket expenses for relocation and housing.

In the current environment of dangerous, high tempo operations and a more competitive private sector economy, it is necessary to determine whether the various retention and *Social Compact* initiatives undertaken by DoD and the Services are having their intended effect— that is, to help sustain and retain the quantity and quality of the all-volunteer force. In the area of retention, DACOWITS sought to answer questions of concern to DoD that include:

- To what extent is the military losing personnel eligible to be retained?

- What are the factors causing these losses and how do such factors influence retention?

- What policies and/or programs could reduce retention losses?

B. LOSS OF PERSONNEL ELIGIBLE TO BE RETAINED

The first question DACOWITS explored was the extent to which the military is losing personnel eligible to be retained. The loss of eligible Service members from Active duty, National Guard and the Reserve should be examined in the context of current data on recruiting and in relation to military career intentions.

Recruitment data for the last fiscal year show that all elements of the Active and Reserve forces achieved their recruiting goals in federal fiscal year 2004, except the Army National Guard and Air National Guard - the Air Guard by only a few hundred and the Army Guard by several thousand.

The fact that the Reserves— Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force— met their target for recruitment in FY2004 is positive, but the inability of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard to meet their recruiting goals is of concern. While integral to the mission in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army Guard and Air Guard also play a unique role in their authorized dual status for both state missions, (e.g., disaster relief, fire fighting) and homeland defense (e.g. airport security, border patrol). As of September 2004 there were 96,630 members of the National Guard mobilized in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

Several explanations have been given to account for the drop in recruiting for the Army National Guard and Air National Guard including the fact that fewer Service members are joining the Guard after leaving Active duty. The loss of these experienced military personnel from the National Guard is one critical area where the military is losing personnel eligible to be retained. Over the last 30 years, former Active duty personnel have accounted for about half of National Guard prior service enlistments. Because recruiting and retention is an ongoing concern, numerous incentives have been authorized at the federal and state level for both Active and Reserve components. It is too early to determine if goals will be met in FY2005 or what effect these incentives will have on recruiting and retention. DACOWITS will continue to examine such issues in FY2005.

While recruitment rates in FY2004 remain largely on target for the Active and Reserve forces, there is evidence that certain categories of eligible personnel within these Services are less likely to remain in the military once they are recruited.[2] For example, eligible female junior officers tend to leave the Services at a higher rate than their male counterparts. Also, personnel with dependents and individuals with qualifications in critical specialties are also being retained at a lower rate than desired.

1. Military Career Intention Data

DACOWITS' review of career intention data from the 2004 Status of Forces Survey (2004 SOF)[3] as well as a review of the actual 2003 separation rates, which were provided in the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC)[4] briefing, shows that differences exist in the retention intentions and actual retention decisions among males and females, Active and Reserve components, and members with versus without dependents. The following section reviews information available on the military career intentions and actual military separation rates of Service personnel eligible to be retained.

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

All of the focus groups conducted in 2004 contained some Service members who intended to continue their military careers, or family members who reported their spouse intended to stay, but 57% of groups also contained participants who intended to leave, or who reported their

spouses intended to leave. Sixty-nine percent of the 2004 groups contained another set of participants who were undecided, or who reported their spouses were undecided.
These general indications of intention to remain in the military for a career of twenty years or more do not differ greatly from the responses given by the DACOWITS focus groups in 2003: 98% of those groups had participants who intended to remain in the military, 59% of groups had participants who intended to leave, and 56% of groups contained participants who were undecided.

b. Research Findings

The following paragraph summarizes data from the 2004 SOF Survey[5] on the retention intentions of Active duty members. These survey data indicate that there may be differences by gender among officers and enlisted Service members. Margins of error for each estimate appear following the percentage. It is important to note that, given the large margins of error for some of the following estimates, not all percentage differences should be considered statistically significant:

- Married male (73%: $\pm$3) and female (68%: $\pm$7) officers with children were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military over married male (65%: $\pm$3) and female (60%: $\pm$8) officers without children.

- Single male (76%: $\pm$10) and single female (68%: $\pm$13) officers with children were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military than single male (58%: $\pm$5) and single female (53%: $\pm$7) officers without children.

- Male (70%: $\pm$3) officers with a working spouse were more likely than female (63%: $\pm$3) officers with a working spouse to remain in the military.

- Male (67%: $\pm$9) officers in a dual career marriage were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military than female (61%: $\pm$8) officers in a dual career marriage.

- Male (73%: $\pm$3) and female (73%: $\pm$7) senior officers were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military over male (66%: $\pm$3) and female (54%: $\pm$5) junior officers.

- Male (73%: $\pm$3) and female (73%: $\pm$7) senior officers were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military over male (67%: $\pm$3) and female (64%: $\pm$5) senior enlisted.

- Male (67%: $\pm$3) and female (64%: $\pm$5) senior enlisted were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military over male (66%: +3) and female (54%: +5) junior officers.

- Male (67%: $\pm$5) and female (64%: $\pm$3) senior enlisted were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military over male (40%: $\pm$5) and female (47%: $\pm$3) junior enlisted.

2. Military Career Retention Data

By comparing actual separation rates to self-reported retention intentions, DoD can begin to identify discrepancies in military career experience across eligible groups of Service personnel and then examine the factors contributing to Service members' decisions not to remain in the military.

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Using focus group protocols, DACOWITS members asked focus group participants about their intentions to stay in the military. These protocols were not designed to measure participants' actual retention decisions. Information on actual rates of separation was provided in the 2003 DMDC briefing that looked at the career experience of Service personnel similar to those in the DACOWITS focus groups.

b. Research Findings

Data on officer separation rates compiled in the 2003 DMDC briefing indicate that:

- Female (9.4%) officers with dependents separated at a higher rate than males (7.4%) with dependents.

- Female (7.5%) officers without dependents were similar to those of male (7.4%) officers with dependents in their separation rates.

- Male (5.5%) officers without dependents had the lowest separation rates.

- Female (10.1%) officers who were married had the highest rates of separation overall.

- Female (9.2%) officers in dual military career marriages had higher separation rates than male (6.3%) officers in dual military marriages.

- Female (11.9%) officer separation rates were markedly higher than those of male (6.6%) officers at 8 years of service and below with the gap being most pronounced at 5 to 8 years of service.

Data on officer separation rates for the National Guard and Reserve in 2003 show that female Service members have slightly higher separation rates than their male counterparts (13.9% vs. 13.4%, respectively). In the Coast Guard, there is little difference in overall attrition rates for female officers compared to the officer corps as a whole.

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The report of some degree of gender difference in separation rates at the 5 to 8 year mark of service in the Active forces could be expected. The majority of officers are in their early twenties when they receive their commission, thus most will be in their late twenties or early thirties when they have accrued 5 to 8 years of military service. This is also the age span during which most women with a college education have their first child.[6] Many women in the civilian workforce have been found to interrupt full-time employment to spend time at home caring for children, and many others trade higher wage jobs for "mother-friendly jobs that can easily be combined with parenting."[7]

The role of family-related factors in female Service members' decisions to separate is prominent in three recent retention studies of female personnel. The 2002 study, *Winning the Retention Wars*, which was prepared for the Commandant of the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, used questionnaire responses from almost 600 recently departed female Air Force officers to identify influences on their career decision.[8] The major reasons female officers gave for leaving the Air Force included a desire to spend more time with family (41%), a desire for geographic stability (41%), a need to stay home with children (27%), dissatisfaction with Air Force leadership (27%), and a desire to start a family (24%).

A 1998 study of 525 female Air Force veterans of the first Persian Gulf War found that those who gave birth to a child within a two-year window from the beginning of the war had the highest rates of separation from the military.[9] A 2001 study of the impact of deployment on Navy mothers found that, regardless of deployment experience, one-fourth to one-third of Navy mothers cited difficulty balancing work and family domains as a reason for their decision to leave the Service.[10]

Researchers at the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis (OEMA) have suggested that economic factors also play a role in explaining the gender difference in retention for those in dual-military marriages.[11] Military women tend to earn less than military men because they are in lower grades on average, and salary is one factor that dual-military couples consider when making the decision about which spouse will remain in the military. In fact, comments from the 2004 DACOWITS focus groups composed of female Service members validate this finding. The higher separation rates of married female officers and female officers in dual-military marriages suggest that if the military career of one spouse is to be ended, it is most often the woman's.

In addition to gender and economic factors, the source of commissioning was considered when examining the retention rates of Active duty officers. The 2003 DMDC briefing[12] indicated that the officer separation rates for male and female graduates of all the Academies differed very little (6.9% vs. 6.6%, respectively), but that female officers commissioned through ROTC or other programs/sources tended to separate at higher rates than their male counterparts.

Because female officers commissioned through the Service Academies have lower rates of separation, gender differences in commissioning source should be considered. According to a 1999 study conducted by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, *Career Progression of Minority and Women Officers*, a smaller proportion of women (10.9%) than men (18.7%) were commissioned through the Academies in 1997.[13] The relatively smaller proportion of female officers commissioned through the Academies may contribute to

the overall gender differences seen in officer retention rates. There has been some improvement in this accession rate since 1997. The 2003 accessions into the Active duty from the Academies were 19.41% for males and 12.59% for females.

3. Military Career Intention Vs. Retention Data

Although DoD met its over all recruiting goals for the Active duty and Reserves in 2004, other data show that eligible personnel are not remaining at the rate they initially intended when they joined the Services. DACOWITS focus group results, DoD reports, and research findings all show some differences between the intentions of Service personnel to remain in the military and actual separation rates. This discrepancy is of concern because it indicates that eligible personnel are leaving the Services at a higher rate than their intentions would predict.

Separation rates differ by rank, marital status, presence of dependents, and commissioning source for officers. Although officers of both genders with dependents—whether single or married—were more likely to report an intention to stay than those without dependents, they actually separate at higher rates than their counterparts without dependents.

One explanation for the apparent discrepancy between Service members' career intentions and the actual retention data may be that many officers with children have the desire to remain due to military job stability, family benefits, and other reasons, but that ultimately they may be unable to balance their military and dependent obligations. This phenomenon has been well documented for female officers, but evidence on the differences between male officers' retention intentions and their actual retention decisions also indicates that male officers with dependents are experiencing the challenge of balancing their military duties with their family obligations.

The Services recognize this discrepancy between intentions and actual retention rates and also recognize that Service personnel in certain critical specialty areas separate at higher rates than their peers. DoD is finalizing metrics for critical retention skills focusing on about 10 critical specialties per Service. This information will be reported in the quarterly balanced scorecard for the 1st Quarter FY2005 briefings to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

There are discrepancies between the reported intentions of Service personnel with certain characteristics (i.e., married with dependents, female junior officer, female dual career family) to remain in the military and the actual retention rates for personnel with these characteristics. The important question is: what factors influence this change between career intentions, retention decisions, and the resulting loss of personnel? The DACOWITS 2004 focus group protocol asked participants to identify the factors that influence retention and any differential effect these factors might have on personnel eligible to be retained.

C. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE LOSS OF PERSONNEL ELIGIBLE TO BE RETAINED

1. Factors Influencing the Decision to Leave

The Committee designed its focus group protocol to solicit information on the factors influencing eligible personnel to leave the military. The identification of these factors can assist DoD and the Services in evaluating the effectiveness of incentives, interventions, and programs that have been initiated to promote retention. Feedback on initiatives generated through the *Social Compact*, for example, can assist the Services in determining how to allocate future resources to similar programs.

The discussion of the factors that focus group participants identified as influencing their decision to leave the military will be followed by an identification of the factors they felt contributed to a Service member's decision to stay. Similarities between the factors identified in 2003 and 2004 are noted.

Several factors were regularly identified by Service members and family members as either reasons to leave the Services or as factors contributing to career indecision. Exhibits II-1 through II-4 below display those factors that were most frequently recorded across groups as influential in the intention to leave the military. Exhibit II-5 shows the factors most frequently noted by undecided Service members.

Exhibit II-1: Factors Influencing the Decision of Active Duty Personnel to Leave the Military

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=41)	
Work/family balance	29	71%
Change in personal goals	28	68%
Workload and schedule	21	51%
Benefits and compensation	12	29%
Job satisfaction	9	22%
Leadership/unit climate issues	9	22%
Compatibility with the military	9	22%

Exhibit II-2: Factors Influencing the Decision of Guard and Reserve Personnel to Leave the Military

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=5)	
Work/family balance	3	60%
Close to retirement	1	20%
PCS/Relocation/Instability	1	20%
Workload and schedule	1	20%
Changing military status from Reserve to Active Component	1	20%

Exhibit II-3: Factors Influencing the Decision of Female Junior Officers to Leave the Military

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=6)	
Work/family balance	5	83%
Change in personal goals	3	50%
Workload and schedule	1	17%
Deployment	1	17%

Exhibit II-4: Factors Influencing the Decision to Leave as Reported by Family Members

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=12)	
Work/family balance	4	33%
Workload and schedule	4	33%
Change in personal goals	3	25%
Relocation/Instability	2	17%

Exhibit II-5: Factors Influencing The Military Career Decisions Of "Undecided" Participants

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=35)	
Job opportunities	20	57%
Work/family balance	14	40%
Leadership and other unit climate factors	10	29%
Workload and schedule	9	26%
Compatibility of military with personal goals	8	23%
Benefits and compensation	7	20%

a. Work/Family Balance

The factor work/family balance, also termed "family related issues" or "conflict between military duties and family and personal life," was cited as a reason to leave the military within 71% of Active duty focus groups in 2004. In 2003, participants in 50% of groups cited problems regarding the "availability of personal/family time."

Work/family balance was the most frequently mentioned factor for leaving the military by Active duty groups, Guard and Reserve groups, female junior officer groups, and family groups. It was the second most influential factor mentioned by undecided Active duty Service members and the third most by undecided female junior officers.

Those indicating an intention to leave the Service for this reason said that the military's policies related to work and family balance were too inflexible and/or that their military obligations impinged upon their ability to form and maintain relationships with persons outside of the military:

> "I can't have a child and be working the way we do— rotating in 3 months at a time, 3 or so times a year."
> —Female, Senior Officer, USAF

In the Active duty focus groups, married members intending to leave the Service often mentioned spousal pressure or their inability to accommodate their spouse's job or career needs.

Conflict between military duties and family obligations was the primary factor (60%) mentioned as an influence to leave within National Guard and Reserve groups:

> "After 9/11, I was ready to be activated, but now that I'm having my first child, I don't know how it's going to work out. I think the first thing that will have to go is my participation in the Reserves. Now that activations are like 2-years long, I'm worried."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USAFR

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Proximity to retirement, the instability of relocation, workload and schedule issues, and a change in military status from Reserve to Active Component were also mentioned within Reserve component focus groups as factors influencing the decision to leave.

Consistent with other demographic and rank groups, female junior officers who were leaving the Service stressed the inability to balance their military obligations with their family roles, or for single personnel, with their personal relationships:

> "[I] would not have children in the military, so [I] would leave to have a family."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USA

> "If I decide to have a family, I'm not sure I want to be an Active duty mother, maybe I would go to the Reserves."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USMC

Family members (e.g., spouses) of Active duty Service personnel who intended to leave the military identified issues related to work/family balance (33%), workload and schedule (33%), and change in personal goals (25%) as their spouses' primary reasons for leaving the Service:

> "[My husband] just decided to get out. He's been in the Air Force for 21 years. He's a Squad Commander and his hours are really intense. We started our family late and have 2 little ones at home. We've shifted our priorities and are ready to start on the next phase [of our life]."
> —Family Member, USAF

In 40% of groups in 2004 that contained undecided personnel, participants reported that work/family balance issues would impact their decision:

> "If I didn't have any children I might stay. I really don't have time to be actively involved in things."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USCG

In 2003, obligations of family and personal life were raised as key factors in 50% of groups containing undecided participants.

b. Change In Personal Goals

This factor, distinct from work/family balance, reflected the views of personnel who were leaving the Service in order to pursue personal or professional goals they believed could not be accomplished in the military. It was the second most frequently mentioned factor given for leaving the Service by personnel on Active duty (68%), and female junior officers groups (50%), the third most mentioned by family groups (25%), and the fifth most by undecided National Guard and Reserve groups (40%):

> "Now, I want to stay home with [my] children. I already have more than 20 years [in the military]."
> —Female, Senior Officer, USN

"[I] would like to go into the entertainment field. [I'm] a musician— classically trained,"
—Male, Junior Enlisted, USMC

"[I'm] anxious to get out and do something different."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USAF

c. Workload And Schedules

Workload and schedules is a factor influencing personnel in every rank in every Service. Personnel in 51% of Active duty focus groups mentioned workload and schedules as a factor influencing the decision to leave the military. Participants in family groups mentioned workload and schedules second in frequency after work/family balance as a consideration to leave the Service. Undecided Active duty and National Guard and Reserve groups cited workload and schedules as the third and fourth most frequent factors respectively. When discussing workload and schedules, the impact of deployment and the increase in OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO was frequently cited. Participants in 32% of Service member focus groups indicated that the high frequency of unpredictable deployments contributed to their decision to leave the military:

"I've been deployed 3 times, and this is my first assignment. I'm already burned out!"
—Female, Junior Enlisted, USAF

"[He] does not enjoy the Coast Guard as much as before [due to] longer hours. [He is] currently frustrated with his job, and the job is a 'brain drain.' He feels the qualified ones are leaving."
—Family Member, USCG

Undecided family members often referred to workload and schedule and deployment and mobilization in their discussions about the challenges of work/family balance:

"We've been married for 3 years, and we've only probably been together for 6 months of that. If I had my way, he'd go back to the dental field or to a career field where he doesn't have to be deployed as much."
—Family Member, USAF

d. PCS/Relocation Instability

National Guard and Reserve groups identified the instability due to Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or relocation as the third (20%) most important factor influencing their decision to leave the military. Participants within about 17% of family member groups also raised the theme of instability caused by multiple relocations in the context of work/family balance:

"For senior officers, the rapid PCS moves are very hard on kids."
—Family member, USA

Deployment can be a contributing factor to this relocation instability. Participants within 17% of female junior officer groups cited relocation instability as the fourth reason in their decision to leave.

e. Leadership/Unit Climate

Leadership and unit climate were factors recorded in 22% of Active duty focus groups as reason to leave the military. Undecided participants in the Active duty and Reserve focus groups mentioned leadership and unit climate as the third (29%) and fourth (40%) most frequent factors related to their retention decision.

f. Career/Job Opportunities

Participants in 57% of the Active duty focus groups in 2004 with undecided Service members identified career/job opportunities as a theme impacting their retention decision. Many undecided participants reported that the availability of advancement opportunities, including promotions, would greatly influence their decision:

> "I have to compete for promotion in my MOS, yet I am not even working in my MOS; so, I don't even have promotional opportunities. No one has been promoted in the last 6 months."
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USAF

Managing the force, so that upward or lateral mobility is available to qualified members, is an important personnel policy issue. An excessively overfilled rank structure will stop promotions for significant time periods and create morale issues among talented members who cannot be promoted. In 2003, career/job opportunities were captured within the factors of "career advancement," recorded as an influence on undecided participants in 30% of groups, and "job characteristics," recorded within 44% of groups.

Undecided participants identified duties and assignments as a factor that would influence their retention decision. Individual participants reported that they were currently dissatisfied with their duties and/or assignments and wanted to change career fields. Some mentioned that they would stay in the military if they received a new position:

> "I will stay in the military if I can change career fields."
> —Female, Junior Enlisted, USAF

Service members continued to work in the same field most often because they were denied the opportunity to cross-train or because certain career fields provided limited lateral mobility:

> "I'm in the job I started out with. I tried to change many times: after 4 years in, after 8 years in, and after 11 years in, but wasn't allowed. I was shot down from base level all the way to HQ [Headquarters], and it looks like I'm stuck here as a crew chief."
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USAF

2. Factors Influencing the Decision to Stay

In 2004, DACOWITS also asked Service members and their families to discuss the main reasons they decided to remain in the military. Exhibits II-6 through II-9 summarize the factors that

participants within Active duty, National Guard and Reserve, junior female officer, and family focus groups most often mentioned as influencing their retention intentions.

Exhibit II-6: Factors Influencing the Decision of Active Duty Personnel to Remain in the Military

Factor	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n =63)	
Enjoyment of the military job	57	90%
Benefits and compensation	49	78%
Career opportunities	35	56%
Job stability and security	28	44%
Patriotism/Pride in service	27	43%
Family-related reasons	23	37%

Exhibit II-7: Factors Influencing the Decision of Guard and Reserve Personnel to Remain in the Military

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=12)	
Enjoyment of the military job	12	100%
Benefits and compensation	8	58%
Patriotism/Pride in the military	6	50%
Job stability and security	1	9%

Exhibit II-8: Factors Influencing the Decision of Female Junior Officers to Remain in the Military

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=6)	
Enjoyment of the military job	6	100%
Benefits and compensation	4	67%
Job stability and security	3	50%
Camaraderie	3	50%
Career opportunities	2	33%

Exhibit II-9: Factors Influencing the Decision to Remain in the Military as Reported by Family Members

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n=12)	
Enjoyment of the military job	12	100%
Benefits and compensation	7	58%
Patriotism/Pride in Service	6	50%
Job stability and security	5	42%

Participants in focus groups exhibited considerable consistency in their identification of positive factors in 2003 and 2004. The high level of satisfaction with benefits and compensation identified in both years may indicate that the legislative changes made in the last few years to increase incentives in these areas has been recognized and favorably received. For example, National Guard and Reserves Forces' access to healthcare, commissaries, and post exchanges has been expanded, as have recruiting and retention bonus authority.

a. Enjoyment Of The Military And The Military Job

Enjoyment of the military job was the number one positive factor identified by participants within all Service personnel and family groups as contributing to a decision to remain in the Service. In almost all focus groups, there were participants who explained that they simply enjoyed their military jobs. This was consistent with the 2003 responses, which included "love of the job" as the main reason to stay in the military.

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Participants within female junior officer groups also identified camaraderie as contributing to their enjoyment of the military job:

> "The main thing was my job. I like what I do. I like my colleagues. Sometimes the patients aren't so great. They can be a challenge, but my colleagues are the driving force. They can be very professional. It's great to work with people that you know how to motivate and who also know how to motivate you."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USAF

The factors identified by participants within family member groups as reasons to remain in the military were similar to those mentioned by participants within the Service personnel groups:

> "[My husband] loves the Marines and wants to do 30 years."
> —Family Member, USMC

b. Benefits And Compensation

Participants in 78% of the Active duty groups and 58% of the National Guard, Reserve, and family groups cited benefits and/or compensation as reasons to retain. This was also consistent with the 2003 findings, which found benefits to be the top tangible factor to remain in the military:

> "The best reasons to stay are the medical and retirement benefits."
> — Male, Senior Enlisted, USAF

Benefits, compensation, and job stability were also considered important to family members who believed their spouses would choose to stay in the military:

> "We consider ourselves very new to the military. [My husband's] job is exciting. The benefits are good. Retirement is good, and there's advancement and other possibilities."
> —Family Member, USCG

c. Career/Job Opportunities

In 56% of the 2004 Active duty focus groups, career progression and advancement was identified as an influential factor among those with an intention to stay. In 2003, this figure was mentioned within slightly less than half of the focus groups as the second most important tangible factor to remain in the military:

> [The Navy has] been good to me and [I] want to become an officer.
> —Female, Junior Enlisted, Navy

The factor of career/job opportunities includes the Service member's ability or inability to work in the career field and/or specialty for which he or she was trained. Service member focus groups typically contained individuals who reported that they currently worked in the job they were trained to do when they first entered the military and individuals who reported that they no

longer did so. Just over 80% of groups contained at least one participant who still remained in their original career field. Sixty-four percent of groups had one or more participants who had switched from their original field. The most common reasons for this were: rotation or reassignment to another job, requested and received cross-training, and/or forced to cross-train due to overstaffing in a particular field.

d. Job Stability And Security

Job stability and security was the fourth most frequently mentioned factor influencing a decision to remain in the military by Active duty, Reserve and family groups alike. Forty-four percent of the Active duty focus groups listed stability and security as a reason to stay in 2004. This was a decrease from focus group reports in 2003 when job stability and security were recorded in approximately half of focus groups.

Focus group participants observed that the civilian job market was unstable and that they were ensuring their financial security by staying in the military:

> "[The] job market in the civilian [sector] is not too good. [There's] no problem with military."
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USMC

It is interesting to note that job stability and security were recorded in a smaller percentage of Reserve groups (9%) than in all the other groups combined (44%). This is understandable since the military is not the primary occupation of most National Guard and Reserve Service members.

e. Patriotism and Pride in Service

Patriotism/pride in service was articulated as a reason to stay by Active and National Guard and Reserve groups. This factor was recorded in a larger percentage of National Guard and Reserve groups (64%) than in non-Reserve groups (43%). In 2003, pride in service was recorded in about one-fourth of DACOWITS focus groups as influencing the decision to remain in the military. Family members recognized that their Service member spouses remained in the military in part due to the pride they feel in serving:

> "My husband doesn't stay in for the money; he's patriotic. That's part of the reason he went in [the military] to begin with."
> —Family Member, USAR

3. Research Findings

a. Factors Influencing The Loss Of Personnel Eligible To Be Retained

In addition to factors identified in responses from focus group participants, DACOWITS commissioned a review of the relevant DoD reports and research findings to further identify factors that might influence the military career decisions of eligible Service members. The 2003 SOF survey included questions on advancement opportunities that have been shown to be predictive of an individual's likelihood of remaining with an organization.

The 2003 SOF survey asked Service members to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements about their military career and service. The response options ranged from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. More officers (65%) than enlisted (36%) members agreed that they would get the assignments they need to get promotions. More officers (37%) than enlisted (24%) agreed that their Service's evaluation/selection system is effective. There were no statistically significant differences by gender. This suggests that male and female Service members of comparable ranks feel similarly about their military advancement opportunities.

A recent RAND study shows, however, that female officers continue to be concentrated in occupations perceived to offer more limited long-term career opportunities (i.e., support occupations).[14] The study, which employed a customized cohort-based data file prepared by DMDC, found that although women's concentration in support occupations has no impact on their career opportunities up to the O-4 level, female officers believe that their traditional non-combat roles limit their chances to advance to senior ranks (O6 and above).

The most recent DoD-wide exit survey, administered to personnel leaving the military, was conducted in 2000. Survey respondents were asked to evaluate 31 reasons that might have influenced their decision to separate. For male officers, the five most frequently cited reasons to leave were: desire to start a second career before becoming too old (44%), overall job satisfaction (43%), desire to settle in a particular location (41%), pay and allowances (29%), and promotion/advancement opportunities (29%).[15]

Among female officers, the most frequently cited reasons for leaving were: overall job satisfaction (50%), desire to settle in a particular location (38%), not getting desirable or appropriate assignments (24%), pay and allowances (20%), and desire to continue my education (20%).

Conspicuously absent in these rankings of influential factors (but stressed heavily in other research reviewed for this report) is the explicit mention of family-related factors such as "desire to start a family" or "amount of time spent away from family." These were not among the 31 response options for this question in the 2000 Exit Survey.[16] While the survey did include "family problems at home" and "family wanted me to separate" as possible responses, these categories are not synonymous with the more neutrally worded options related to work and family balance.

The 2000 Exit Survey questions may not have adequately captured the essence of what many female Service members with plans to leave have reported in other places: that military service and raising a family are often difficult to balance.

This next section specifically examines women's military retention for women within the context of trends in the civilian labor force.

b. Factors Affecting Women's Retention In The Civilian Workforce

As discussed earlier, junior female officers, particularly those with children, leave the Services at higher rates than their male counterparts. Participants within each of the 2004 DACOWITS

focus groups— particularly within the female enlisted and the female junior officer groups — identified work/family balance and related issues as the primary reason to leave the military. To better understand this finding, an examination was made of the factors affecting women in the civilian workforce.

Over the past three decades, women's workforce participation has risen to 60%, and the labor force participation rate of mothers with children under age 18 was at 72% in 2000.[17] Nearly three-fourths of mothers today are balancing family responsibilities with employment. Childbirth remains a major milestone in the lives of women, and many interrupt their careers to devote their full attention to it, at least temporarily.[18] In part because of childbirth, the employment status and jobs held by women in the civilian sector change more often over time than those of men. The birth of a child is one of the primary factors in the separation decisions of female employees in civilian occupations.[19]

The timing of childbirth is also a critical factor in women's decisions to leave the civilian workforce. On average, American women who had their first child in 2000 were about 25 years of age. Over the past three decades, the average age of mothers for all births steadily shifted upward, from 24.6 years of age to 27.2 years of age.

The civilian literature identifies family-related factors as influential in women's participation in the workforce in the private sector. For example, full-time work status before pregnancy is strongly related to employment decisions after childbirth. Over half of women who work full-time before childbirth continue to work at the same job after the child is born.[20] Parenting conditions during the period before the mother's return to the workforce also play a key role.[21] Childcare and associated psychological strains can precipitate the consideration of a career change or separation from the workforce for mothers.

Non family-related factors have also been shown to affect women's work-related decisions. For example, a recent study of women working within the healthcare sector found that perceptions of career opportunities and advancement in their organizations contributed significantly to employees' job satisfaction and to their decisions about whether to stay or leave.[22]

Job satisfaction is a consistent predictor of retention in the research literature on the civilian workforce. For women, work-family balance issues are a major component of their evaluation of job satisfaction. Other factors are also important. Challenge and job autonomy have been identified as important "intrinsic" factors that influence the job satisfaction of female pharmacists, while staffing, compensation, relationships with co-workers, and job security are the most important "extrinsic" factors.[23] Action by management to improve the extrinsic factors of a job can reduce the turnover rate and increase retention for those satisfied with the intrinsic factors.

D. POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO REDUCE RETENTION LOSSES

The military makes a considerable investment in the recruitment and training of Service personnel. Personnel and the Services benefit from continuity and longevity of eligible, qualified, and experienced members. The final retention-related question addressed by

DACOWITS in 2004 was: What policies and/or programs could reduce retention losses? DACOWITS asked focus group participants this question and reviewed DoD reports and research findings to identify policies and programs that might increase the retention rate for eligible personnel who leave the military before 20 years of service. These comments and findings were considered in light of the efforts of DoD and the Services over the past 4 to 6 years to address the complex issue of retention.

1. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Service members participating in the 2004 focus groups were asked to identify one or two things the military could do differently to retain eligible personnel with skills that are in high demand in the civilian sector (e.g., foreign language speakers, communication technology, pilots, etc.). Exhibit II-10 presents the suggestions from participants within the Active duty, National Guard, and Reserve focus groups.

Exhibit II-10: Recommendations for Retaining Persons With High Demand Skills and Characteristics

Recommendations	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged	
Active component groups (n=38)		
Benefits and compensation	32	84%
Career advancement opportunities	12	32%
Job-related factors	10	26%
National Guard and Reserve groups (n=10)		
Benefits and compensation	4	40%
Deployment/unpredictability	3	30%
Career advancement opportunities	2	20%

Most participants who identified the theme of benefits and compensation suggested that the military should increase bonuses and pay to match that of the civilian sector:

"For us career types with twenty or more years, give us bonuses! They know they've got me. Why punish me for being in so long? For enlistees, after 20 years, bonuses are cut off."
—Male, Senior Enlisted, USAF

"Even with bonuses, [once] you get out into the civilian world, you get [paid] so much more. There are people making twice as much as you and doing the same work. Plus, they don't have to put up with doing PT."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USA

Participants in both Active duty and Reserve focus groups commented that people with high demand skills are deterred from continuing their military career due to the lack of career advancement opportunities:

"Pilots get all the good deals in the Air Force. If you are not a pilot and in support services, the career fields are not open to you."
—Female, Senior Officer, USAF

National Guard and Reserve groups in particular also raised the need to address the increase in deployment and the resulting unpredictability that affects the factors of work and family balance, PCS, relocation and instability, and workload and schedules:

> "Deployment needs to be shorter term. If I wanted to be Active duty, I would be Active duty. I don't want to go for 1 to 2 years."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USAFR

2. Research Findings

There is a growing body of literature, largely from the civilian sector, demonstrating that "work-life" initiatives (i.e., organizational programs, facilities, and policies that help employees balance work and non-work roles) not only benefit employees, but can also positively impact important organizational outcomes such as employee attendance, performance, and retention. Workers with access to family-responsive policies and programs (e.g., childcare information referral) reported greater commitment (i.e., personal attachment to the organization) and lower intention to quit. These positive organizational outcomes were particularly strong among workers who had young children.[24]

Employees' perceptions of organizational support (i.e., employees' beliefs about their organizations concern for their well-being) have been shown to have real consequences for employers. Workers reporting higher perceived organizational support (POS) also report higher levels of commitment and loyalty to their organization.[25]

Providing flexibility and resources that allow employees to balance work and family is a strategy used by many organizations to successfully recruit and retain qualified female employees.[26] Parental leaves and childcare spending accounts considerably reduced turnover among employees following childbirth.[27] Civilian employers have increasingly recognized that organizational support is necessary to help manage time shortages, scheduling dilemmas, and conflict between work-family domains,[28] and that "expecting employees to manage their non-work difficulties alone, and with no involvement by the organization, is not effective."[29]

Work-life policies and programs from the civilian sector have been examined for their applicability to the military. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has identified several practices in its *Best Practices of Private Sector Employers*.[30] Use of programs successful in the civilian sector including childcare support and flexible or non-standard work schedules, for example, sometimes involve major shifts in military policy and statute (e.g., leave of absence programs).

A recent RAND analysis found that a facilitated Return to Service program— which would provide personnel who have left the military an opportunity to return to service—would have a relatively high return on investment. Sabbatical programs "may mitigate the effect of a challenging career path…and assist in sustaining the long term health [of the force]."[31]

DoD *Social Compact* and numerous other efforts of the military to increase recruiting and retention have benefited from the experience of civilian best practices. The following actions have recently been taken to address the work-life balance of Service members and families:

- Dr. David S. Chu, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness met with Governors to discuss the actions State governments can take to support military families, especially the unique requirements of Guard and Reserve families.[32]

- Florida has established a model for state support of military families. Comprehensive legislation will resolve unemployment compensation ineligibility, assist spouses with employment, help military children transition into Florida schools, and support housing requirements for military families.

- An Idaho Guard Family Readiness Workshop was followed by a statewide town hall meeting with family members, facilitated through video and audio conferencing.

- DoD officials at Ft. Campbell announced DoD Family Stability Initiative ("USA4MilitaryFamilies"), a collaboration among interested states and DoD, that will work along with the Senate Subcommittees on Children and Families and Armed Services Personnel to improve the quality of life of military families.

- DoD officials met with members of the Virginia Citizen-Soldier Council to discuss DoD initiative and potential opportunities for collaborative efforts with Virginia.

Additionally, the Tuition Assistance (TA) program has grown as a benefit since the late 1990s. Through legislation and service initiatives, TA is now equivalent to full cost support of a half semester credit load. The Department agrees with the Services support of TA as a beneficial program for recruitment and retention and as a job enhancer. The 2004 *Report of the 1st Quadrennial Quality of Life Review* suggests that TA is a major factor in Service personnel's desire to remain in the military.[33]

E. OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING RETENTION

1. DACOWITS Focus Groups Findings

Leadership and unit climate were examined in greater detail in the 2004 DACOWITS focus groups because of previous indications of its importance in relation to sexual assault. However, due to the nature of the question, most Service members addressed unit climate in the context of its impact on their retention decisions. The Committee asked Service members to discuss unit climate and the social dynamics in their units, including factors such as unit morale, the extent to which unit members have trust in one another, whether unit members believe they are treated fairly, and the degree to which members feel unit leaders are concerned about their well-being. Considering that definition, Service members were asked: To what extent do unit climate factors affect their decision to stay or leave the military?

In 47 of the Service member focus groups there were some participants who believed that unit climate affects retention. Most groups had a mix of comments on unit climate. Positive comments were recorded in 79% of Service member groups, while negative comments were recorded in 98% of the groups. Details on their comments are provided below.

Exhibit II-11: All Service Member Focus Groups' Assessment of Unit Climate

Positive Unit Climates Factors	Number and Percent of Groups in Which Theme Emerged (n=47)	
Leadership is Positive	20	43%
Morale is High	18	38%
Harassment & Assault are Absent	14	30%
Treatment is Fair	12	26%
Trust is High	11	23%
Cohesion & Camaraderie are High	8	17%
Negative Unit Climates Factors	Number and Percent of Groups in Which Theme Emerged (n=47)	
Leadership is Negative	25	53%
Treatment is Differential	22	47%
Harassment & Assault are Present	19	40%
Trust is Low	16	34%
Morale is low	16	34%
Internal Conflict Exists	15	32%
Gender Issues Exist	13	28%
Respect, Recognition, Tolerance are Low	13	28%

Compared with all Service member focus groups, participants in female officer groups were less likely to stress negative unit climate themes. Perhaps because they have more direct responsibility for unit climate issues, or because they have more authority and status in the organization, female officers in DACOWITS focus groups appeared to perceive unit climate more favorably than their female enlisted counterparts.

Exhibit II-12: Female Officer Groups' Assessment of Unit Climate

Positive unit climates factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged	
	Female officer groups (n= 9)	
Leadership is Positive	4	44%
Harassment and Assault are Absent	3	33%
Morale is high	2	22%
Cohesion & Camaraderie are High	2	22%
Negative unit climate factors	Female officer groups (n= 9)	
Respect, Recognition, and Tolerance are Low	3	33%
Leadership is Negative	2	22%
Treatment is Differential	2	22%
Harassment and Assault are Present	2	22%
Trust is Low	2	22%
Internal Conflict Exists	2	22%

a. **Positive Or Negative Leadership**

Participants who spoke positively about leadership in their unit described a command that was willing to listen to and understand everyone, encouraged their education, and was fair and caring.

Participants who felt dissatisfied with leadership in their unit reported a command that was often out of touch with subordinates, only listened to and cared about everyone only to the extent that it benefited them, bestowed special treatment on some subordinates, or embarrassed and disrespected subordinates:

> "Leaders lose focus on what is going on in the unit. How can a commander know what is going on if you don't visit the work center?"
> —Female, Senior Officer, USAF

Some Service members felt dissatisfied with the level of respect and recognition they received from leadership and/or subordinates. Some in the lower ranks felt that their work was unappreciated and unrecognized, while some in the higher ranks felt that the newer generations of subordinates failed to respect leadership, their duties, and the core values of the military.

b. **High Or Low Morale**

In some groups, participants describing unit morale as high explained why they felt this way:

> "[It] has a lot to do with deployment. You're around each other all the time."
> —Female, Junior Enlisted, USAR

Participants describing unit morale as low felt that it was an indirect result of causes such as poor leadership, differential treatment, and lack of respect:

> "[I'm leaving the military because of] the changes in the [Coast Guard] in general. The overall command climate - there's nothing but hypocrisy."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USCG

c. **Absence Or Presence of Harassment And Assault**

The absence or presence of sexual harassment and/or assault was linked to unit climate in the focus groups. Participants in 40% of Service member focus groups stated that sexual harassment and sexual assault do occur:

> "I had a tech SGT [who] was a real bear for everyone on the flight. He said, 'If I wasn't married, I'd sleep with you.' He was my direct supervisor for a particular shift. It got to the point that I got other people involved. He made me feel really uncomfortable."
> — Female, Junior Enlisted, USAR

In 23% of Service member focus groups, participants indicated an explicit lack of harassment and assault in the unit:

"I don't think I've ever heard of anybody mentioning anything related to sexual assault or anything like that, and I've been here 8 years."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USAR

d. Fair Or Differential Treatment

Personnel in 27% of groups felt that there was differential treatment related to gender or other factors such as leadership's preferential treatment toward certain subordinates, especially regarding career opportunities:

"Females can't get on ships and aren't eligible for promotion because they can't get the sea time. They are behind the curve."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USCG

"If you're part of the clique, you get the best TDY/deployments."
—Male, Junior Enlisted, USAF

Twenty-five percent of the Service member focus groups contained at least one person who felt that people in the unit are treated fairly.

2. Research Findings

In the most recent DOD-wide Exit Survey (2000), female officers cited "quality of leadership" as the most important factor, that, "if improved" would have made them stay. The 2000 Exit Survey asked: "Which is the most important factor we could have improved that would have made you stay?" Female officers cited "quality of leadership" most frequently out of a list of 39 possible choices. Several factors essentially tied for the second most frequently cited factor: basic pay, level of manning in your unit, amount of enjoyment from your job, location or station of choice, amount of personal/family time you have, and co-location with military spouse.

F. CONCLUSION

The 2004 focus groups results, DoD data, and research findings were considered to address three major questions on retention:

- To what extent is the military losing personnel eligible to be retained?

- What factors contribute to their decision to leave?

- What policies or programs could improve retention?

All of the Service member focus groups conducted for the 2004 report contained participants who were eligible to remain in the Service and indicated they intended to do so. However, over half (57%) of these same groups had eligible participants who indicated they were planning to separate from their Service.

Differences in reported intentions to stay in the military were found by rank, gender, marital status, and family dependent status. Senior enlisted personnel were more likely to report an intention to stay over junior enlisted personnel. Male junior officers are more likely to report the intention to stay than their female counterparts. Officers with children, female or male, single or married were more likely to report an intention to stay than their peers without children. However, actual separation data indicate that officers with children separate at a higher rate than those without children, and that female officers with children separate at the highest rate.

Discrepancies between reported intentions to remain in the military and actual separation rates were examined in the focus groups to identify factors influencing the loss of personnel eligible to remain. Focus group participants identified several factors that negatively influence their decision to stay in the military. All focus groups identified the difficulty of balancing work and family as the number one reason for leaving the military. Other factors were identified as contributing to a decision to remain in the military. Notably, enjoyment of the military job was the number one reason given by all focus groups to remain in the Service. Several factors were seen as having a potential influence, either positively or negatively, on members undecided about the length of their military career.

In addition to focus groups recommendations, DACOWITS also reviewed best practices from the civilian sector and DoD policies and practices to identify ways to improve the retention of personnel eligible to be retained. Civilian sector best practices related to work and family balance have already been implemented by DoD and the Services under the *Social Compact* and other initiatives. Congress has also passed legislation increasing benefits and compensation.

The *Social Compact* initiatives and the investments made in the 1990s and early 2000s have helped sustain the current force levels. Recent initiatives and legislation are attempting to address retention and future personnel needs. The most recent recruiting data, discrepancies in reported career intention and actual retention, and the 2003 and 2004 focus group findings indicate, however, that continued efforts will be required to address Service member and family members' concerns in the areas of work/family balance, workload and schedule, relocation instability, and leadership climate— especially in the environment of high OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO associated with the GWOT. DoD could face increasing challenges to retain certain eligible personnel (e.g., female junior officers and enlisted) in some Services (e.g., Reserve components) at the required levels.

III. DEPLOYMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

Deployment and its impact on Service members and families continue to be areas of concern to DoD. The results of Service member focus groups and current research on support during deployment were published in the 2003 DACOWITS Annual Report. Due to the increasing pace of operational deployments, deployment remained a primary topic for DACOWITS in 2004. To support their continued interest in this area, DACOWITS received additional briefings during 2004 from all the Services on current and future deployments. DACOWITS sought to answer several questions of concern to DoD, including:

- What are the effects and challenges for Service members and families due to increased deployments?

- What solutions will make a difference to families and units?

- Does the military health care system adequately provide services for women throughout the deployment cycle?

- To what extent are units and other members impacted when some members are non-deployable or return early? What is the impact and how could that impact be mitigated?

In support of the GWOT, including Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and others, American military personnel are experiencing deployments of greater duration and frequency than was true prior to the events of September 11, 2001. For example, deployments of up to 12 months are common for ground forces supporting OIF. Additionally, members of the National Guard and Reserves —particularly those in critical specialties experiencing a shortage of personnel—are being asked to bear a substantial share of the workload during the GWOT and to temporarily put their civilian careers and goals on hold. Within both the Active and Reserve components, there is concern that frequent, lengthy and unpredictable deployments may have consequences for retention, morale and readiness.

B. IMPORTANT CHALLENGES FOR SERVICE MEMBERS AND FAMILIES

DACOWITS asked Service members and family members to identify the challenges they encountered during each phase of deployment. The most common 2004 deployment concerns are discussed below. In instances where these themes were significantly more important to members of the National Guard and Reserve, that is so noted. Where appropriate, research material is included to supplement the DACOWITS focus group information.

1. Responsibilities of Remaining Prepared

Cited in 78% of the focus groups, remaining prepared for a deployment emerged as the primary challenge that Service members and their families faced in the pre-deployment period. Participants frequently mentioned that it was the individual responsibility of Service members and family members to be ready for deployment:

> "This is the career you chose, so you must be ready for responsibilities."
> —Male, Senior Officer, USAF

> "You have to deal with the knowledge that you will be running the show."
> —Family Member, USCG

Some participants stressed that the pre-deployment process can run smoothly when Service members involve their support network in the process and are prepared:

> "We have a whole plan laid out: [my] family and friends are all pitching in."
> —Male, Senior Officer, Air Force

Participants in 17% of the focus groups identified the need to balance work and family as part of the pre-deployment process. Although single and married Service members viewed the issue differently, they still identified it as stressful. Some married Service members felt that the military did not understand their need to spend time with their families before deployment in order to ensure all that needed to be done for family preparedness was completed. Specifically, participants mentioned that the hectic pace preceding deployment was stressful and that the quantity of pre-deployment training limited time spent with family:

> "Three months gunnery, one month NTC, and then local back yard training. Worked until 9 to get ready to deploy. Even when we were home, we were not home."
> —Male, Senior Enlisted, USA

In contrast, some single Service members felt that the military did not respect their non-family obligations (e.g., education) as much as the family obligations of married members:

> "[P]arents can leave work early, whereas single people can't leave early if they have extra schoolwork to do. How can you put a value on that?"
> —Female, Junior Enlisted, USAF

2. Unpredictability

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

The impact of unpredictability in the timing of deployment was recorded in 59% of focus groups as a major challenge during the pre-deployment period. For some participants, the lack of advanced notification hindered adequate pre-deployment preparation, and left Service members and their loved ones feeling dissatisfied. One Marine Corps family member explained that her spouse's departure date kept changing, which was "extremely frustrating and hard on the kids."

Participants reported feeling distressed by the uncertainty of the deployment schedule or actual length of the deployment. Not knowing these details was difficult for both Service members and their families:

> "[He] should have been gone 90 days, [but] was gone for 178 days. We went through a lot of disappointments."
> —Family Member, USAF

Reservists also were frustrated by the lack of fixed deployment schedules, a theme echoed in 2003 DACOWITS focus groups as well as in the literature on military families and deployments:

> "It would be helpful if there was a set date for both coming and going."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USNR

As noted above, Service members cited timeline stabilization or the lack of a stable work schedules as problematic. Participants explained that it was extremely frustrating not knowing when you are coming or going, or having your deployment extended. Improving the predictability of the deployment was recommended in 31% of the focus groups, although participants often acknowledged that changes are unavoidable and were unable to make specific suggestions for solving this problem.

b. Research Findings

Military personnel rely on a number of methods to deal with the stress of deployment. Data from the March 2003 Status of Forces (SOF) survey indicate that Service members with recent deployment experience most frequently cite communication and predictability as important factors in their ability to cope with deployments (Exhibit III-1). "Ability to communicate with family" and "knowing the expected length of deployment" were rated as important or very important by 92% and 90%, respectively, of Service members with deployment experience or for whom a deployment was pending.[34] Related to the issue of predictability, 85% of Service members reported that pre-deployment information was important or very important in coping with deployment. In contrast, 48% described reunion planning information or classes as important or very important.

Exhibit III-1: How important are each of the following to you in being able to cope with deployments? *
(Percent of Service members reporting Important or Very important)

Category	Percent
Your ability to communicate with your family	92%
Knowing the expected length of the deployment	90%
Pre-deployment information	85%
Reunion planning information or classes	48%

(Bar chart with horizontal axis from 0% to 100% in increments of 20%)

* Source: March 2003 Status of Forces Survey of Active Duty Members: Tabulations of Responses. DMDC.

When asked to rate the importance of various factors in their family's ability to cope with deployment, results were very similar: ability to communicate with them (94%) and knowing the expected length of deployment (92%) were important or very important in helping their family cope. Other factors Service members considered important or very important for their families included pre-deployment information (81%) and contact with someone in the unit during deployment (80%). Service members again placed less emphasis on the importance of reunion planning information classes (50%) for their family members.

3. Impact on Children

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Participants in 45% of focus groups identified deployment as adversely affecting children's emotional well being, behavior, and school performance. Commonly observed problems among young children and teenagers included developing an insecure attachment, demonstrating a fear of loss, stunted academic progress, and displays of rebellion and confusion. One Marine Corps family member explained how deployment affected her eldest son, who joked that "Dad likes his younger son more" because his father had missed most of his older son's birthdays while being able to attend the younger son's birthday.

DACOWITS asked Service members and families to identify specific challenges for children in dealing with the deployment of a parent. Responses are grouped into three age groups: young children, school-age children, and teens. Many similarities emerged across these age groupings, but some age-specific trends were evident. Not all groups contained personnel with children who had experienced a deployment.

1. **The factors that most frequently emerged within the focus groups with respect to young children (those not yet attending school) were:**

   - Missing the absent parent or feelings of loss
   - Not understanding what was going on
   - Failure to recognize the deployed parent on return

Some participants felt that the strain of deployment was "tougher with younger children." Specifically, focus group members reported that it was difficult to explain deployment to young children. Young children missed the absent parent, sometimes feeling insecure or fearful. Several Service members explained that their young children did not recognize them when they returned from the deployment. In contrast, some parents of young children identified positive aspects of deployment for their children, such as the strengthening of extended family and community bonds:

> "I didn't have any issues when he was deployed. My daughter was like 'my dad's fighting the bad guys.' She was secure enough and she announced it one night when we were at Friendly's [for dinner]. The people were so nice and they paid for our meal."
> — Family Member, USA

2. **The factors that most frequently emerged within the focus groups with respect to school-aged children (those not yet teens) were:**

   - Declining academic performance
   - Discipline problems
   - Changing schools
   - Missing absent parent
   - Fear of loss

For these children, the primary problems identified by focus group members were related to school. Participants reported that the academic performance of some children declined and that others faced the challenges of changing schools.

Some participants reported discipline problems among this age group, and others noted that, like the young children, school-aged children experienced feelings of abandonment or fear of loss:

> "[My] 9 year-old was the worst one. He understands a lot more than the other ones. He was scared and said, 'Dad, don't die.'"
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USAR

Some participants stressed the support they received with their school-aged children during this difficult time:

> "Thank god, we had male teachers for my kids…it helped a bunch. Now, since I've been back they [my children] check to see if I'm in bed at night."
> — Male, Senior Enlisted, USA

3. **The factors that most frequently emerged within the focus groups with respect to teens were:**

   - Discipline problems
   - Missing the absent parent
   - Declining academic performance

Generally speaking, focus group members agreed that "there's a lot of rebellion and confusion among teens," and for some, deployment seemed to exacerbate discipline problems:

> "My teenager was suspended from school the last two times the Coast Guard was deployed."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USCG

Other discipline problems included "acting out," "not listening," and "staying out late and missing curfew." Focus group participants also reported that some teens had difficulty emotionally adjusting to a Service member's absence:

> "Mom, how are we going to survive with Dad and my younger sister with you gone?"
> (son of senior enlisted female)
> — Female, Senior Enlisted, USAF

> "My oldest just doesn't want to do anything. A lot of it is they are used to you being there and when you are gone they feel abandoned."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USMC

b. Research Findings

Children growing up in today's military families are doing so in a period characterized by longer, more frequent and more unpredictable deployments than in the past several decades, making it important to continue to assess the impact of deployment on the well-being of military children.[35] While the effects of deployments during GWOT have yet to be determined, several studies using pre-GWOT data have addressed the topic more generally. Most of these studies have found a significant negative relationship between deployment-related parental absence and one or more aspects of children's well-being.

Psychologist Michelle Kelly and colleagues recently completed a longitudinal study of deploying Navy mothers and their children.[36] The study examined:

- The effect of deployment on children's rates of internalizing behaviors (e.g., fear, sadness, over-controlled reactions) and/or externalizing behaviors (e.g., aggression, non-compliance, under-controlled reactions), compared with children of non-deployed mothers

- The effect of deployment on mother-child attachment and on maternal separation anxiety.

Kelly and colleagues surveyed 71 deploying Navy mothers of young children (average age of 3) and their primary childcare providers prior to and after, the deployment. This longitudinal study began in 1996, and researchers continued to collect data for several years. A control group of 83 non-deploying Navy mothers were also surveyed during the same period. Results indicated that children of deployed mothers exhibited higher levels of internalizing behavior than those whose mothers were assigned shore duty, and childcare providers (but not Navy mothers in the deployment group) also reported higher rates of externalizing behaviors from the children than did non-deployed Navy mothers. About 12% of children of deployed mothers exhibited internalizing behavior scores in the clinical range, compared to 1% of children of non-deployed mothers.

When asked what effects the deployment had on the family, about 38% of these deployed Navy mothers reported that the deployment was stressful for the family, and 25% felt their child had emotional difficulty with the event. In contrast, about one-third of deployed mothers believed the deployment had a positive effect on their children. Examples of positive effects included getting to spend more time with grandparents, and helping the child to mature or grow up. Researchers did note, however, that, "in contrast to older children [with deployed parents] whose behavior could be expected to improve, young children's behavior did not improve over time".[37]

In a separate study examining children's responses to parental separation during the first Gulf War, Jensen et al. found that children whose parents had deployed exhibited higher levels of depression compared to children whose military parent did not deploy. No differences between children of non-deployed and deployed military parents were found with respect to other potentially negative outcomes however, including child anxiety and behavior problems. Similar to the Kelly et al. study, Jensen and colleagues found that younger children were more vulnerable to the negative effects of deployment than older children.[38]

4. Childcare Arrangements and Issues

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Forty-six percent of focus groups contained participants who identified childcare as a pre-deployment challenge. Creating and implementing family care plans is stressful for Service members and their families. Preparing both themselves and their children for the impending deployment is an aspect of this theme. As one member explained the most difficult part of the pre-deployment process was:

"…trying to prepare my child that I would be gone for 6 months."
Female, Senior Enlisted, USMC

Childcare issues related to being part of a dual military household were also raised and included both the frustration of making childcare arrangements on base, the worry that both parents might be deployed simultaneously, and issues related to childcare when the non-deployed spouse was required to work extended hours, mid-shifts or nights while the second parent was deployed.

During deployment the issue of childcare continued. Related to the challenge of balancing work and family responsibilities was the issue of the impact of deployment on children, a theme that emerged in 63% of the focus groups. The quality, availability, reliability, and cost of childcare and/or youth activities continued to challenge Service members during the deployment period.

b. Research Findings

The Department of Defense operates the nation's largest employer-sponsored childcare system, serving more than 200,000 children daily. Availability of childcare space to meet Service member needs is a continuing challenge for DoD. The Services are experiencing a shortfall of approximately 40K spaces. The effort to expand childcare through construction resulted in only three total projects in FY03 and FY04. Additionally realignment from overseas bases to already full capacity bases in the United States will potentially create an even greater shortfall. Through a new initiative, however, all Services are testing ways to expand child development spaces by partnering with civilian centers and homes to bridge the gap between the current available spaces and the projected demand. While testing will be at limited sites, the partnerships forged and the types of agreements made may assist with expanding spaces and meeting the long-term need for quality care.[39] The need for care for children of Service members returning from deployment is offered through expansion of regular programs and services.

5. Administrative Problems

Completing administrative requirements emerged as a pre-deployment concern in 41% of the focus groups. Specific pre-deployment administrative challenges that were cited included:

■ Managing financial matters, such as arranging how bills would be paid
■ Making legal arrangements, such as power of attorney and a will

In support of this idea, one member explained that the hardest part of pre-deployment is dealing with:

"family issues [such as] wills, getting set to pay all the bills, and doing a transfer of credit cards if necessary."
—Female, Senior Officer, USNR

The theme of administrative problems continued through the actual deployment phase and emerged in 32% of the focus groups. Issues most frequently mentioned were problems related to managing finances, exercising powers of attorney, using healthcare benefits, obtaining basic pay, and searching for housing.

Participants in 29% of the focus groups suggested the need to improve administrative procedures, including those related to healthcare, special pay, and travel preparations. Service members mentioned that better planning was needed in general. With regard to comments about special pay, it was suggested that the military make sure that those receiving Basic Allowance for Subsistence continue to receive it, and that family separation payments be made prior to the deployment.

6. Communication

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Communication issues were recorded as a pre-deployment concern in 24% of groups. Disseminating information and establishing points-of-contact were the issues most often cited, although focus group members were also concerned about the communication between spouses and within families during deployment. Both the quality and quantity of information concerned family members. Participants explained that Service members "do not always bring home the right information," or "forget to pass on deployment information to their spouses." Service members also commented on the challenge of internal family communications during the pre-deployment process.

> "When I go away, I have a lot of clarification to do with my family. You try to put them in a comfort zone, [but] there is an unending [number of] questions that come to you."
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USAR

Communication problems also emerged during the deployment phase. Comments related to communication, such as the following, were recorded in 68% of the focus groups:

> "Communications are either very brief or non-existent."
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USA

Family members identified specific communication issues, including the frustration of trying to separate rumors from truth, and the inadequacy or unavailability of e-mail and satellite telephones. Some family members were frustrated with being unable to obtain details about the deployment and their Service member's physical well being or whereabouts. One Marine Corps spouse said that her most difficult challenge during deployment was "not being able to communicate" with her spouse. Another assessed communication during deployment more positively:

> "It's good to have access to cheap phone cards…e-mail is great, especially in Europe [and] Family Readiness has e-mail access and video phone"
> — Family Member, USAR

When it came to making recommendations for improving communications, participants in 27% of the focus groups recommended improvements within the military organization. They suggested improving the quality of communication between leadership and Service members and their families.

> "Squadron leaders need to get to know people better."
> —Male, Senior Office, USAF

> "People in charge don't seem to know what they are doing or communicating what is happening."
> —Family Member, USMC

b. Research Findings

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) recently conducted a research study aimed at identifying gaps in military family-support best practices, and the role of non-profits and civilian community organizations in serving the military community during current deployments.[40] The 2004 study, entitled "*Serving the Home Front*" and funded by Sears, collected data from Service members, military family members, support providers, and literature. The study incorporated a web survey of military family members and Service members from all four DoD Service branches and the Coast Guard. Survey respondents reflected a wide range of military experience, rank, and years of service from both the Active and Reserve components. Several key findings from the NMFA survey are highlighted below.

Among its major findings, the NMFA's study recommendations emphasized the need for informed, clear and proactive communication between Service members, military families, commanders, units, and service providers. NMFA findings stressed that broad-based, proactive communication and information sharing can help ensure program coordination— a key element needed to support military families during deployment. Researchers also suggested that the military should provide standardized, continuous training at all echelons, including, but not limited to, commanders, representatives, support providers, and family members. This will help ensure the consistent functioning and utilization of military family programs and services.[41]

Additional conclusions from the NMFA study included the following:

- Strong partnerships among and between military and community agencies are critical to ensure family and Service member's access to programs and services that meet needs arising from challenges due to deployment

- The outpouring of community spirit, good will, and resources fills gaps in military family support services for all military families, but especially for isolated families and non-ID card holders.[42]

7. Adjustment to Lifestyle and Role Changes

Difficulty in adjusting to lifestyle and role changes, recorded in 77% of the focus groups, was the primary challenge for participants during the deployment. Specifically, participants reported experiencing emotional adjustment problems that included loneliness, depression, isolation, and fear of loss. One mid-grade enlisted male in the Air Force explained that his wife "lost her sense of security" while he was gone. There were some participants, however, who expressed comfort in adapting to the role changes caused by deployments.

Service member participants explained that they needed to adjust to a host of job-related factors such as increased workload and "new leadership at deployed location." Participants also experienced problems adjusting to both foreign environments and cultures, citing difficulties with time zone changes, weather patterns, remote locations, cultural differences and language barriers.

8. Administrative and Financial Issues

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Administrative and financial issues were recorded in 34% of focus groups. Participants in 18% of focus groups described financial challenges, including reports of spouses mismanaging fiscal accounts during the deployment. For example, one Service member explained that while she was activated, her husband took over the responsibility of paying their bills:

> "My accounts were screwed up when I got back. It took 3 months to get [it straightened] out."
> —Female, Junior Enlisted, USAR

Less frequently mentioned administrative issues included:

- Amount of time spent in-processing and debriefing
- Problems with civilian jobs
- Inadequacy and unavailability of healthcare

Participants in 73% of Reserve focus groups experienced administrative or financial problems post-deployment, particularly with respect to their civilian employment.

> "[My] employer didn't have enough information and [it was] difficult [for him] not knowing when I was coming back."
> — Male Junior Enlisted, USAFR

One Reserve family member—who expressed that her family had no difficulties financially but that others did—offered the following:

> "Make a suggestion that when you go back – if the Defense Department could come up with some kind of incentive program for employers, to help employers take better care of activated soldiers…"
> — Family Member, USAR

Another family member suggested that, in her spouse's unit:

> "… the rotational AD (Active duty) tours [are] too hard on families and employers/creditor relations.
> — Family Member, USAR

b. Research Findings

As Citizen-Soldiers, most National Guard and Reserve personnel must balance their citizen employment obligations with their military duties and responsibilities. Although 66% of reservists surveyed for the *May 2003 Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Members* experienced no change in their income due to mobilization (Exhibit III-2), extended deployments are becoming financially difficult for some members of the National Guard and Reserve and their families. Most members must leave their civilian jobs when activated, and some have

reported losing their civilian employment and/or health benefits, taking pay cuts, or giving up hard-earned assets as a result of mobilization.[43] Although the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) of 1994 requires that National Guard and Reserve members be re-hired when the mobilization is over, these job protections do not apply when there are company-wide layoffs.

For family members of the National Guard and Reserve, major changes in a Service member's civilian job status or pay can impact overall family income, and can have direct and immediate consequences on the spouse's own employment. For example, the spouse might be required to change their work schedule, leave a job to provide childcare, or address other circumstances resulting from the Service member's prolonged absence.

Surveys of National Guard and Reserve personnel who have recently experienced a mobilization indicate that civilian income loss is not uncommon. Data from the May 2003 *Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Members* shown in Exhibit III-2 indicate that, among members who had experienced a mobilization within the past 2 years, 26% reported losing some family income from a civilian job (sum of bottom three bars in Exhibit III-2), and 13% reported losing more than $1000 per month (sum of bottom two bars in Exhibit III-2). These results are similar to those obtained from the *2002 Survey of Spouses of Activated National Guard and Reserve Component Members*, in which one-third of spouses reported a family income loss as a result of mobilization.[44]

Exhibit III-2: How much was the monthly increase/decrease in your (and your spouse's) civilian income?*

Category	Percentage
Increased $2,501 or more	1%
Increased $1,001-$2,500	2%
Increased $1-$1,000	5%
No change	66%
Decreased $1-$1000	13%
Decreased $1,001-$2,500	8%
Decreased $2,501 or more	5%
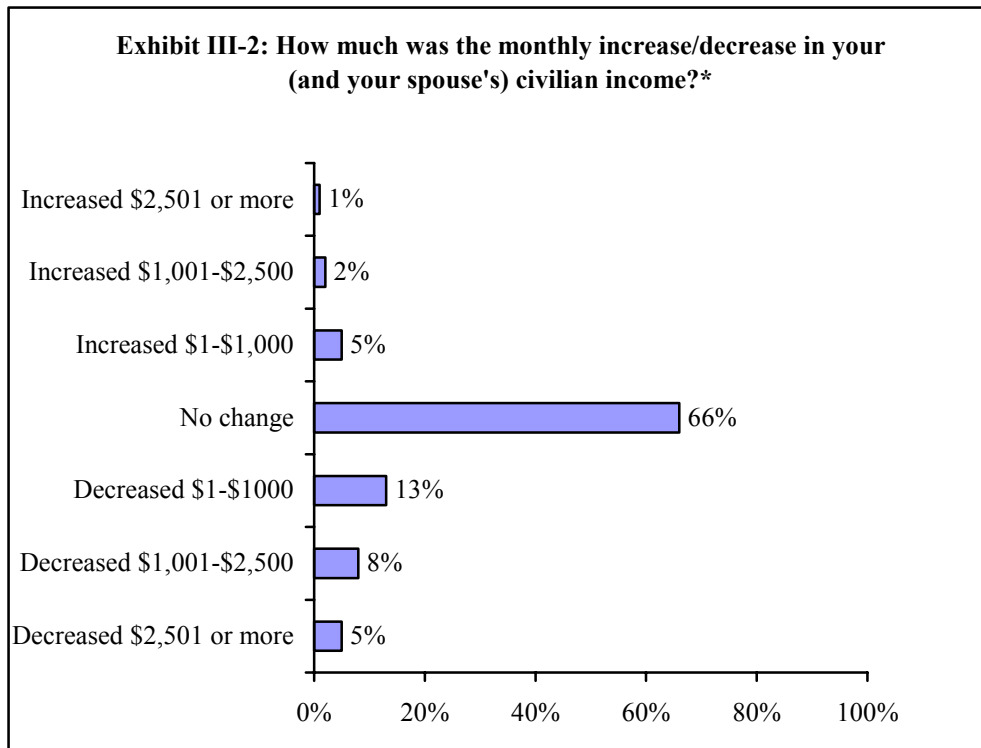
* Source: May 2003 Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Members: Tabulations of Responses.

One consequence of income loss experienced by National Guard and Reserve families is that some may have difficulty keeping up with mortgage payments while the member is mobilized. Delegates to the 2003 Conference of the Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) recently identified mortgage relief for National Guard and Reserve families as one of the most important issues currently faced by Army families. They recommended that mortgage relief be accomplished through an amendment to the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act. The amendment would be written to ensure affected families could defer the difference between the existing mortgage obligation on the family's primary residence and the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) while mobilized.[45]

9. Support Programs

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Participants in 23% of the focus groups reported dissatisfaction with the adequacy and availability of support services during deployment. These participants cited several different reasons why there wasn't a good support group in place for the people who remained behind:

- Family readiness groups and units did not always greet new families who arrived after the main body of Service members had departed

- Some Service members in certain career fields who deployed individually reported there were no family support groups in place for their family members

- Base-oriented formal and informal support networks sometimes unintentionally excluded those living off base or spouses in dual military families.

Participants in 46% of focus groups recommended improving support programs for spouses and families of deployed Service members. In making these recommendations, some family members discussed the isolation they felt from the lack of Active spouse groups and family activities. One family member whose spouse was in the Reserve component explained that "there was a regrettable lack of interest on the part of the base in the welfare of the families." She suggested that it would be relatively easy for the base to change that perception:

"Rent a bowling alley. Invite these women and their kids, and give 'em a piece of pizza."
—Family Member, USAFR

Echoing these comments, another Reserve component family member elaborated on the need to include spouses in post-deployment activities.

"After the return, there was a party and the wives were not invited. We greet these men as heroes and the base says, 'Who's that woman? She took care of our kids, let's ignore her!'"
—Family Member, USAFR

One focus group member complimented the military's new information program, One Source:

"The Army does have a good program "One Source." That's a pretty tight system."
—Male, Senior Enlisted, USA

Eighteen percent of Reserve focus groups contained at least one person who reported insufficient support as a post-deployment challenge. Some participants in Reserve focus groups report that they lacked support from leadership, and/or that the military programs and services provided inadequate support during post-deployment:

"[There was] no leadership at the general level to deal with post deployment [issues]."
—Female, Senior Officer, USNR

When we heard about the flight crews coming home, we heard of parties, etc. It just exacerbated the fact that nobody came to greet us. I know it's hard to do it for individuals. It just would have made such an impact. 'Ok, so I guess our mission didn't mean anything.'"
—Female, Junior Enlisted, USAR

b. Research Findings

Though research has shown that military family members most frequently utilize informal resources (e.g., friends and relatives) as their first line of support[46], each Service has developed numerous formal programs to enhance family adaptation during deployment. A number of military family programs (e.g., Army Family Team Building and Family Readiness Groups) and services have been found to be effective at strengthening the self-reliance and coping skills of spouses who choose to participate.

Unfortunately, available data indicate that military family support programs are underutilized and lack widespread participation by spouses. For example, in their recent study examining Army spouse integration into the military community, Burell and colleagues analyzed survey results completed by several hundred Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve spouses.[47] These researchers found that, while 88% of Active component spouses reported their soldier's unit had an FRG, 43% said they do not attend.

Similarly, the 57% of Active component Army spouses reported they had not taken Army Family Team Building program (AFTB) training, and only 44% reported they were friends with another spouse in the unit. Not surprisingly, Army National Guard or Army Reserve spouses reported much lower participation and military community integration than spouses from the Active components (Exhibit III-3).

Exhibit III-3: Indicators of integration into military life among Active component Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard spouses*

Integration Indicator	Active Component Army Spouses	Army Reserve Spouses	Army National Guard Spouses
Yes, my soldier's unit does have FSG.	88%	52%	54%
I do not attend FSG meetings.	43%	86%	79%
I have not taken AFTB training	57%	77%	83%
I have no friends who are unit spouses	44%	76%	53%

* Source: Burrell, L., Durand, D.B., & Fortado, J. (2003). "Military community integration and its effect on well-being and retention." *Armed Forces & Society* 30: pg. 15.

Burell and colleagues reported low levels of community integration for all three groups of spouses, but concluded that the more the spouse was integrated with the larger military community, the more likely she/he was supportive of the Service member's decision to remain in the military.

c. Research Findings On Support Programs Used By National Guard and Reserve Units

In addition to distance, lack of awareness of available resources is another challenge to efforts to support family members of National Guard and Reserve personnel during deployments. Based on data from the *2002 Survey of Spouses of Activated National Guard and Reserve Component Members*, lack of awareness is the major factor in the relatively low attendance of Reserve spouses at pre-activation briefings: of nearly 4000 military spouses of National Guard and Reserve members called to Active duty, 52% reported they were not aware that such a briefing had taken place. An additional 13% reported they were invited, but did not attend.[48] To raise awareness and improve deployment support within these communities of Reserve component families, study recommendations included maintaining a goal of 100% contact with spouses, and emphasizing that Reserve and Guard units "establish ownership of every family via their family readiness programs." [49]

Connecting Reserve component families, who live across America, with the services they need presents a particular challenge. An aggressive effort to reach Reserve families is under way. In October 2002, DoD created the Joint Family Readiness Working Group to share strategies, identify gaps in service, and review lessons learned. Since that time, the Joint Family Readiness Working Group has promoted the sharing of best practices and pushed to increase mutual support across Service and component boundaries. Moreover, this joint vision has spread to all levels of the Reserve components, leading to an increase in shared support and joint practices at the unit level. This collaboration has contributed to increased overall support for vital family readiness programs to assist Guard and Reserve families, including the establishment of approximately 400 National Guard Family Assistance Centers to augment the family support resources. At the same time, the National Guard has taken the lead in supporting families that are geographically isolated from military installations, working through 54 state and territory offices to provide family support and training. Unit Family Readiness Groups, staffed by volunteers, actively maintain communication with families in outlying areas through newsletters, web sites, and direct communication to enhance unit-to-family communication.[50]

10. Reunion and Readjustment

a. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Participants in 90% of focus groups identified reunion and readjustment as the major challenge of post-deployment. While participants reported problems adapting to lifestyle changes (e.g., slower tempo, different structure), the major difficulty was reestablishing relationships and family dynamics. For example, participants described the reintegration of Service members into the family routine and the renegotiation of household responsibilities as challenging. Several Service members expressed concern that their younger children no longer recognized them, or continued to rely only on the non-deployed parent.

Some Service members expressed sensitivity to these issues, suggesting that efforts by military personnel services and support providers to educate the force about the challenges of reunion have been effective:

"I had to know if there were any new rules for the kids. I'm just going to sit back and learn from my wife about how things have been adapting. I want to flow seamlessly back into family life; I don't want to disrupt things."
—Male, Senior Enlisted, USAF

b. Research Findings

Among the most recent research on the effect of deployment on Service members is a study on the impact of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan on the mental health of U.S. Army and Marine Corps personnel, and the potential barriers to mental health care for combat veterans. This study, led by psychiatrists and other specialists from the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and reported in the July 2004 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, involved surveys of more than 6000 members of four combat infantry units. Three of the four units were surveyed both prior to, and after, the deployment.

The researchers found that "the percentage of study participants whose responses met the screening criteria indicating the presence of major depression, generalized anxiety or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was significantly higher after duty in Iraq (15.6% to 17.1%) than after duty in Afghanistan (11.2%) or before deployment to Iraq (9.3%)." [51] The study also found that between 23% and 40% of personnel whose responses indicated a probable mental disorder actually sought treatment; an outcome that the authors noted is also common in the civilian sector. Among reasons for not seeking treatment, Soldiers and Marines reported that seeking mental health services is stigmatizing. For example, among those respondents who screened positive for mental health disorders (i.e., those most in need of mental health treatment), nearly two-thirds agreed they "would be perceived as weak"(65%) if they sought help, or their "unit leadership might treat [them] differently" (63%).

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11. Leave

Participants in 14% of focus groups identified the lack of post-deployment leave or vacation time as a challenge, explaining that not being able to take leave hindered the ability to re-connect with families and generally readjust to post-deployment life.

Eighteen percent of Reserve focus groups contained at least one person who reported insufficient leave time as a post-deployment challenge. For some individual participants, lack of rest and relaxation meant not having a break between deployment and redeployment:

"In some situations, [you're] being deployed and then [you come] back and then [you're] deployed again quickly. [There's] never time to adjust and your personal tempo is always high."
— Female, Senior Officer, USAFR

"When I got back, the difficult part was that I didn't get any time off. If you didn't take your leave while you were on orders, you had to sell your leave back, and you couldn't take any time off. The AD got 2 weeks off. It's the same letter that I read in '00, but they said you're a Reservist. Anybody in AD who was deployed over 90 days got 10 days off."
—Female, Senior Enlisted USAR

C. UNIQUE DEPLOYMENT CHALLENGES FOR FEMALE SERVICE MEMBERS

During the discussion of challenges that emerged during deployment, DACOWITS focus group leaders asked female Service members to identify those issues or hardships that they felt were unique to women. The themes that most frequently emerged are shown in Exhibit III-4.

Exhibit III-4: Deployment Challenges for Female Service members

Factors	Number and percent of groups in which theme emerged (n =29)	
Healthcare and Hygiene	24	83%
Differential Treatment	12	50%

1. Health And Hygiene

The adequacy and availability of healthcare and related hygiene issues emerged as the predominant factor, reported in 83% of the focus groups in which this question was posed. Specifically, participants cited problems obtaining proper medical care and various female hygiene products.

Participants also mentioned the lack of shower and rest facilities both on the installation and during the trip to the installation:

"If you have to fly on a C-130 for 3 days and in between eat and drink, but not drink before getting on the plane since there aren't facilities - yes, that is a problem."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USAR

2. Differential Treatment

Another factor that emerged in response to this question related to differential treatment. Female participants in 50% of focus groups explained that they encountered differential treatment:

> "It was like being exposed to an old boys' club."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USA

> "No one should be put in the same situation that I was as the only female…people need to be trained on how to interact with different genders."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USCG

As a recommendation for future deployments, some female Service members seemed to feel that increasing female support, particularly in senior ranks, would alleviate this problem:

> "[H]aving a senior female go along would help some females who would like to talk to a female versus a male."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USMC

D. EFFECT OF EARLY RETURNS ON INDIVIDUAL AND UNIT MORALE

DACOWITS asked Service members if personnel returning home early from a deployment for personal reasons (e.g., emergency leave, pregnancy) had an effect on individual and unit morale. In 62% of the groups a negative effect was cited. Within those sessions in which Service members elaborated on why early returns and inability to deploy had a negative impact, the most common reasons were:

- Early returns leave units understaffed, which increases personal workload for the remaining members of the unit

- There is a sense of differential treatment.

As one focus group participate stated:

> "We have to pick up the slack of some members"
> —Male, Senior Enlisted, USAF

In 30% of the groups, at least one person claimed that early returns do not affect morale. The most common reasons were:

- One needs to put oneself in another's shoes

- Allowing emergency leave helps morale.

Those who expressed this view argued that they would want the same consideration if they faced a personal need to return home early. Interestingly, one member of an Army focus group felt that leave could sometimes help boost unit morale, at least on the home front:

> "During the year I spent in Korea, I got environmental leave. We went to an FRG and talked about our mission. I gave them more information in 30 days than they received in 6 months. That helped morale."
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USA

A substantial portion of participants explained that the specific situation determines the impact of an early return on morale, listing these reasons most frequently:

- Depends on the situation or reason

- Depends on leadership.

E. CONCLUSION

Due to the increased tempo and long-term commitments for our military in regions around the world, DACOWITS studied deployment issues in 2003 and 2004. Preparedness was found to be an ongoing issue both for the families and the Service members. While all members encounter hardships in trying to prepare simultaneously for their military mission and for the subsequent family separation, National Guard and Reserve personnel often have special problems because they do not always have easy access to family readiness and support programs and because of obligations to their civilian job. Although significant progress has been made, communications and the availability of childcare continue to be a concern of Service members during all phases of deployment.

The Committee studied the impact of separation on children. Due to its complexity, this topic will continue into 2005. Existing programs that address the reunion and readjustment phases of deployment are perceived as having a mixed benefit for Service members. The time required to fulfill the requirements of these programs are often seen as burdensome. However, to ensure the long-term health of Service members, requirements such as mental health assessments must be enforced during the post-deployment phase. The Committee gathered comments on other topics that present challenges to leadership including: administrative and financial, health and hygiene and early returns. These topics must be dealt with by leadership in a manner that addresses their readiness and preparedness impact on Service members and their units during all phases of the deployment.

IV. SEXUAL ASSAULT

A. INTRODUCTION

"I am concerned about the recent reports regarding allegations of Sexual Assaults on Service
members deployed to Iraq and Kuwait. Sexual Assault will not be tolerated in the Department of
Defense. Commanders at every level have a duty to take appropriate steps to prevent sexual
assaults, protect victims, and hold those who commit offenses accountable."
—Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense[52]

Prompted by concerns over how the military has handled sexual assault within the ranks, the
DoD has undertaken a variety of aggressive actions to improve its policies and protocol. On
February 10, 2004 the Secretary of Defense directed the creation of DoD Task Force on Care for
Victims of Sexual Assault (2004 DoD Task Force) to investigate "how the Department handles
treatment of and care for victims of sexual assault."[53]

Since many of the reports concerned allegations of sexual assault in the current combat theater of
operations, the Army opened an investigation and issued The Acting Secretary of the Army's
Task Force Report on Sexual Assault Policies. Additionally, in response to allegations of sexual
assault at the Air Force Academy, at Hickam Air Force Base and in the Air Force's Pacific
Command, the Secretary of the Air Force instituted a service wide investigation.

The Air Force Academy allegations also prompted Congress to establish the panel to review
Sexual Misconduct Allegations at the Air Force Academy (Fowler Commission). This panel of
experts reviewed the sexual misconduct policies and practices in place at the Academy and
assessed the adequacy and effectiveness of the response of military leadership. More recently,
Congress established the Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Task Force to review the other
academies with follow-on-duties to review DoD policies for sexual assault. In September 2004,
to implement the 2004 DoD Task Force recommendations the Under Secretary of Defense
(Personnel and Readiness) established the Joint Task Force for Sexual Assault Prevention and
Response (JTF SAPR) led by a Brigadier General. On the 4th of January 2005, DoD announced
the extensive policy change recommended by the JTF SAPR. The new sexual assault policy
covers eleven core areas and addresses many of the issues that Service members mentioned to
DACOWITS members during focus groups, which are discussed in this chapter. One area that
still needs to be resolved concerns opportunities for victims to report sexual assault without
initiating a criminal investigation.

Because of the importance of this issue to the well-being and retention of military women, the
Department of Defense requested that DACOWITS provide insight and recommendations.   This
chapter of the DACOWITS report briefly summarizes data and findings on the prevalence of
sexual assault in the military and addresses a variety of ways to combat it. Section B discusses
the difficulty created by confusing and differing definitions of sexual assault. Section C
addresses the extent of the problem. Section D details barriers to reporting. Section E examines
resources, and section F investigates prevention. DACOWITS sought to answer questions of
concern to DoD that include:

- To what extent are military members reporting incidents of sexual assault, and if not, why? How can the process be improved?

- How can the victims of sexual assault best be helped? How can the climate of trust necessary to ensure reporting of sexual assault be enhanced or created?

- What can be done to reduce the number of sexual assaults on military members?

B. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

DACOWITS research confirms the conclusion of the 2004 DoD Task Force that lack of clarity across the Services in definitions, in the types of sexual assault information collected, and in reporting standards and procedures makes it more difficult to provide appropriate care for victims and to bring military offenders to justice.[54] Their report suggests that "there is considerable inconsistency in the legal and behavioral definition of terms such as sexual assault…"[55] The majority of those the task force interviewed did not clearly understand what sexual assault is and what it is not. Particularly troubling was the confusion about the difference between sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual assault among those interviewed— including members of the chain of command, victims, legal personnel and law enforcement representatives. The same term may be used variably within and between DoD, the services, and federal and civilian agencies. Investigators noted several major problems related to lack of standardization. When investigating sexual assault allegations at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, for example, the Pacific Command and the Air Force in general had no common standard for reporting sexual assault, which in turn affected their ability to keep track of the data.

For purposes of law enforcement, the military Services apply those definitions of offenses that are listed in the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) including: "any of several sexual offenses in which there is no lawful consent. The sexual offenses are rape, forcible sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault, or an attempt to commit any of these offenses."[56] This definition is currently under review. Definitions of sexual assault in the civilian sector tend to be broader than the UCMJ, and encompass a wider range of victimizations distinct from rape or attempted rape. According to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) annually administered by the Department of Justice, sexual assault includes completed or attempted attacks involving unwanted sexual contact between the victim and offender, and that may or may not involve force, grabbing or fondling.[57]

Because confusion in applying the various definitions of this criminal conduct has presented significant challenges for DoD, the 2004 DoD Task Force recommended that a working group of military and civilian experts be convened to arrive at a uniform standard. The newly formed Task Force for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response will establish a single definition to provide clarity for all of the individuals and agencies involved.

C. AWARENESS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

1. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

The prevalence of sexual assault is difficult to quantify because of confusion over the definition and the reluctance to report incidents. In our focus groups, we attempted to capture the extent of the problem in terms of awareness. In order to ensure consistency in data collection, the DACOWITS members conducting the 2004 focus groups provided the participants with the following clarification of what was meant by sexual assault:

"Any of several sexual offenses in which there is no lawful consent. For the purposes of this definition, the sexual offenses are rape, forcible sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault, or an attempt to commit any of these offenses."[58]

DACOWITS moderators asked Service members if, considering the above definition, they were aware of incidents of sexual assault in their unit, at their installation or during deployment. In nearly all Service member groups, regardless of gender composition, at least some participants reported that they were aware of incidents of sexual assault, but the response to this question also showed some gender differences. Fifty percent of male groups contained participants who reported that they were not aware of incidents, while only 18% of female groups had members who reported not being aware of an incident of sexual assault.

Regardless of Service branch, the large majority of focus groups contained one or more participants who were aware of sexual assault occurring at the unit, on the installation, or on deployment. A somewhat smaller percentage (70%) of Guard and Reserve groups contained participants who were aware of sexual assault occurring in the military, probably due to the smaller amount of time these personnel have spent on Active or Reserve duty. Awareness of assault was expressed in all grades. Within each rank group, more focus groups contained participants who were aware of sexual assaults than contained participants who were not aware of sexual assaults.

During focus groups, DACOWITS moderators attempted to determine, from those participants who expressed awareness of an assault, whether the incident was reported to authorities or went unreported. Not all participants had knowledge about the outcome of incidents. In each Service, as well as in the Guard and Reserve, a large number of groups contained Service members who were aware of reported assaults.

2. Research Findings

The 2004 DoD Task Force asked the individual Services to provide the total number of alleged sexual assaults in which a Service member was a victim and which were reported to investigators in 2002 and 2003. The Services "reported a total of 1007 victims in 2002 and 1113 in 2003, translating to 69 and 70 sexual assaults per 100,000 Service members during each respective period".[59]

In each of the Services, reported rates of sexual assault against women were less than 5%, with no statistically significant differences in rates found across the Service branches. Rates of sexual assault against female Active duty personnel varied by pay grade, with junior enlisted women reporting the highest rate of sexual assault (5%). Rates among this group of Service members have declined since 1995 (10% in 1995 vs. 5% in 2002). Rates of reported sexual assaults among female senior enlisted personnel fell from 3% in 1995 to 1% in 2002. The percentage of female Service members reporting they had been sexually assaulted dropped by half from 6% in 1995 to 3% in 2002, according to the *Armed Forces 2002 Sexual Harassment Survey.*[60]

Although each of the individual Services experienced a significant decline in rates of sexual assault against female Service members, the sharpest drop occurred among female personnel in the Army (9% in 1995 vs. 3% in 2002). The percentage of male Service members in DoD reporting they had been sexually assaulted remained unchanged at 1% between survey periods.[61]

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reports that, based on data from their 1.7 million patients, about 22% of women veterans using VA have experienced military sexual trauma (MST). It is important to note that the VA defines MST as sexual harassment that is threatening in nature, or sexual assault.[62] Though they may not be representative of all female veterans, in a recent survey of more than 3600 female veterans using VA healthcare, 23% reported a history of sexual assault while on Active duty.[63]

DoD Central Registry uses common report forms (DD 2486) to report incidents of sexual assault. However, reporting practices lack uniform interpretation and implementation among the Services and across installations. This impedes the military's ability to collect timely and reliable data and to effectively monitor and evaluate victim support programs that utilize these report forms.

D. BARRIERS TO REPORTING SEXUAL ASSAULT

1. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings

Service member participants in DACOWITS focus groups identified a large number of barriers that they believe inhibit the reporting of sexual assault in the military. These barriers are shown below in Exhibit IV-1, in the order of frequency with which they were recorded across groups. Also shown in the exhibit is the distribution of themes by gender composition of the groups.

Exhibit IV-1: Perceived Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault: All Groups and by Gender Composition

Factors	All groups Number and percent of groups in which factor emerged (n =47)		By gender			
			Female groups (n=36)		Male groups (n =11)	
Fear of repercussions	37	79%	29	81%	8	73%
Confidentiality, confidence, privacy, trust	29	62%	22	61%	7	64%
Career-related concerns	21	45%	16	44%	5	45%
Distrust of Leadership	18	38%	14	39%	4	36%
Gossip, "bad reputation", and stigma	14	30%	13	36%	1	9%
Nature of investigation/reporting process	12	26%	9	25%	3	27%
Shame, embarrassment, self-blame	9	19%	6	17%	3	27%
"Don't want to get someone in trouble"	4	9%	3	8%	1	9%
Believe credibility will be questioned	4	9%	4	11%	0	0%
Ignorance	4	9%	4	11%	0	0%

As Exhibit IV-1 indicates, most factors were recorded with similar frequency in male and female groups. The exceptions were "gossip, bad reputation, and stigma," "believe their credibility will be questioned," and "ignorance," which were less likely to be mentioned in male groups. Each factor in Exhibit IV-1 is briefly discussed below:

a. Fear of Repercussions

Within 79% of Service member groups, participants cited fear of repercussions as a potential barrier to reporting sexual assault:

> "That's where the peer influence comes in – (people get angry) "If you wouldn't have said anything…" With this high OPTEMPO… (we're already tight on people)."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USAF

Repercussion included fears of:

- Retribution and reprisal (recorded in 57% of the groups)

- Not being taken seriously (recorded in 25% of the groups)

- Authority/rank of perpetrator (recorded in 9% of the groups).

These fears are vividly represented in statements provided by Service members like this one:

"A lot of females feel intimidated because when she actually reports something [an instance of assault] they are categorizing her as trying to stir up trouble, especially if it becomes more public than it should…she could possibly experience some backlash from the unit."
—Female, Junior Enlisted, USA

b. Confidentiality, Confidence, Privacy, and Trust

Confidentiality, confidence, privacy and trust emerged as a theme in 62% of the groups. For many focus group participants, the absence of any of these qualities could present a barrier to reporting sexual assault:

"…it's a very small world. It wouldn't take long for it to circle around and get back to where it started."
—Female, Junior Enlisted, USAR

"If I knew there was a committee I could turn to that was private, that they're separate from everyone else - beyond the instructors. And they can do something about it."
—Female, Junior Officer, USAFR

c. Career-Related Concerns

Participants in 45% groups mentioned potentially harmful effects to a Service member's career as a barrier to reporting sexual assault. Some examples of career-related concerns that focus group participants raised included the impact of reporting on promotion potential and working relationships:

"It depends on who's doing the raping. If it's another service member, there's more reluctance to report it. Especially if you've got to work with them."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USAF

d. Distrust of Leadership

Distrust of leadership was reported as a barrier in 38% of focus groups. Participants who reported this theme felt trust in leadership, particularly their ability to follow through, is critical to a Service member's willingness to report a sexual assault:

"If they don't feel they can trust leadership with regular issues, how is that Soldier going to go to their leader and tell them 'hey, I was raped last night'? It falls back on leadership a lot."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USA

"The attitude of your leadership permits you to come forward or not."
—Female, Senior Enlisted, USAF

e. Gossip, "Bad Reputation," and Stigma

Participants in 30% of the groups mentioned the idea of being stigmatized or obtaining a "bad reputation" as a potential barrier. Similarly, participants felt that if a Service member reported a sexual assault, he or she could become the topic of "gossip" on the installation:

> "…Silence is more of a code. If you do blow the horn, you've just ostracized yourself. If you ever complain about anything, you're ostracized, even if you're in the right. No one wants to associate with you, because you're the one that's caused the rolling rock."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USAF

> "I think it goes unrecorded/reported because of the stigma, and command turns it against the women, 'Why did you go out with this guy?'"
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USMC

> "People gossip/talk; if I am a guy he will tell all his friends and ruin my reputation while he claims to be innocent."
> —Female, Junior Enlisted, USAF

f. Nature Of Investigation/Reporting Process

In 26% of the groups, participants reported that the perceived nature of the investigative and/or reporting process might potentially deter a Service member from reporting a sexual assault:

> "The process gets muddled after that…so, to them [the victim] it is just easier to let it slide."
> —Male, Senior Officer, USA

g. Shame, Embarrassment, Self-Blame

Participants in 19% of the groups expressed a concern that a Service member may feel too ashamed or embarrassed to report an incident. Belief that he or she is partly responsible for the assault may also lessen the likelihood of reporting:

> "If you talk to any victim of an assault case, there is guilt. Kids are blaming themselves, the mother is blaming them, and you can't get away from it."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USAFR

> "The biggest thing is letting them know that it's not their fault…. People say, 'She was wearing this and that'. It's important to let people know that it's not their fault. Often it's an unknown person. Rapists are not regular people. If it's not reported, there's no data."
> —Male, Senior Enlisted, USN

h. "Don't Want To Get Someone In Trouble"

In 9% percent of the focus groups, participants reported that a victim of sexual assault might choose not to report the act for fear of getting someone in trouble:

> "there is a perception of protecting the perpetrator."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USN

i. Believe Credibility Will Be Questioned

Participants in 9% of the groups believed that the credibility of the complainant could come into question, particularly when the assault involves alcohol. Under these circumstances, Service members felt that the victim might choose not to report the incident:

> "It was reported, there was a criminal investigation. Due to the female's amount of alcohol intake, she could not remember a lot of details of the incident, so the charges were dropped. There was no punishment for the perpetrator. She could never prove that she did not consent. The guy's saying, 'She did, she wanted it, she said she wanted it, she can't remember.' "
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USAF

> "There's a fear from the person that if they were seen drinking together with someone, then everyone would assume that it was consensual."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USCG

j. Ignorance

Ignorance emerged as a theme in 9% of the groups. Some participants expressed that a victim may be unaware of what constitutes sexual assault and in some instances are completely unaware of what to do if an assault occurred.

Exhibit IV-2 displays, by Service, the number and percent of groups that identified each of the major reported barriers.

Exhibit IV-2: Perceived barriers to reporting sexual assault: by Service

Factors	Army (n = 6)		Air Force (n =11)		Navy (n = 7)		Marine Corps (n =7)		Coast Guard (n = 7)		Guard/ Reserve (n =9)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Fear of repercussions	5	83%	8	73%	7	100%	5	71%	6	86%	6	67%
Confidentiality, privacy, trust	4	67%	3	27%	6	86%	3	43%	6	86%	7	78%
Career-related concerns	3	50%	1	9%	6	86%	4	57%	3	43%	4	44%
Distrust of Leadership	4	80%	9	82%	2	29%	0	0%	1	14%	2	22%
Gossip, "bad reputation", and stigma	2	40%	4	36%	2	29%	2	29%	1	14%	3	33%
Nature of investigation/ reporting process	3	50%	4	36%	1	14%	0	0%	1	14%	3	33%
Shame, embarrassment, self-blame	2	33%	2	18%	2	29%	2	29%	0	0%	1	11%
"Don't want to get someone in trouble"	0	0%	1	9%	1	14%	1	14%	1	14%	0	0%

2. Research Findings

a. Underreporting of Military Sexual Assaults

Data from a variety of research sources indicate that female Service members frequently cite the following reasons for not reporting an incident of sexual assault to a member of the chain of command. These reasons, presented in rank order, track with the findings from DACOWITS focus groups presented in the last section:

- Fear of retaliation/reprisal

- Lack of privacy or confidentiality

- Negative impact on career advancement

- Lack of command support

- Lack of knowledge of the reporting process.

For example, the Fowler Commission reported that some female cadets claimed that they were punished or placed on administrative restrictions for disciplinary infractions when they came forward.[64] Additionally, testimony from the Congressional Women's Caucus hearings indicated that female sexual assault victims in the military have been threatened with fraternization charges.[65]

The 2004 DoD Task Force reported that perceived lack of privacy and confidentiality within DoD is considered by many experts to be one of the most significant obstacles to reporting. The Task Force reviewed current Military Rules of Evidence (MRE) and concluded that MRE 513 provides limited privilege between a psychotherapist and a patient.[66] A related issue is that many sexual assault victims, including female cadets at the Air Force Academy, believe that reporting a sexual assault will lead to an investigation that will jeopardize their careers.[67] Again, the Fowler Commission stressed the need to provide confidential channels at the Academy for victims to help encourage reporting. The Fowler Commission recommended that the Air Force Academy provide options for sexual assault victims to receive confidential treatment and counseling, as well as encouraging the use of psychotherapist/patient privilege rules commonly used in the civilian sector.

Empirical and anecdotal research examining why sexual assault victims in the military choose not to report sexual assault suggests concern that the chain of command and other unit personnel would not believe them or would ignore the complaint. The 2004 DoD Task Force notes that this issue is especially prevalent when the alleged offender is higher in rank, has a good military record and reputation, has the power to influence the victim's career, or is extremely popular.[68]

The 2004 DoD Task Force noted that "junior enlisted personnel are not aware of the full range of reporting options available to them," and that they" identified a critical need for education and training on where to report, how to support a victim, and what to do in the event of a sexual assault."[69]

b. Underreporting of Civilian Sexual Assaults

Most sexual assaults—military and civilian— go unreported to authorities. As a result, many offenders are not brought to justice and are able to continue patterns of unlawful conduct. In the civilian sphere for example, NCVS data analyzed by the Department of Justice indicate that one-third of rapes and attempted rapes, and one-fourth of sexual assaults were reported to the police between 1992-2000.[70]

According to NCVS data from 1993-1999, the major reasons why victims of rape, attempted rape and sexual assault in the civilian sector failed to report the incident to the police were:

- Victims viewed the assault as a personal matter

- Victims feared retaliation/reprisal.

Twenty-three percent of civilian rape victims who did not report chose not to do so because they felt the incident was a personal matter. Data from the NCVS indicate that women who were victimized by a current or former boyfriend or husband were the least likely to report the incident. This finding is important considering that most victims of sexual assault know their assailant. Twenty-eight percent of sexual assaults are committed by an assailant whom the victim does not know, and 10% are committed by the victim's intimate partner.[71] About 17% of civilian victims did not report being sexually assaulted because they feared reprisal.[72]

E. RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ADDRESS SEXUAL ASSAULT

1. DACOWITS Focus Group Findings:

All Service member focus groups contained at least some individuals who reported they were aware of available resources to help in the event of sexual assault. Only 23% of groups contained personnel who were not aware of any resources (Exhibit IV-3).

Exhibit IV-3: Awareness of Resources Available in Case of Sexual Assault

Response	Number and percent of groups in which response was recorded (n=44)	
Aware	44	100%
Not aware	10	23%

Exhibit IV-4 displays the specific resources that were most frequently reported as available to help deal with sexual assault.

Exhibit IV-4: Resources Available to Help with Sexual Assault

Factor	Number and percentage of groups in which theme emerged (n=44)	
Military programs and services	30	68%
Unit leadership	22	50%
Hospitals (military or civilian)	20	45%
Law enforcement personnel (military or civilian)	19	43%
"Someone you trust" (e.g., friends, family)	17	39%
Chaplain	15	34%
Civilian care providers/services	14	32%

These resources are briefly discussed below.

a. Military Programs And Services

In 68% of the focus groups, participants cited one or more military programs or services available to them in the event of a sexual assault. These programs and services included:

- Crisis hotline (recorded in 11% of the groups)

- EEOC, or the Equal Opportunity office (recorded in 11% of the groups)

- Work-Life Office (recorded in 7% of the groups), or Family Support Services (recorded in 5% of the groups)

- Sexual Assault Victim Intervention (SAVI), a Navy program (recorded in 5% of the groups).

- Classes, training and briefings, and Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) were each mentioned in 2% of the groups.

b. Unit Leadership

Members of leadership were mentioned in 50% of the focus groups as a potential resource:

"I would be able to go to my leadership and tell them what's going on. My section and unit are close - so I could tell them what has happened to me."
—Female, Junior Enlisted, USAF

"Just say the word and every NCO knows what to do, I think every NCO has a card in their wallet on what to do."
—Male, Junior Enlisted, USMC

c. Hospitals (Military Or Civilian)

Military hospitals were mentioned as a resource in 20% of the groups, and civilian hospitals in 18% of the groups:

"I would go to whatever medical facility is closest."
—Female, Senior Officer, USMC

d. Law Enforcement Personnel (Military or Civilian)

Civilian law enforcement personnel were mentioned as a resource in 20% of the groups, and military law enforcement in 14% of the groups.

e. "Someone You Trust" (e.g., Friends, Family)

The resources most commonly mentioned in this category were:

- Friends (recorded in 23% of the groups)

- Family (recorded in 20% of the groups)

- Significant other (recorded in 18% of the groups).

Instead of seeking help formally, one senior officer female suggested that:

"Often [times] a victim just seeks support from a friend rather than report the incident."
—Female, Senior Officer, USNR

f. Chaplain

Participants in 34% percent of the groups identified the Chaplain as a potential resource in the event of sexual assault:

> "If you don't want to go to command you can go to the chaplain."
> —Male, Junior Enlisted, USNR

g. Civilian Care Providers/Services

Other than hospitals, civilian providers mentioned as potential resources included counselors, crises centers, and hotlines:

> "They do not trust the chain of command and MPs. I would send them to off-post resources such as a rape crisis counselor."
> —Male, Senior Enlisted, USA

2. Research Findings: Best Practices in Sexual Assault Response

We have consistently found the principle of "putting victims first" to be crucial to ensuring the appropriate level of care throughout both the civilian and military medical, legal and counseling systems. Those working with crime victims should be cognizant that placing the victim first helps achieve a variety of positive outcomes. How law enforcement first responds to victims is critical in determining how victims cope, first with the immediate crisis, and later, with their recovery from the crime. In addition, the first response can strongly influence victims' subsequent participation in the investigation and prosecution of the crime.[73]

The circumstances of the crime and the crime scene often determine the reaction of the victim and how agencies and authorities should respond. When placing a victim first, agencies and authorities should consistently respond to the victim's needs with compassion, empathy, and understanding. These needs may vary, but most often a victim will want attention placed on the following:

- A need to feel safe

- A need to express their emotions

- A need to understand "what happens next."[74]

Described below are two victim-centered programs that provide an organizational blueprint with demonstrated utility to the military. They balance the victim's needs with the needs of the criminal justice and law enforcement agencies.

a. The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Model

Many communities across the country have discovered that a coordinated, comprehensive approach in responding to sexual assault cases has resulted in better service to victims. The SART is a widely accepted model for responding to sexual assault victims/survivors in civilian communities.[75]

A SART is victim-centered and comprised of key stakeholders, including victim advocates, law enforcement personnel, mental health support, health care providers trained in forensic examinations, for example Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs), and prosecution/court representatives.[76] While individual communities can adapt the SART model that best fits their unique needs, all SARTs share some common aspects:

- Victims are served by a team of agencies that work in cooperation with, not in isolation of, one another

- Victims have access to a trained victim advocate whose only role is to provide support to the victim

- Law enforcement personnel, hospital emergency staff, and victim advocates work together to ensure that victims receive efficient, comprehensive care within an atmosphere of respect for the victims' immediate and longer-term needs.

Some common complaints of victims of sexual assault in communities without coordinated responses are: 1) they often have to tell their story a number of times; 2) they do not always understand the different roles of each person with whom they interact, and 3) they are not provided enough information about how forensic evidence will be collected, what the police reporting and prosecution processes will entail, and what resources are available to them.[77]

In communities with SARTs, law enforcement, hospital emergency departments, and victim advocates work hand-in-hand to coordinate a response starting immediately after a sexual assault is reported. In most communities with SARTs, law enforcement personnel have received special training regarding the crime of sexual assault itself, as well as training in playing an Active role in the coordinated response required by the SART model. SANEs go through a certification process to collect forensic evidence and protect the chain-of-custody of evidence. SANEs are also trained to understand the unique aspects of sexual assault and how to best participate in the SART.

Finally, victim advocates are trained to understand the unique role each agency plays in the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases. The advocate has an appreciation for the steps in the process and assists the victim by providing emotional support, information about the process, and assistance dealing with family members regarding the assault.
Every agency representative involved with the case handles unique aspects of the case, but all work closely together and try to respect one another's roles. The result is that SARTs can provide seamless, comprehensive care to victims. One of these programs—the Nellis Air Force Base (AFB) Sexual Assault Prevention Project (SAPP)— was highlighted repeatedly in the 2004

DoD Task Force Report as a pocket of excellence.[78] This program, described below, represents an application of the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) model to a military setting.

Recognizing they could do more to educate military personnel about sexual assault and provide better services to victims, leadership at Nellis AFB created a cooperative agreement with The Rape Crisis Center of Las Vegas (RCC) in 2003, and expanded the training resources and services that can be provided to base personnel. Nellis AFB and RCC worked cooperatively to address sexual assault prevention and provide resources and support, such as crisis intervention and counseling, to victims. This partnership evolved into the SAPP, which is a multi-disciplinary, base-wide program that responds to the crime of sexual assault. The SAPP also focuses on providing education about sexual assault, prevention, and treatment.

SAPP organizers at Nellis highlighted the need to implement a SART on base. The installation, through funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) brought in SART experts to provide training on how to implement a SART. Outcomes of this process included:

- A cooperative agreement between the base, the Rape Crisis Center, and the University of Nevada's Medical Center's SANE program to ensure a seamless and high standard of care for sexual assault victims

- All First Sergeants at Nellis AFB attend mandatory sexual assault education/SART training

- Mental health providers, medical personnel, prosecutors, and victim advocates are trained

- All members of the SART go through a two-day training delivered by experts in the field of sexual assault, the University Medical Center of Nevada, the Office of Special Investigations, the Staff Judge Advocate, and the Rape Crisis Center. The Rape Crisis Center trains SART members on the sexual assault forensic exam, victim interviews, crime lab procedures, and trial issues.

The SART training at Nellis AFB focuses primarily on the components of a SART, including what agencies/people are included; the importance of forensic evidence collection; and SART operational issues. These operational issues include the unique circumstances of sexual assault on a military base, and specific information on the roles of the following personnel/departments: 1) First Sergeants, 2) Peer Counselors, 3) Office of Special Investigators, and 4) the Judge Advocate General.

The training also includes education on sexual assault itself, addressing drug-facilitated sexual assault, crisis intervention needs of victims, working with male victims, and the psychological impact of sexual assault. All these components were necessary to ensure that key stakeholders were included in the SART implementation, that participants understood the prevalence and effects of sexual assault, and that military personnel understood the various roles they play in assisting victims.

Sexual assault awareness and educational materials developed for the Nellis SAPP are slated to be incorporated into the permanent training curriculum at the Air Force Sergeant's Training Academy at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. The Air Force Inspector General, upon reviewing Nellis AFB's SART, declared it a best practice program for the U.S. Air Force.

b. Department of Veterans Affairs Program

To address the issue of military sexual trauma (MST), the Veteran's Administration has also developed an extensive program.[79] The key components of the VA's program are:

- Awareness

- Education and sensitivity training

- Outreach

- Screening and treatment

- Program evaluation.

The VA developed an active provider awareness campaign. Instrumental to this effort was the 2001 National MST Working Group which reviewed existing MST programs to identify best practice models, provide guidance for integrated MST program development, address issues of data collection and program evaluation, plan employee education opportunities to promote MST treatment, and develop MST clinical practice guidelines.

The VA developed an education program with respect to sensitivity training, and an education program to train primary care and other practitioners about the prevalence, screening, referral, and treatment for MST. To achieve outreach, female veterans can access service through the Women Veterans Program Managers at each VA facility.

Also, for screening and treatment, all enrolled veterans are screened for MST when they access VA health care services. MST Coordinators assure proper usage of MST software and proper data entry. Various types of mental health care professionals provide individual and group MST counseling.

Finally, detailed tracking and evaluation of MST care and treatment is planned, but is not yet implemented across the system. Encouragingly, the results of one study indicate that females who were treated in the Women Veterans Stress Disorders Treatment Teams showed significant improvement in post-traumatic stress disorder, violence, medical conditions, overall adjustment, quality of life, and perceived impact of their illness on social functioning.[80]

3. Research Findings: Service Sexual Assault Programs

While the thrust of the 2004 DoD Task Force Report focused on the need for greater coordination, clarity and resource allocation with respect to policies and programs dealing with sexual assault in the Services, the Task Force's report also noted that:

> "…the Services deserve credit for the individual initiatives across the functional spectrum to increase capability to respond to risks related to sexual assault, improve care for victims of sexual assault, and establish command emphasis to rapidly report sexual assault incidents."[81]

a. The Navy's Sexual Assault Victim Intervention (SAVI) Program

The Navy, which alone among DoD Services has published Service-wide polices "requiring a standardized sexual assault prevention and victim assistance program,"[82] has established and maintains a comprehensive victim-sensitive program designed to both prevent and respond to sexual assault. The Navy's Sexual Assault Victim Intervention program, or SAVI, is "the only defined sexual assault program within DoD Services that has both dedicated staff and funding at both Headquarters and installation levels."[83] The Navy's SAVI program represents a multifaceted approach to prevention and treatment, providing:

- Awareness and prevention education

- Victim advocacy and intervention services

- Data collection.

The SAVI program follows from explicit Navy policy guidance that states, among other directives, that victims must have access to appropriate assistance, including 24-hour response to reports of sexual assault, as well as victim services and resources. At the Headquarters level, there is a civilian SAVI program manger and 26 funded fleet positions at 25 Fleet and Family Services Centers (FFSC) Navy-wide. The installation command or the regional command determines whether these positions will be full or part-time, but every Navy command has points of contact (POCs) for whom SAVI administration is a collateral duty. At the installation level, the base Commanding Officer is required to designate a SAVI program coordinator for that installation. This coordinator plans, develops and implements all administrative aspects of the base SAVI program. To ensure command oversight, each Navy command also has a SAVI program POC who:

- Coordinates the Navy's mandatory sexual assault training, included in General Military Training (GMT) for the command

- Provides up-to-date information on resources and services in place for sexual assault victims at each command.

Each command has an appointed SAVI Command Representative, who acts as a liaison between the victim, the victim support system and the command/executive level. The SAVI Command representative is required to be an individual judged mature and knowledgeable enough to

provide accurate information, and to consider and balance the concerns of both the victim and the command.

An additional important facet of the Navy SAVI program—and one that facilitates the case tracking and accountability stressed throughout the 2004 DoD Task Force report—is that each Navy command has an appointed SAVI Data Collection Coordinator (DCC). This individual's responsibilities include gathering and tracking data on sexual assault incidents in the command, and making certain they are included in the command's Situation Report (SITREP).

b. Air Force Policies and Programs

The Air Force recently reviewed its sexual assault programs and policies at several levels, including assessments of the Pacific Command (PACAF), the Air Force Education and Training Command (AFETC at Sheppard Air Force Base), and Service-wide at the Major Command (MAJCOM) level. Air Force findings were published in an August 2004 report, which concluded that while the Air Force has law enforcement, command, and medical policies and regulations for addressing sexual assault, they lack a unified message that brings together all these resources with training, awareness and prevention.[84] The Air Force report has findings and recommendations on the realities of sexual assault, policy and leadership, education and training, reporting, response and the deployed environment. The Air Force initiated an Integrated Process Team to consolidate the findings of the report, and conducted a summit for Air Force Leaders discussing findings and courses of action after the report. The Service has also established a Victim Support Liaison at each base under the Wing Commander/CV.[85] The Air Force drew upon several existing programs as templates and benchmarks for implementation (see Previous Discussion of Nellis AFB, SAPP).

c. Marine Corps Polices And Programs

The Marine Corps has consolidated its resources in regard to sexual assault in its Marine Corps Order 1752.5 – Sexual Assault Prevention and Response. Published in September 2004, this document ensures responsibilities are assigned to individual Marines, Commanders and Headquarters Marine Corps. It provides specific guidance on providing for the needs (e.g., privacy, treatment) of victims. It will also be formalized under one program, encompassing existing and new victim-based programs. It establishes a sexual assault prevention program and mandates tracking through an incident database.

In addition to these planned responses, many Department of Navy requirements that apply to the Navy also apply to the Marine Corps, including the responsibility to provide services and response to sexual assault victims.[86] Currently, victim advocates are at every USMC installation, to include 29 full or part-time staff with the Family Advocacy Program (FAP), and an additional 107 volunteers. Through the FAP, the Marine Corps also provides "crisis intervention, safety plan/referrals, and support [for] victims throughout [the] criminal justice process".[87]

d. Army Policies And Programs

The Army Surgeon General, Provost Marshall General, Judge Advocate General, and the Criminal Investigative Command (CID) have programs in place that address reporting, investigation, victim support and data collection related to sexual assault cases that come to the attention of the chain of command, the military police and the CID. A major finding of the Acting Secretary of the Army's 2004 *Task Force Report on Sexual Assault Policies* was that all these programs and agencies must be integrated into a single approach to handling sexual assault.[88] The Army has completed its roadmap for full implementation of its report.

The Office of the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (G1) has responsibility for the sexual assault policies and programs within the Army. LTC John McPhaul of the G1's Human Resources Directorate recently noted that assignment of advocates to all victims of sexual assault—a recommendation highlighted in the Acting Secretary's 2004 report—is among the important initiatives which will become part of Army Command Policy (Army Regulation 600-20). Similar to the other Services, LTC McPhaul further explained that the Army is striving to get all agencies to "work in concert with each other by establishing a policy that deals with sexual assault not only in garrison but also in a deployed setting as well".[89]

e. Coast Guard Policies And Programs

Although not a DoD service, the Coast Guard as a sea Service is included in the DACOWITS sexual assault program review. Their Commandant Instruction 1754.10 focuses on the accountability of the Commanding Officer for ensuring the sensitive, coordinated and effective management of rape and sexual assault cases. The key person in the program is the Employee Assistance Program Coordinator (EAPC). He/she is trained to assist commands in the proper support of the victim and provides case management and coordination of services provided by Coast Guard Intelligence Service, Medical, Legal and Chaplain services. The EAPC also ensures mandatory annual training, awareness, and prevention efforts are in place.[90]

The Acting Secretary of the Army's 2004 *Task Force Report on Sexual Assault Policies*— which provides a useful overview of current practices in each Service including the Coast Guard— notes that the Coast Guard also has "voluntary, collateral duty, victim support persons who assist victims in securing basic needs and who serve as a companion throughout the medical, legal and judicial processes."[91]

F. PREVENTION

1. DACOWITS Focus Groups Findings

Focus group members provided valuable insights into how sexual assault can best be prevented. Exhibit IV-5 shows these recommendations in the order of frequency mentioned across all groups, as well as the distribution of responses by the gender composition of the groups.

Exhibit IV-5: Recommendations for Command to Prevent Sexual Assault

Factors	All groups Number and percent of groups in which factor emerged (n=40)		Female groups (n = 32)		Male groups (n=8)	
Promote awareness (e.g., education)	33	83%	25	78%	8	100%
Organizational changes	19	48%	15	47%	4	50%
Reporting process	12	30%	9	28%	3	38%
Working and living conditions	9	23%	7	22%	2	25%
Programs and services	7	18%	7	22%	0	0%

As Exhibit IV-5 indicates, male and female groups tended to offer similar recommendations, with one exception: participants in 22% of the female groups suggested that more programs and services be provided as a method to address sexual assault, whereas participants in male groups did not offer this recommendation. However, at least one participant in each of the male groups recommended enhancing education about sexual assault. Each recommendation is briefly discussed below.

a. Promote Awareness

Promoting awareness of sexual assault emerged as a major theme in 83% of the groups surveyed. Participants suggested a need for more briefings and training on recognizing or identifying sexual assault:

> "We should have more quarterly briefings and more education than what we're getting."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USA

> "More awareness briefings on this issue. As much as they stress things in the Army (e.g., we know to wear seatbelts, and other safety issues), they should stress awareness. I knew of a female that was raped in the MP barracks, and she was so afraid and didn't trust anyone…she did exactly what we've talked about."
> —Female, Senior Enlisted, USA

In addition to providing more briefings and training, one Service member suggested an organizational approach to promoting awareness:

> "I think the main emphasis needs to be at the unit level. Policy can come from the top-down, but it needs to be talked about from the bottom-up with immediate supervisors."
> —Male, Senior Enlisted, USAF

b. Organizational Changes

Participants in 48% of groups recommended that commands take a more proactive role in establishing a climate of trust:

"The command proves themselves with small issues first, (e.g., emphasizing with mid-grade enlisted women to look out for the junior personnel). There's a climate of trust in command and just knowing what to do...including that in part of your leadership scheme is important."
—Female, Junior Officer, USCG

c. Reporting Process

In 30% of the focus groups, participants reported a need for the command to address the sexual assault reporting process. Some areas within the reporting process that participants suggested need improvement were:

- Punishment (recorded in 16% of the groups)

- Follow-through (recorded in 7% of the groups)

- Swift action (recorded in 5% of the groups).

"Command should enforce the rules when they find out. They shouldn't turn the other cheek. After it's reported, follow through."
—Female, Junior Enlisted, USCG

d. Working and Living Conditions

Improving working and living conditions emerged as a theme in 23% of the focus groups. Participants made recommendations that varied from addressing their living environments to enforcing stricter dress codes:

"Coed living is a problem. Men and women in the same rooms - what do you expect?"
—Male, Senior Enlisted, USA

e. Programs and Services

Participants offered recommendations for improving existing military programs, along with ideas for new victim services. Included among these recommendations were:

- Formal establishment of mentorship program (recorded in 7% of the groups)

- Sexual Assault Victim Investigation (SAVI) – a Navy program (recorded in 5% of the groups)

Forming a private committee, offering more forums for women, involving an outside agency, and developing a hotline were each recommended in 2% of the groups:

> "Even maybe a hotline or something - (if) they don't want to talk about it, or are embarrassed, that will start the ball rolling."
> —Female, Junior Officer, USAR

2. Research Findings

Several Task Forces met over the past 18 months on the subject of sexual assault. This section highlights some of the best practices as well as the necessary elements in effective prevention programs identified by these groups and in our review of current research. The importance of training was a common theme. In its final report, the 2004 DoD Task Force recommended that DoD develop standardized requirements, guidelines, protocols, and instructional materials that focus on prevention across the total force.

Specifically, DoD Task Force recommended that DoD identify and develop effective, inter-operable, and exportable prevention training methodologies (tools and guidelines) for Service members, leaders, and trainers at all levels. This may include validating and leveraging current, "best practice" prevention training efforts from within and outside the military. Military sexual assault prevention programs cited by the Task Force as "pocket of excellence" include:[92]

- **Dorm Awareness Program at Travis Air Force Base:** This program provides training for young Airmen on how to improve situational awareness with respect to sexual assault, how to avoid becoming a victim, and how to address appropriate dating behavior.

- **Sexual Assault Free Environment (SAFE) Program at Kusan Air Force Base, Korea:** This program, mandatory for all personnel assigned to the base, includes informative and widely publicized briefings by the wing commander, the equal opportunity representative, and subject matter experts.

- **Sexual Assault Prevention Program (SAPP) at Nellis Air Force Base:** This program, mandatory for all Nellis personnel, utilizes a three-pronged approach, focusing on prevention, education and on and off-base community outreach.

Similarly, the Air Force Task Force final report notes that, although training provided by first responders (personnel expected to offer immediate medical, investigative, and legal assistance to victims) is estimated to be of the highest quality, it is focused on discrete aspects of sexual assault response. The Air Force assessment team concluded that first responders, as well as all levels of leadership, would be more effective if they had a general understanding of the totality of sexual assault response. This would strengthen their knowledge base and complement their expertise. The assessment team concluded that prevention training needs to be interactive, targeted, and additive, rather than simply a general briefing, which would not be well received by key target populations (18 to 25 years of age). Further, the assessment team stressed that all training must be linked to the overarching Air Force policy and communications strategy to ensure consistency, and that training should be provided at key career transition points.[93]

The 2004 Army Task Force found that, while the Army's current human relations training program encompasses sexual harassment prevention; it covers sexual assault only to a limited extent. With respect to prevention, the Army Task Force recommended:[94]

- Creation of a policy focused on education, prevention, integrated victim support, thorough investigation, appropriate action, timely reporting, follow-up, and feedback.

- Creation of a sustained, comprehensive, progressive, and sequential training that integrates sexual assault topics into Army values, and includes Army values in all leadership and human relations training.

- Establish a structured system for documentation, quarterly assessment, reporting, and program improvement at the installation, major command, and Headquarters, Department of the Army levels.

Additionally, on 7 April 2004 the Army leadership, General Peter J. Schoomaker and Acting Secretary R.L. Brownlee, published a clear zero tolerance Army policy on sexual assault that emphasized several key points in prevention.

3. Zero Tolerance Programs

The importance of predictable, fair, and appropriate law enforcement actions being taken by commanders as a deterrent to sexual assault was a common theme in the task force reports and in our focus group discussions. Thus, a strong case can be made for a Commander's "Zero Tolerance" program which would send a clear message that sexual assault will not be tolerated:

"There needs to be stiffer punishments, but you don't want to seem vindictive. If I saw a guy get slapped on the wrist for sexual assault, I'd think to myself 'Man, what is going on?' If it is a heavy punishment across the board….you'd think that would get their attention."
—Male, Junior enlisted, USCG

The Army policy is a good example of the necessary elements for prevention: clear statement by the command of the consequences of sexual assault, training to ensure Service members understand the appropriate boundaries of conduct, and emphasis on the importance of reporting so victims can be cared for and offenders can be prosecuted.

As discussed earlier in this report, sexual assault training in the context of a military wide Zero Tolerance Policy should take place at regular and appropriate career intervals. It is particularly important, however at accession. Incoming members of the military must understand what conduct of a sexual nature is appropriate and what is inappropriate, what is legal and illegal behavior, and what are the boundaries of acceptable conduct. The training should make clear that sexual assault is a crime that will be fully prosecuted and that it is the duty of Service members to take individual responsibility for appropriate conduct and personal safety. Prompt reporting should be seen as part of that duty.

The establishment of a Zero Tolerance Policy will increase the level of confidence Service members must have in the chain of command's ability to effectively address a report of sexual

assault. We heard all too often that within DoD that confidence is significantly undermined by the perceived lack of confidentiality. The objective of increasing reporting rates is tied to the level of privacy/confidentiality protection offered by the reporting system. An improved reporting system must take systematic steps to build victim trust and confidence by countering widely held perceptions that third parties (lacking a "need-to-know" status) will gain knowledge of the incident. At the same time, the improved reporting system must acknowledge the commander's responsibility to maintain good order and discipline by investigating crimes, holding offenders accountable, and maintaining safety throughout the command.[95] The ability of a victim to report confidentially to a member of the chain of command, medical, legal, or a psychotherapist has to be addressed in policy and, if necessary, in law. The current lack of confidentially serves as a barrier to reporting. However, there is equal concern that affording victims avenues of confidential disclosure within DoD will result in either delay or lack of investigation that ultimately impedes commanders' solemn responsibility to hold offenders accountable and to ensure community safety. Resolving these inherent tensions is complicated, but must be addressed.[96]

G. CONCLUSION

Men and women who chose to serve our country deserve an environment free of the threat of sexual assault. Sexual assault in the ranks negatively affects unit cohesion and readiness and makes it more difficult to recruit and retain the quality force necessary to defend the nation. Thus, the attention of DoD's most senior leaders and policy makers is needed to establish and implement more effective policies for prevention, prosecution of offenders, and care of victims. Although the prevalence of sexual assault declined between 1995 and 2002, the data and findings cited in this section and others demonstrate clearly that more must done to meet the Secretary's directive for "ensuring that the victims of sexual assault are properly treated, their medical and psychological needs are properly met, our policies and programs are effective, and we are prompt in dealing with all issues involved".[97]

The importance of training is a theme echoed throughout our report. This training must emphasize that sexual assault is a crime that will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It should be an integral part of Professional Military Education for all levels, from enlisted through General Officers, and used especially in command and leadership courses. It is important for soldiers and leadership to understand the issues of consent and the impact on consent the presence of alcohol or date rape drugs has. The UCMJ has clear definitions of consent and force that protect the victim when incapacitated by alcohol or narcotics. Leadership's knowledge of these consent definitions is critical to prevention training for subordinates and subsequent prosecution if there is non-compliance. This comprehensive and ongoing training should be delivered in the context of the core values of military service and the mission requirements of unit cohesion and readiness. Such training—utilized for Service members, law enforcement, medical personnel and victim advocates—is key to prevention.

Focus group participants repeatedly talked about the importance of having a "climate of trust" in a unit. To establish and maintain this climate, policies must balance the need for confidentiality for victims, which fuels trust in the chain of command, with the command's need for information to provide good order and discipline.

DACOWITS commends the efforts of DoD to, in the words of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, "set a higher standard…The American military is committed to high standards of personal conduct, and the prompt, proper care of those who are injured in the course of military service. We owe our people– the American public– no less." [98]

V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. RETENTION

The initial questions by DACOWITS in the investigation of the retention of eligible Service personnel were:

- To what extent is the military losing personnel eligible to be retained?

- What are the factors causing these losses and how do such factors influence retention?

- What policies and/or programs could reduce retention losses?

A review of DoD reports on intention and retention data, the responses of the participants in the sixty-four focus groups and a review of relevant research led to an identification of factors Service personnel and their families consider when making decisions on whether to remain in the military. After identifying the factors that contribute to the loss of personnel eligible to be retained, DACOWITS considered suggestions provided by these same sources that might enhance the decision to remain in the military.

1. Loss of Personnel Eligible to be Retained

a. Findings

i. Married officers with children were more likely to report an intention to remain in the military than married officers without children. However, married officers with children actually separate at a higher rate than those without children.

ii. Female officers who were married had the highest rate of separation overall and female officers with dependents separated at a higher rate than male officers with dependents. Female officers in dual-military marriages had a higher separation rate than their male counterparts. Female officer separation rates were most pronounced at five to eight years of Service.

b. Recommendation

The Services should examine in greater detail the reasons for the discrepancy between the reported intentions and actual retention of married officers with children.

2. Factors Contributing to the Loss of Eligible Personnel

a. Findings

i. 'Work/family balance' was the factor most frequently cited by Active duty, Guard and Reserve members as influencing their intention to leave the Service. Seventy-one percent of

the Active duty focus groups included personnel who regarded the imbalance of work/family life as a primary reason for separation.

ii. "Change in personal goals" was the second most salient factor identified by Active duty personnel as influential in their decision to leave the military, recorded in sixty-eight percent of the Active duty focus groups. This factor was also mentioned second most frequently among female junior officers, recorded in fifty percent of these focus groups, and third most frequently among family members, recorded in twenty-five percent of these groups. Research has demonstrated that programs like Facilitated Return to Service (RTS) can have a high return on investment in terms of retention.

iii. Workload and schedule conflicts were mentioned as influential in the decision to leave the military within Active duty and Reserve focus groups of each rank and gender, as well as within family member focus groups.

iv. Increasing or expanding benefits and compensation—including retirement benefits, basic pay, and health care—was the primary recommendation provided by focus groups participants as a way to retain personnel with high demand skills and characteristics. Improving opportunities for career advancement was the second most frequently mentioned recommendation to promote retention of these personnel.

b. Recommendations

i. Future SOF and exit surveys for all constituencies should ask specific questions focused on factors that make balancing military Service and family responsibilities a challenge.

ii. Consistent with the intention of DoD Social Compact, the Services should provide for flexibility in addressing work/family balance, such as offering families the option of remaining at the installation of assignment to meet extenuating family commitments.

3. Policies and Programs to Increase Retention Among Eligible Personnel

Recommendations

i. The Services should review existing programs and policies designed to promote career retention, identifying and reporting on opportunities to apply them more broadly, especially to married officers with children.

ii. The Services should develop and implement programs designed to address special circumstances that many female officers experience in their fifth to eighth year of service, such as childbirth and child rearing.

iii. The Services should develop Leave of Absence/Sabbatical programs as means of increasing retention rates, such as the proposed Navy Surface Warfare Officer Sabbatical and the Coast Guard's existing Care for Newborn Children and Temporary Separation Programs. Support should be given to the legislative authority needed to execute these programs.

iv. The Services should reexamine the use of "optional career paths' to accommodate changes in personal goals, particularly for officers.

v. The Services should determine whether new benefit, compensation, and bonus programs could be developed to more effectively retain experienced personnel as they reach mid career. Possible examples include providing children of Service members greater access to ROTC scholarship programs, expanding transferability of Montgomery GI Bill benefits to dependent children, and allowing additional enrollment opportunities for Montgomery GI Bill benefits.

B. DEPLOYMENT

The initial questions by DACOWITS in the investigation of deployment were:

- OPTEMPO and deployments have a major impact on Service members (to include Guard and Reserve members) and families.

- What are the effects on Service members, spouses, and children?

- What are the most important challenges? What are those unique to women?

- What solutions will make a difference to families and units?

- To what extent are units and other members impacted when some members are non-deployable or return early? What are the impacts and how can they be mitigated?

- Does the military health care system adequately provide services for women throughout the deployment cycle?

There is a concern that frequent, lengthy and unpredictable deployments may have consequences for retention. A review of DoD reports on deployment, the responses of the participants in the focus groups and a review of relevant research led to an identification of factors Service personnel and their family consider when meeting the demands of deployment. DACOWITS considered suggestions provided by these same sources that might enhance Service members' ability to address deployments.

1. Preparedness and Unpredictability

a. Finding

Service members stressed the importance of being prepared for deployments, both personally and professionally. Because of extended work hours during pre-deployment, some Service members experienced insufficient time for family and personal matters. A major concern was the unpredictability of both departure times and the length of deployments. The need for coordination with employers exacerbated these concerns for Guard and Reserve members.

b. Recommendations

i. The Services should establish policies requiring sufficient time be incorporated in pre-deployment training schedules allowing members to attend to personal affairs.

ii. As in our 2003 report, DACOWITS again recommends that, when possible, greater predictability be integrated into the deployment process.

2. Impact on Children (Childcare)

a. Findings

i. Children are often adversely affected by parental deployments. This is particularly acute in single parent and dual military families where both parents are deployed, or when the non-deployed spouse works extended hours or nights. The problems experienced by young children include insecure attachment, confusion and feelings of loss. School aged children and teens often exhibited higher incidence of discipline problems, declining academic performance and fear of loss.

ii. Service members and spouses expressed concerns about the availability of childcare during deployment, with the greatest problems occurring in dual military and single parent families.

b. Recommendations

i. The Services should be encouraged not to deploy both parents of minor children simultaneously.

ii. Single custodial parents and one member of a dual military couple with minor children should be exempt, with the approval of their commander, from stop-loss restrictions if their family situation is incompatible with continued military service.

iii. New accession training about the effects and stresses of parenthood, and especially single parenthood in military Service, should be evaluated for its effectiveness.

iv. Future Status of Forces surveys of the Active duty and Reserve components should include questions to determine the effects of deployment on the children of Service members.

v. A survey similar to the 2000 Survey of Spouses should be conducted in the coming year. It should include questions about the effects of deployment on families, with special emphasis on children.

vi. Although efforts have been made to increase the availability of childcare, DACOWITS reiterates its 2003 report recommendations with respect to childcare: that DoD increase its efforts to meet its goals of providing the currently estimated need of childcare spaces as identified by the office of Children and Youth, and that the Services address the need for greater childcare availability during times of increased OPTEMPO/PERSTEMPO.

3. Communication

a. Finding

Keeping families well informed during pre-deployment and during deployment was a common concern. The hectic pace of pre-deployment often hindered good family communication and spouses felt that they did not receive adequate information. Lack of communication during deployment was a major concern for family members.

b. Recommendations

i. Leadership should strongly support programs that promote family readiness. Letters should be mailed home to the families of all deploying Service members with information about anticipated deployment schedules, support programs, points of contact for legal affairs, financial issues, childcare options, psychological counseling and other available resources.

ii. The effectiveness of online sources of communication and information currently in use, such as Military One Source and similar Service programs, should be assessed.

4. Support Programs

a. Finding

Many Service members, especially Guard and Reserve personnel, were concerned about the availability of and access to support programs for their families. Often, programs were available but were not well advertised and were underutilized. Many families now have internet access or can obtain it from other sources.

b. Recommendations

i. The development and use of unit internet resources should be encouraged to promote access to family support services.

ii. All Services should continue outreach to family members, especially during deployment. Special consideration should be given to dual military spouses, families of single members and of individuals deploying independent of their unit.

5. Reunion and Readjustment

a. Findings

i. Reestablishing family relationships is a challenge for many Service members post-deployment. The first few days are particularly difficult when members are required to spend hours (or sometimes days) in administrative in-processing.

ii. Implementation of post-deployment leave policies does not appear to be uniform, particularly for Guard and Reserve units. Some members noted that OPTEMPO demanded that they return to duty quickly.

iii. Current research shows that some Service personnel meet the criteria indicating the presence of a psychological disorder. The need for widespread screening is evident, and yet the data show that Service members are reluctant to seek help. Of those who screened in need, less than half sought mental health services. Some Army units are currently screening all returning soldiers.

b. Recommendations

i. Administrative requirements for returning personnel should be kept to a minimum.

ii. Reunion and readjustment programs should include adequate time off for family and personal needs. Authorized leave for Guard and Reserve members should not be denied.

iii. Services should enforce existing policy that requires mental health screenings for all personnel upon return from contingency deployments.

6. Administrative and Financial

a. Finding

Participants in many focus groups mentioned administrative, legal, and financial challenges while the Service member was deployed. For some Guard and Reserve members, the problems were more acute because they had less access to support services. Additionally, if their civilian employment was legally altered or eliminated during deployment, Guard and Reserve members could return to face underemployment or unemployment.

b. Recommendations

i. Additional employer incentive programs should be created to encourage hiring and support of Guard and Reserve members. Incentives could include tax benefits.

ii. Mobilized Guard and Reserve members whose civilian jobs were eliminated should be given priority to remain on Active status when possible.

7. Health and Hygiene

a. Finding

Female Service members have experienced inadequate and unavailable restroom and shower facilities in a deployed, austere environment. Additionally, they cited problems obtaining various hygiene products.

b. Recommendation

The Services should address and provide for privacy concerns and uniquely female requirements when possible.

8. Early Returns

a. Finding

Service members expressed concern when individuals did not deploy or returned early from deployment for reasons perceived as illegitimate, especially when units were understaffed.

b. Recommendation

As in our 2003 report, DACOWITS again recommends that the Department provide guidance to the Services to maintain relevant standardized data for effective personnel policy. Data collection and analysis should include information on the reasons for non-deployment and evacuation, as well as statistics on non-deployable members and early returnees by rank and gender.

C. SEXUAL ASSAULT

The initial questions by DACOWITS in the investigation of sexual assault were:

- The Department of Defense has a duty to take appropriate steps to prevent sexual assaults, protect victims, and hold those who commit offenses accountable.

- Are military members reporting incidents of sexual assault? If not, why not? How can the process be improved?

- What can be done to reduce the number of sexual assaults on military members?

- What is being done to help those affected by sexual assault? How can it be improved?

Sexual assault is a crime and a command issue. It negatively affects unit cohesion, morale, performance, readiness and mission accomplishment. A review of DoD reports on sexual assault, the responses of the participants in the focus groups and a review of relevant research led to an identification of factors Service personnel and their families consider when dealing with this issue. DACOWITS considered suggestions provided by these same sources that might enhance DoD's ability to protect Service members from sexual assault. The findings and recommendations closely track those of DoD 2004 Task Force on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault. DACOWITS commends the work of DoD 2004 Task Force, which we have used extensively in the writing of this report.

1. **Zero Tolerance Policy**

a. **Finding**

We reiterate the words of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld: "Sexual assault will not be tolerated in the Department of Defense." A Zero Tolerance Policy is the most effective deterrent to sexual assault in the military and would help to establish the essential climate of trust referenced again and again in our focus groups.

b. **Recommendations**

i. DACOWITS recommends that the Secretary of Defense codify the Zero Tolerance policy on sexual assault in a DoD Directive and that the Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs promulgate service-specific Zero Tolerance policies. We find the Army policy dated 7 April 2004 to be an excellent example.

ii. Commanders at every level must clearly state and widely disseminate Zero Tolerance policies.

2. **Sexual Assault Definition**

a. **Finding**

A clear definition of sexual assault is essential to deterrence, effective training, improved rates of reporting, and consistent and fair military law enforcement. We fully endorse the priority of the 2004 DoD Task Force on defining sexual assault.

b. **Recommendations**

i. That the work in progress as a result of the 2004 DoD Task Force recommendations concerning a clear definition of sexual assault be concluded as soon as possible.

ii. That the new definition of sexual assault as promulgated by the Task Force for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response be quickly incorporated into the UCMJ and be used consistently in training, in data collection and by military law enforcement authorities.

3. **Reporting System**

a. **Finding**

DACOWITS endorses the recommendations of the Task Force with respect to establishing a consistent, military-wide reporting system based on a clear definition of sexual assault.

b. Recommendation

The Committee urges DoD to implement a comprehensive and consistent data reporting system that preserves the confidentiality of the victim.

4. Underreporting

a. Findings

i. Our focus groups confirm that underreporting of military sexual assault is all too prevalent.

ii. The committee notes that anecdotal evidence from our focus groups and from Service and DoD-wide task force reports trace the high rate underreporting to a widespread perception of lack of trust in the system. Specifically, Service members are skeptical of the military's ability to respond in ways that will preclude embarrassment, reprisal, and/or negative career consequences.

iii. Service members must have confidence in the chain of command's ability to effectively deal with reports of sexual assault. Confidentiality, which fuels trust in the chain of command, is essential and must be balanced with information needed to provide discipline, accountability and good order.

b. Recommendations

i. Commanders must fully enforce Zero Tolerance policies and prosecute sexual assault offenses to the fullest extent of the law.

ii. Before proceeding with any potential administrative punishment of the victim for possible wrongdoing in connection with a sexual assault incident, commanders should always consider awaiting the outcome of the sexual assault investigation and prosecution.

5. Privacy and Confidentiality

a. Findings

i. Policies must balance the privacy/confidentiality needs of the victim from the standpoint of treatment with the command's need for information relevant to good order and discipline.

ii. Victims are reluctant to come forward unless there is a climate of trust. Confidentiality is the essential element in that climate of trust.

iii. As noted in some of the best practices treatment programs, the victim does not have to immediately consent to the prosecution of the offender. However, those involved in the confidential process must be cognizant of the chain of evidence requirements. Law

enforcement officials must get essential information and evidence if the crime is to be successfully prosecuted.

b. Recommendation

A protocol should be established whereby the victim is encouraged to seek treatment and to report the crime with the assurance that once the crime is reported to law enforcement, privacy will be protected to the maximum extent possible and the victim kept informed of the progress of the case. A crucial aspect of this protocol is the provision of a victim advocate, independent of the chain of command, who assists the victim throughout the process.

6. Resources Available

a. Findings

i. Focus group results reveal a high level of awareness of resources available to victims of sexual assault. However, the notable exception is the junior ranks, where it is most needed.

ii. Research on best practices emphasizes the need for a coordinated, comprehensive, victim-centered approach in which law enforcement, hospital emergency departments and victim advocates work together.

iii. The challenging nature of providing resources in a deployed environment was also addressed. Extensive work is being done in this area, and we will monitor this in 2005.

b. Recommendation

Special efforts must be made to reach the junior ranks regarding resources available, e.g. information campaigns directly targeting Service members in their living quarters, as well as work and social environments.

7. Training

a. Finding

The importance of training was a common theme in our review of research into the prevention of sexual assault. In its final report, the 2004 DoD Task Force recommended that DoD develop instructional materials focusing on prevention across the total force.

b. Recommendations

i. Comprehensive training on sexual assault should be an integral and ongoing part of Professional Military Education for all levels, enlisted through General Officers, especially in commander and leadership courses.

ii. Training should emphasize that sexual assault is a crime that will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and should be delivered in the context of the core values of military Service and the mission requirements of unit cohesion and readiness.

iii. Using the official definition of sexual assault, training should clearly instruct on what sexual assault is and is not. The importance of Service members taking responsibility for their own and each other's safety and well-being should be an integral part of this training. Alcohol use should be emphasized as a serious risk factor.

iv. Sexual assault training should not be coed in order to facilitate forthright discussion and understanding.

v. Sexual assault training should cover the procedures and resources available to victims following a sexual assault, particularly at the junior grades. Service members should be instructed to seek immediate medical attention after an assault for both their own care and to enable authorities to collect the evidence necessary for prosecution. The full range of civilian and military resources should be clearly delineated, so that Service members understand that they can seek help at civilian hospitals and from civilian law enforcement in addition to their options within the military.

vi. Educational awareness efforts should include an information campaign utilizing posters, pocket cards, and other media to convey specific programs, agencies, names, addresses and phone numbers offering assistance to victims of sexual assault.

8. Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)

a. Findings

i. Articles 120, 128 and 134, UCMJ, all deal with aspects of sexual assault.

ii. Article 120, UCMJ, explanation paragraph (1)(b) "Force and lack of consent," which establishes a standard for consent, is unclear and can result in the inability to prosecute successfully.

b. Recommendations

i. Articles 120, 128 and 134, UCMJ, should be revised to clarify and more closely align with the official definition of sexual assault, ensuring that sexual assault has a clear and consistent legal standard, distinct from sexual harassment and other sex-related offenses. DoD should include these revisions in the 2006 legislative proposals.

ii. DACOWITS strongly recommends that the standard for consent be reviewed and revised to facilitate successful prosecution of sexual assault cases. These essential revisions should be implemented expeditiously.

APPENDIX A

CHARTER

Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS)

A. Official Designation: Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

B. Objectives and Scope of Activities: The Committee shall provide the Department of Defense, through the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (PDUSD) (P&R), with advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces. In addition, the Committee shall provide advice and recommendations on family issues related to the recruitment and retention of a highly qualified professional military. To accomplish this mission, the Committee shall be composed of no more than 15 civilian members, representing a distribution of demography, professional career fields, community service, and geography, and selected on the basis of their experience in the military, as a member of a military family, or with women's or family-related workforce issues. Members must be U.S. citizens selected without regard to race, creed, gender, national origin, age, marital status, or physically challenging conditions. Members are appointed by the Secretary of Defense, and shall serve as individuals and not as official representatives of any group or organization with which they may be affiliated. While the members serve at the pleasure of the Secretary of Defense, normally the term of membership is three years, with approximately one-third of the membership rotating annually. The members of the Committee shall serve without compensation, but may be allowed transportation and per diem for Government-directed travel.

C. Period of Time Necessary for the Committee to Carry Out Its Purposes: Indefinite.

D. Official to Whom the Committee Reports: The Committee reports to the PDUSD (P&R), with functional responsibilities under the staff cognizance of the Director for DACOWITS and Women's Military Matters. The PDUSD (P&R) shall appoint a Designated Federal Official (normally the Director) to approve or call each meeting, to approve the meeting agenda, to attend all meetings, and to chair meetings when so directed by the agency head. The Designated Federal Official shall have the authority to adjourn any meeting of the Committee that is not considered to be in the public interest.

E. Agency Responsible for Providing Necessary Support: The PDUSD (P&R) provides such personnel, facilities, and other administrative support necessary for the performance of the Committee's functions.

F. Duties: The duties of the Committee include assisting the Department of Defense by advising on specified matters relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the Services. In addition, the Committee will advise on family issues related to the recruitment and retention of a highly qualified professional military. In carrying out its duties, the Committee serves as a conduit of

information and advice to the Department of Defense on issues relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women and on family issues related to the recruitment and retention of a highly qualified professional military. Through its work, the Committee encourages public acceptance of military service as a citizenship responsibility and as a career field for qualified women in the Services. In addition, the Committee will actively promote family-related issues that will assist the Department in recruiting and retaining a highly qualified professional military.

G. Annual Operating Costs: It is estimated that the annual operating costs to support the Committee will not exceed $500,000, which includes staff support years, meetings, per diem, and travel costs. The annual person-years of Federal staff support for the Committee will not exceed five.

H. Number and Frequency of Committee Meetings: A minimum of two meetings shall be held annually.

I. Termination Date: The Committee shall terminate upon the completion of its mission or two years from the date this Charter is filed with the U.S. Congress.

J. Filing Date: April 17, 2004.

DACOWITS MEMBERS' BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Lynda Davis
Lynda Davis is the President of Davis O'Connell, Inc., and a Managing Partner of International Capitol Partners, LLC Asset Security Management, LLC providing government relations, management consulting, and resource development services in the areas of homeland defense and homeland security. Her career has included service at the Office of Management and Budget, the U.S. Senate Budget and Appropriations Committees, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Office of the Governor of the State of Florida. Dr. Davis has a B.A. and M.A. in Clinical Psychology and an M.P.A. and Ph.D. in Public Administration. She serves on the Boards of the National Council for Adoption, the Council for Human Rights, and INMED: Partnership for programs. She was a decorated signal officer in the Florida Army National Guard and the Army Reserve.

Senator J. P. Duniphan
J. P. Duniphan is currently a state senator for South Dakota. She served as a state representative for South Dakota for eight years where she was a committee chairman and a Majority Whip and served on the Executive Board. She is currently Chairman of the State Corrections Commission and Chairman of the Interstate Compact of Prisoners Commission. She is a business owner and a partner in Hospitality Systems Inc., Quad Investments, and the Elks II Theater. Sen. Duniphan is a member of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve State Committee of South Dakota and a member of the Rapid City Chamber of Commerce – Military Affairs Committee, Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota. She received a B.A. from Loretto Heights College in Denver, Colorado.

Bonnie Fuller Ford
Bonnie Fuller Ford is currently employed as a registered nurse in a major medical center. She is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and a member of the New Mexico Cultural Heritage Council. Her vast nursing experience ranges from home health and hospice to oncology and Cardiac Rehabilitation Center Co-director. Ms. Ford is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Nursing from the University of New Mexico.

Margaret M. Hoffmann
Margaret Hoffmann is a High School College Advisor (ret.) and a College Admission Director (ret.). She served at Bryn Mawr College, Madeira School, Virginia, Mount Vernon Seminary/Junior College, Washington, D.C., and the Washington International School, Washington, D.C. Currently, Mrs. Hoffmann serves as a Trustee of Capital Partners For Education, Schools' Committee Chair, and of The Arena Stage, Community Engagement Committee.

Lieutenant General Carol A. Mutter, USMC, Retired
Carol A. Mutter serves as the Chair, Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS). She served for over 31 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, attaining the rank of Lieutenant General. Her military experience included leadership positions in logistics, data processing, financial management, research and development, and acquisitions. Achieving many firsts for women during her career, Carol was the first woman to be qualified as Command Center Crew Commander/Space Director at U.S. Space Command (Joint Assignment); the first woman of general/flag rank to command a major deployable tactical command (3rd Force Service Support Group, Okinawa, Japan); and the first woman nominated by the President of the U.S. for three-star rank. She ended her Marine Corps career as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. She currently serves on the National Advisory Council of the Alliance for National Defense, is the Immediate Past National President of the Women Marines Association, and a Senior Fellow at the Joint Forces Staff College. She has a B.A. in Mathematics Education from the University of Northern Colorado, an M.A. in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College at Newport, RI, and an M.S. from Salve Regina College at Newport, RI.

Mary Ann Nelson
Mary Nelson has taught mathematics at all levels over the past 35 years, and is currently an Applied Mathematics instructor at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Previous college teaching positions included George Mason University, the University of Maryland Overseas Division, and Front Range Community College. Mrs. Nelson has a B.S. and M.S. in Mathematics from Marquette and George Mason University, respectively, and is currently completing her dissertation in Research and Evaluation Methodology. She was an Army spouse for 26 years including ten years in Germany and two in Moscow, Russia. In Moscow, she managed an AID program through the Commerce Department, which brought scientists and businessmen from all over the former Soviet Union to the United States for internships.

Catherine L. O'Neill
Catherine L. O'Neill is the former Commander of American Legion Pioneer Post 149 in Salem, OR. She served in the United States Army as an enlisted Signals Intelligence Analyst, where she performed top-secret work at a joint Service intelligence center in San Antonio, Texas. Upon separation from Active duty, she became a writer and commentator specializing in issues involving women in the military. Ms. O'Neill graduated from Harvard University with a B.A. degree in 1992. She also attended Yale University Divinity School and Rutgers University. She was a 1991 National Endowment for the Humanities Younger Scholar Award winner.

Susan L. Patane
Susan L. Patane is the owner of SLP Communications, specializing in environmental issues. She is also the Co-Host of Inland Empire Alive, a local cable show focusing on community programs in the Inland Empire. Prior to her career in public relations she coached gymnastics for 20 years. She coordinated a six-time award winning USA Weekend and Points of Life "Make A Different Day Project," a national day of volunteerism. Ms. Patane volunteers her expertise for The

Unforgettables Foundation, a non-profit organization devoted to assisting with burial costs for children. She earned her B.A. in Human Resources from Golden Gate University.

Colonel Darryl Ladd Pattillo, USAR, Retired
Darryl Ladd Pattillo is President of D. Ladd Pattillo & Associates, Inc., an investment-banking firm in Austin, Texas. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Rotary Club of Austin, and President of the Military Affairs Council of Austin. He serves as financial advisor to numerous local governments in Texas. He retired as an Infantry Colonel, following thirty-three years in the Army Guard and Reserve. Throughout his military career, he held various leadership and staff positions, culminating in his last assignment as Deputy Legislative Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Colonel Pattillo received a B.B.A. in Finance from the University of Texas at Austin. He graduated with a J.D. from South Texas College of Law and served four years as Assistant Attorney General of Texas. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College and the Air Force War College. Colonel Pattillo is a member of the Texas Veterans Land Board and is the Treasurer of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States.

Margaret Robson
Margaret Robson serves on the Board of Directors of the American Folk Art Museum, New York, NY, the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, the Vice President's Residence Foundation, Washington, DC, and is a Regent for the Museums of New Mexico. She has served on the Board of Directors for Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago, IL, as a Commission for the Georgia Boxing Commission, Atlanta, GA, the Board of Directors of the College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN, and the Santa Fe Art Institute, Santa Fe, NM. Former President George H.W. Bush appointed her to the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Ms. Robson received her B.A. from the University of Minnesota.

Virginia Rowell
Virginia Rowell is a Senior Cadillac Sales Director for Mary Kay Cosmetics. She previously served as the Training Instructor for the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Training Center and as an Education Program Specialist at the Vilseck, Germany Child Development Center. She earned numerous awards and recognitions through her community involvement: the Soaring Eagle Award, the highest award for community service presented by the U.S. Army Europe; the St. Joan Medallion, the outstanding Community Service Award from the Vilseck, Germany Military Community; and the Commander's Medal for Outstanding Community Service from Fort Leavenworth, KS. Ms. Rowell earned a B.A. from Marymount College, Tarrytown, NY, and attended St. John University Graduate School of Education, NY. She has been an Army spouse for over 25 years and is the mother of two Active duty soldiers.

Honorable Ellen R. Sauerbrey
Ambassador Ellen Sauerbrey is the United States Representative to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.   An educator, legislative leader, radio talk show host, writer, and political activist, Mrs. Sauerbrey is the former Minority Leader of the Maryland House of Delegates. She was the 1994 and 1998 Republican nominee for Governor of Maryland

and subsequently elected Republican National Committeewoman for Maryland. She served as a member of the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in 2001. Ambassador Sauerbrey graduated Summa Cum Laude from Western Maryland College with a B.A. degree in Biology and English and taught Biology in the Baltimore County school system.

Colonel Vance Shaw, USAFR, Retired
Vance Shaw is a retired U.S. Air Force Colonel and a Viet Nam veteran with the Legion of Merit and a Bronze Star. He currently works as a Human Resources consultant with John Snow, Inc. in Arlington, Virginia. He taught AFROTC at Tuskegee University; taught Military History at the US Air Force Academy; and taught as an Adjunct Professor for Johns Hopkins Graduate School of Business. He has facilitated over 2,000 workshops on Human Relations and Diversity. He is a member of Sigma Pi Phi-Boule Fraternity and a former member of the Board of Directors at Lake Michigan College. He has a B.A. in Psychology from Texas A&M University, an M.A. in Police Administration from Michigan State University, and an M.S. in Urban Sociology from the University of Northern Colorado.

Rosalie Silberman
Rosalie Silberman was a member of the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission from 1984-1995. She served as Vice Chairman from 1986-1995. In 1995, she was appointed as the first executive director of the United States Congress' Office of Compliance, a newly created independent regulatory agency. The agency administers and enforces the eleven anti-discrimination, labor management relations, safety, and employment laws applied to the legislative branch by the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995. She currently serves as Chairman of the Board of the Independent Women's Forum, a national, non-partisan organization that speaks for public policies, which promote a strong military, equal opportunity, and economic growth. She received her B.A. from Smith College.

APPENDIX C

INSTALLATION VISITED IN 2004 FOR FOCUS GROUPS

SITE	MEMBERS	DATES
Andrews AFB, MD	Sen. Duniphan, Mrs. Silberman, Mrs. Hoffman	4 Mar 04
March AB, Joint Reserve Base (JRB), California	Dr. Davis, Ms. Patane	16-19 Apr 03
NAS JRB Fort Worth, TX	Ms. Robson, Col. Pattillo	19-21 Apr 03
Kadena AB, Okinawa and Camp Butler, MC Okinawa	Sen. Duniphan, Mrs. Hoffmann	23-30 Apr 04
Seattle, CG, WA	Mrs. Ford, Ms. Patane	28 Apr - 1 May 04
Willow Grove ARS - Located in Pennsylvania (913th AW, 327th AS both 22nd AF)	Ms. O'Neill, Mrs. Rowell	30 Apr - 3 May 04
Iwakuni, MC Japan and Yokosuka, Navy Station Japan	Ms. Patane, Col. Shaw	7-15 May 04
Jacksonville NAS, FL	Dr. Davis, Ms. Patane	19-21 May 04
Fort Riley, Army, KS	Col. Pattillo, Ms. Robson	1-4 Jun 04
Pope AFB, NC	Ms. O'Neill, Mrs. Nelson,	16-19 Jun 04
Kodiak, CG, AK	Sen. Duniphan, Col. Shaw	22-25 Jun 04
Fort Drum, Army, NY	Ms. O'Neill	12-15 Jul 04

APPENDIX D

ACTIVE DUTY FAMILY MEMBER FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Installation: _____

Date: _____   Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Recorder: _____

# of Participants Present for Entire Session: _____

<u># of Participants Excused due to Objection to Tape:</u>
Objection:
_____
_____

<u>Info on Sponsor:</u>

Paygrade: E1-E4   E5-E6   E7-E9   W1-O3 O4-O6

For USMC   E1-E3   E4-E5   E6-E9

Service: USA   USN   USAF   USMC USCG

Military Status: Active Duty   Reserve/Guard

General Description of Participants (e.g. tired, non-responsive, peppy, …):
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

General Description of Room/Facility:
_____
_____
_____
_____

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening and welcome to our session. Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion. My name is (your name) and my colleague is (team member's name). We are civilian volunteers serving on the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services—also known as DACOWITS.

For groups with contracted recorders:
Today we also have with us (Caliber staff member name), an employee of Caliber Associates. Caliber is a civilian research firm contracted by DACOWITS to record today's discussion.

DACOWITS was established in 1951 and was re-chartered in 2002 by the Secretary of Defense. The Committee is composed of 12 civilian volunteers who are responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the Department of Defense on issues relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces. We are also tasked to examine family issues related to the recruitment and retention of a highly qualified professional military.

PROCESS

We are visiting installations throughout the country and overseas and talking to members of all branches of the military, male and female, to learn their concerns. We are also speaking to family members to learn about their particular issues. The issues we will discuss with you today include personnel retention, support during deployments, and military health care.

We want to emphasize that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law. The findings and recommendations of our Committee are based on data pooled from all installations we visit, and are communicated directly to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. We will not attribute any information to you individually or provide anyone, including commanders, information that would identify you. Our report will communicate the overall substance of the views and concerns military personnel and family members share with us.

We invite you to participate in today's discussions because we are interested in learning about your experiences and your views about military life. There is no right or wrong answer. Please feel free to share your point of view, even if it differs from what others say during our discussion.

GROUND RULES

Before we begin, let me talk about the ground rules we would like you to observe.

- *We are very interested in your individual opinions and experiences.* Keep in mind that we are interested in all of your comments, positive and negative. In most groups, some people are talkers and others prefer to stay quiet. We value everyone's thoughts and may ask you directly to contribute your thoughts to the group, or may have to cut you short in order to get more participation.

- *Please speak loud and clear.* Only one person should talk at a time. If several people are talking, we will not hear all of your comments. Also, let me emphasize the importance of respecting one another's views—all of your individual comments are important to us.

- *Our session will take about an hour-and-a-half.* We will not take a formal break.

- **(FOR THOSE WITH TAPE RECORDERS ONLY)** *We would like to tape record the session.* Your opinions are important to us and we don't want to miss any of your comments. Tape recording the discussion will help us accurately present your views. No one but members of our Committee will have access to the recording. Unless there are any objections, we will be tape recording today's session.

NOTE FOR MEMBERS: From hereon, the bold items are those that should be stated out loud. All items that are not in bold are for you to select the appropriate wording, are optional, or are further instructions for you.

WARM-UP

1. Let's begin by finding out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Please introduce yourself by telling us your name or nickname and how long you have been a/an [Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard**] family member.**

Thank you. Now we'd like to begin a series of questions about the retention of military personnel. We would like to learn more about this issue from you.

2. By a show of hands, we'd like you to tell us about your spouse's current career intentions in the armed forces. After his/her current obligation, if applicable, does he/she intend to remain in the military, leave the service, or is this undecided?

      a. How many of your spouses intend to remain in the military? Record numbers.

      b. Leave the service?

      c. Are undecided?

2a. For those of you whose spouses plan to stay in the service, what are the main factors that influenced this decision?

    Probes:
- Views of family members, spouse employment, OPTEMPO
- Promotion, career opportunities
- Service to country
- Enjoyment of the job

2b. For those of you whose spouses intend to leave the service after their current obligation, what are the main factors that influenced this decision?

    Probes:
- Pay, benefits
- Inadequate time for family
- Family stresses related to health or childcare
- Civilian sector opportunities
- Deployments/OPTEMPO

2c. For those of you whose spouses are undecided, what are the main factors that will influence this decision?

3. The military is considering a number of ways to make a career in the armed forces more flexible, such as giving the Service members the option to take an unpaid leave of absence from the military for one or two years, and then come back on Active duty. Another option might be to let the Service member transfer to the Reserves or National Guard for a number of years, then return to Active duty.

    If these options were available to your spouse, would you encourage him or her to use them?

4. If you knew these options existed, would it affect your feelings about whether your spouse stayed in or left the military? What makes you say that?

SUPPORT DURING DEPLOYMENTS

5. Now we would like to talk about support during deployments. But before we do, we'd like to ask a preliminary question. By show of hands, how many of you have experienced a deployment?

   Record number.

We are going to look at the deployment process and explore the challenges deployment brings, the support received to overcome these challenges, and your recommendations for improving the support. For those of you who have not yet been through a deployment, please answer following questions based on what you anticipate the experience will be like.

6. We would like to know, which phase of the deployment was most challenging for you and your family members, or do you anticipate being the most challenging: pre-deployment— that is, the period days and weeks immediately prior to your departure— the deployment itself, or post-deployment—the days and weeks immediately following your return.

   Please tell us by a show of hands which phase of deployment was the most difficult:

   a. **Pre-deployment** (Record number.)

   b. **Deployment**

   c. **Post-deployment**

7. We would like you to first consider the pre-deployment phase, prior to your departure. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family faced— or that you anticipate having to face— during this period?

   Probes:
   • Amount of advance notice
   • Adequacy and availability of programs/services to prepare for deployment
   • Financial and/or legal arrangements
   • Childcare arrangements/issues
   • Pet arrangements
   • Family Care Plan
   • Establishing points of contact with unit
   • Information on how to stay in communication with loved ones.

8. Now please consider your experience during the deployment itself. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced— or that you anticipate having to face— during this period?

    Probes:
- Difficulties with pay, benefits or other administrative problems
- Loneliness/isolation/depression
- Marital/family difficulties
- Communication w/ family or service member
- Getting information about the deployment (e.g., duration, possible R&R etc.)
- Adjustment to one-parent household/role changes
- Impact on children's behavior/school performance
- Special challenges for teenagers
- Lack of childcare or activities for youth

9. Please consider your actual or anticipated experiences 'post-deployment'— that is, during the days and weeks immediately following your spouse's return. What are the challenges your and your family members faced during this period?

    Probes:
- Financial difficulties
- Administrative problems
- Difficulties with reunion and readjustment
- Changes in the roles of family members
- Children's reactions
- Health care/benefits, etc.

10. For those of you who have very young children, please share the specific challenges they faced during the deployment process. What issues did you encounter with school-aged children? Teenagers?

11. When some Service members returned home early from a deployment or did not deploy at all due to personal reasons (e.g. emergency leave)**, what effect did these events have on your morale?**

12. How would you describe the support you and your family received throughout this whole process?

    Probes:
- What went well?
- What did not go well?
- Were the support programs and services you needed available and effective?
- Did your spouse's unit have a Family Support Group?
- Did you participate in the Family Support Group?

13. In many military families, the Service member's decision about whether to remain in the military is actually a joint decision— made together by both the Service member and his or her spouse.

    In what ways, if at all, did your experiences during the deployment affect your feelings about whether your spouse stayed in or left the military?

    Probe:
- Which deployment experiences were most important making you feel this way?

14. What improvements can the Services make to better support you and your family during the deployment process?

WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE ISSUES

Now, we would like to ask some questions about women's health care.

15. First, by a show of hands, how many of you have experience (either personally or within your family) with obstetrics and gynecological care related to pregnancy while your sponsor was on Active duty? Record number. If none, go to question 17.

16. Of those of you who raised your hand, how many of you received ob/gyn care related to pregnancy within military health care facilities? Record number. If none, go to question 18.

17. What do you think about the care you received in the military facilities?

    Probes:
- Access to care
- Quality of any particular services
- Confidentiality of health care received
- Satisfaction with hygiene facilities (showers, bathrooms, hand-washing, and availability of personal hygiene products)
- Vaccinations – screening for pregnancy

18. Of those who have experience with pregnancy while your sponsor was on Active duty, how many of you received some of this care in civilian facilities? Record number. If none, go to question 20.

19. What do you think about the care you received in the civilian facilities?

    Probes:
- Access to care
- Quality of any particular services
- Confidentiality of health care received
- Satisfaction with hygiene facilities (showers, bathrooms, hand-washing, and availability of personal hygiene products)
- Vaccinations – screening for pregnancy
- Out-of-pocket costs?

20. What recommendations do you have for military facilities to improve their obstetric and gynecological care related to pregnancy?

WRAP-UP

21.   Are there any other topics that you would like to mention?

END

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

We will be available for a few more minutes if you would like to mention anything else to us privately.

Once again, thank you very much.

APPENDIX E

ACTIVE DUTY PROTOCOL:
E1-E6, 01-03,W1-W3

Installation: _____

Date: _____   Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Recorder: _____

# of Participants Present for Entire Session: _____

# of participants excused: _____

Reason(s) they were excused:
_____
_____

For demographic variables below, recorder please highlight in **bold type** the appropriate category:

Paygrade: E1-E4   USMC E1-E3   W1-O3

Gender: Male   Female

Service: USA   USN   USAF   USMC   USCG

Military Status: Active Duty   Reserve/Guard

General Description of Participants (e.g. tired, non-responsive, peppy, …):
_____
_____
_____
_____

General Description of Room/Facility:
_____
_____
_____
_____

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening and welcome to our session. Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion, and thank you for your service. We're very proud of all you do! My name is (your name) and my colleague is (team member's name). We are civilian volunteers serving on the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services—also known as DACOWITS.

For groups with contracted recorders:
Today we also have with us (Caliber staff member name), an employee of Caliber Associates. Caliber is a civilian research firm contracted by DACOWITS to record today's discussion.

DACOWITS was established in 1951 and was re-chartered in 2002 by the Secretary of Defense. The Committee is composed of 12 civilian volunteers who are responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the Department of Defense on issues relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces. We are also tasked to examine family issues related to the recruitment and retention of a highly qualified professional military.

PROCESS

We are visiting installations throughout the country and overseas and talking to members of all branches of the military, male and female, to learn about your concerns. We are also speaking to family members to learn about their particular issues. The issues we will discuss with you today include personnel retention, deployment, and sexual assault.

We want to emphasize that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law. The findings and recommendations of our Committee are based on data pooled from all installations we visit, and are communicated directly to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. We will not attribute any information to you individually or provide anyone, including commanders, information that would identify you. Our report will communicate the overall substance of the views and concerns military personnel and family members share with us.

We invite you to participate in today's discussions because we are interested in learning about your experiences and your views about military life. There is no right or wrong answer. Please feel free to share your point of view, even if it differs from what others say during our discussion.

GROUND RULES

Before we begin, let me talk about the ground rules we would like you to observe.

- *We are very interested in your individual opinions and experiences.* Keep in mind that we are interested in all of your comments, positive and negative. In most groups, some people are talkers and others prefer to stay quiet. We value everyone's thoughts and may ask you directly to contribute your thoughts to the group, or may have to cut you short in order to get more participation.

- *Please speak loud and clear.* Only one person should talk at a time. If several people are talking, we will not hear all of your comments. Also, let me emphasize the importance of respecting one another's views—all of your individual comments are important to us.

- *Our session will take about an hour-and-a-half.* We will not take a formal break.

- **(FOR THOSE WITH TAPE RECORDERS ONLY)** *We would like to tape record the session.* Your opinions are important to us and we don't want to miss any of your comments. Tape recording the discussion will help us accurately present your views. No one but members of our Committee will have access to the recording. Unless there are any objections, we will be tape recording today's session.

NOTE FOR MEMBERS: From hereon, the bold items are those that should be stated out loud. All items that are not in bold are for you to select the appropriate wording, are optional, or are further instructions for you. Also note that there will be unique issues for single members, so ensure your questions/probes include them.

WARM-UP

1. **Let's begin by finding out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Please introduce yourself by telling us your name or nickname, how long you have served in the [**Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard**] and why you joined.**

   Thank you. Now we'd like to begin with a series of questions about your future military career decisions.

PERSONNEL RETENTION

2. **By a show of hands, we'd like you to tell us about your current career intentions in the armed forces. After your current obligation, do you intend to remain in the military, leave the service, or are you undecided?**

a. **How many of you intend to remain in the military?** Record numbers

b. **Leave the service?**

c. **Are undecided?**

2a. For those of you who plan to stay in the service, what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

Probes:
- Pay, benefits, job security
- Views of family members, spouse employment, OPTEMPO
- Promotion, career opportunities
- Service to country
- Enjoyment of the job

2b. For those of you who intend to leave the service after your current obligation, what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

Probes:
- Pay, benefits
- Inadequate time for family
- Family stresses related to health or childcare
- Civilian sector opportunities
- Deployments/OPTEMPO

2c. For those of you who are undecided, what are the main factors that will influence your decision?

3. Are you currently working in the job you were trained to do when you entered the military?

> If necessary for clarification:
> Army enlisted and USMC enlisted/officers: **MOS**
> Army officers: **Area of Concentration**
> Air Force enlisted and officers: **Career Specialty**
> Navy and Coast Guard enlisted: **Rating**
> Navy officers: **Designator**
> Coast Guard officers: no specializations

Probe:
- If not, how will this impact your military career decision?

4. **Would it affect your career decision if the military were able to provide a more flexible career path?**

    Probes (provide examples of career flexibility initiatives):
    - Transfer to the Reserves or National Guard for a number of years and then a return to Active duty
    - Shifting your military career field if you are qualified for a second specialty and a slot were available
    - If you had the option to take an unpaid leave of absence from the military for one or two years, and then come back on Active duty in the same specialty and the same rank, would you use it?
    - Would an extended leave program influence your decision to stay in or leave the military?

5. **Some skills in the military are in high demand in the civilian market, like the ability to speak foreign languages, work with communications technology, or pilot aircraft—just to name a few. What are the one or two main things the military should do differently to retain the people with high demand skills and characteristics?**

DEPLOYMENT

Now we would now like to discuss your deployment experiences.

6. **Please tell us by a show of hands:**

    a. **How many of you have ever been deployed?** Record number.

    b. **Of those of you who have deployed, how many of you have family members in your home? What about singles with pets?**

For those of you who have been deployed, please answer the following questions with respect to your most recent deployment. If you have never been deployed, please answer based on what you anticipate the experience would be like.

7. We would like to know, which phase of the deployment was most challenging for you and your family members, or do you anticipate being the most challenging: pre-deployment—that is, the period days and weeks immediately prior to your departure— the deployment itself, or post-deployment—the days and weeks immediately following your return.

Please tell us by a show of hands which phase of deployment was the most difficult:

      d. **Pre-deployment** (Record number.)
      e. **Deployment**
      c. **Post-deployment**

8. We would like you to first consider the pre-deployment phase, prior to your departure. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced— or that you anticipate having to face— during this period?

    Probes:
- Amount of advance notice
- Adequacy and availability of programs/services to prepare for deployment
- Financial and/or legal arrangements
- Childcare arrangements/issues
- Pet arrangements
- Family Care Plan
- Establishing points of contact with unit
- Information on how to stay in communication with loved ones.

9. Now please consider your experience during the deployment itself. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced— or that you anticipate having to face— during this period?

    Probes:
- Difficulties with pay, benefits or other administrative problems
- Loneliness/isolation/depression
- Marital/family difficulties
- Communication w/ family or service member
- Getting information about the deployment (e.g., duration, possible R&R etc.)
- Adjustment to one-parent household/role changes
- Impact on children's behavior/school performance
- Special challenges for teenagers
- Lack of childcare or activities for youth

10. [ASK IN FEMALE FOCUS GROUPS ONLY] **What deployment-related challenges did you experience—or do you anticipate— that are unique to women?**

    Probes:
- Health care (e.g., OB/GYN) for deployed women
- Differential treatment
- Harassment

11. Please consider your actual or anticipated experiences 'post-deployment'— that is, during the days and weeks immediately following your return. What are the challenges you and your family members faced during this period?

Probes:
- Financial difficulties
- Administrative problems
- Difficulties with reunion and readjustment
- Changes in the roles of family members
- Children's reactions

12. For those of you who have very young children, please share the specific challenges they faced during the deployment process. What issues did you encounter with school-aged children? Teenagers?

13. When some Service members return home early from a deployment or did not deploy at all for personal reasons (e.g. emergency leave), what effect do these events have on individual and unit morale?

14. What recommendations would you give to improve future deployments?

SEXUAL ASSAULT

The following questions deal with unit climate and are meant for everyone, regardless of whether or not you have been deployed. When we say "unit climate", we are referring to the personal and social dynamics in your unit, including factors such as unit morale, the extent to which unit members have trust in one another, whether unit members believe they are treated fairly, and the degree to which members feel unit leaders are concerned about the well-being of their [Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines].

15. When you consider the definition we have just read, to what extent do you think unit climate factors affect the decision to stay or leave the military?

16. How would you describe the current climate in your unit, or units you have been in?

Probes:
- What is morale like in the unit?
- Do unit members trust one another?
- Do unit leaders appear concerned with the well-being of their subordinates?

- Are people treated fairly?
- Is there a great deal of internal conflict in the unit?
- Is there sexual harassment and or gender harassment in the unit?

The next few questions concern the topic of sexual assault. I want to emphasize once again that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law and will not be attributed to you individually. For our purposes today, what we mean by sexual assault is: "Sexual Assault: Any of several sexual offenses in which there is no lawful consent. For the purposes of this definition, the sexual offenses are rape, forcible sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault, or an attempt to commit any of these offenses."

17. Considering this definition, in your military experience are you aware of incidents of sexual assault in your unit, installation or during deployment?

Probes: (if yes):
- Clarify location of assault: unit, installation or deployment
- Was the incident(s) reported?
- If it was not reported, do you know why?
- Is sexual assault in the military widespread or rare?

18.   If the sexual assault(s) was reported to military authorities, what was the outcome or the action taken by the authorities?

Probes:
- How was the one who reported the assault treated?
- Was the action taken satisfactory/appropriate?

19. What resources are available to address sexual assault when it occurs?

Probes:
- Specific personnel (Commanders, physicians, MPs, etc.)
- Agencies, programs or services
- Civilian care providers
- Are these resources adequate?

20. What, if any, are the barriers that might prevent a Service member from reporting TO SOMEONE IN THE MILITARY that they have been the victim of a sexual assault by another Service member?

Probes:
- Fear of retribution
- Impact on Service member's career
- Lack of confidence or trust

21. What efforts should the command make to prevent sexual assault?

Probes:
- Leadership responsibility
- Training initiatives

22. Are there any other topics that you would like to mention?

END

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions and experiences with us. Your thoughts are invaluable to our efforts to inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense on these matters. We will be available for a few more minutes if you would like to mention anything else to us privately. Once again, thank you very much.

APPENDIX F

ACTIVE DUTY PROTOCOL:
E-7 to E-9 and 04 to 06, W4-W5

Installation: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Recorder: _____

# of Participants Present for Entire Session: _____

# of participants excused: _____

Reason(s) they were excused:
_____
_____

For demographic variables below, recorder please highlight in **bold type** the appropriate category:

Paygrade: E5-E6   E7-E9   USMC E4-E5   USMC E6-E9   O4-O6

Gender: Male   Female

Service: USA   USN   USAF   USMC   USCG

Military Status: Active Duty   Reserve/Guard

General Description of Participants (e.g. tired, non-responsive, peppy, …):
_____
_____
_____
_____

General Description of Room/Facility:
_____
_____
_____
_____

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening and welcome to our session. Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion. Mutter: And thank you for your service. We're very proud of all you do! My name is (your name) and my colleague is (team member's name). We are civilian volunteers serving on the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services—also known as DACOWITS.

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Today we also have with us (Caliber staff member name), an employee of Caliber Associates. Caliber is a civilian research firm contracted by DACOWITS to record today's discussion.

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PROCESS

We are visiting installations throughout the country and overseas and talking to members of all branches of the military, male and female, to learn about your concerns. We are also speaking to family members to learn about their particular issues. The issues we will discuss with you today include personnel retention, deployment, and sexual assault.

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- *Please speak loud and clear.* Only one person should talk at a time. If several people are talking, we will not hear all of your comments. Also, let me emphasize the importance of respecting one another's views—all of your individual comments are important to us.

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WARM-UP

1. **Let's begin by finding out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Please introduce yourself by telling us your name or nickname and how long you have served in the [**Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard**] and why you joined.**

   Thank you. Now we'd like to begin with a series of questions about your military career decisions.

PERSONNEL RETENTION

2. **By a show of hands, we'd like you to tell us if, you will be staying to retirement or beyond 20 years.**

    a. **How many of you will be staying in the military until 20 years?** Record numbers
    b. **Staying beyond 20 years?**
    c. **Are undecided?**

2a. For those of you continuing to twenty years and beyond, what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

    Probes:
- Retirement pay/benefits
- Current pay, benefits
- Job security
- Views of family members, spouse employment, OPTEMPO
- Promotion, career opportunities
- Service to country
- Enjoyment of the job

2b. For those of you who will leave before twenty years or at 20 years what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

    Probes:
- Pay, benefits
- Inadequate time for family
- Family stresses related to health or childcare
- Civilian sector opportunities
- Deployments/OPTEMPO

3. **What were the main factors that influenced your decision to stay in the military past your first term or obligation, and then to make the military a career?**

4. **Are you currently working in the career field you chose when you entered the military?**

> <u>If necessary for clarification:</u>
> USMC enlisted and officer and Army enlisted: **MOS**
> For Army officer: **Area of Concentration**
> Air Force enlisted and officer: **Career Specialty**
> Navy and Coast Guard enlisted: **Rating**
> Navy officer: **Designator**
> Coast Guard officer: no specializations

Probe
- If not, has this ever influenced your decision about staying in or leaving the military?

5. For those of you who are considering leaving the military before 20 years or at 20 years would it affect your career decision if the military were able to provide a more flexible career path?

Probes (provide examples of career flexibility initiatives):
- Shifting career fields if you are qualified for another field and a slot were available
- Transfer to the Reserves or National Guard for a number of years and then a return to Active duty.
- If you had the option to take an unpaid leave of absence from the military for one or two years, and then come back on Active duty in the same specialty and the same rank, would you use it?
- Would an extended leave program influence your decision to stay in or leave the military?

6. Do you believe the military has provided you a flexible career path?

7. Many skills in the military are in high demand in the civilian market, like the ability to speak foreign languages, work with communications technology, or pilot aircraft. What are the one or two main things the military should do differently to retain the people with high demand skills and characteristics?

DEPLOYMENT

Now we would now like to discuss your deployment experiences.

8. Please tell us by a show of hands:

    a. How many of you have been deployed? Record number.

    b. Of those of you who have deployed, how many of you have family members in your home? What about singles with pets?

9. We would like to know, which phase of the deployment was most challenging for you and your family members, or do you anticipate being the most challenging: pre-deployment—that is, the period days and weeks immediately prior to your departure— the deployment itself, or post-deployment—the days and weeks immediately following your return.

Please tell us by a show of hands which phase of deployment was the most difficult:

    f. Pre-deployment (Record number.)

    g. Deployment

    c. Post-deployment

10. For those who have been deployed, we would like you to first consider your experiences during the pre-deployment phase, prior to your departure. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced during this period?

Probes:
- Amount of advance notice
- Adequacy and availability of programs/services to prepare for deployment
- Financial and/or legal arrangements
- Childcare arrangements/issues
- Pet arrangements
- Family Care Plan
- Establishing points of contact with unit
- Information on how to stay in communication with loved ones

11. Now please consider your experience during the deployment itself. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced during this period?

Probes:
- Difficulties with pay, benefits or other administrative problems
- Loneliness/isolation/depression
- Marital/family difficulties
- Communication w/ family or service member
- Getting information about the deployment (e.g., duration, possible R&R etc.)
- Adjustment to one-parent household/role changes
- Impact on children's behavior/school performance
- Special challenges for teenagers
- Lack of childcare or activities for youth

12. [FEMALE FOCUS GROUPS ONLY] **What challenges or hardships did you experience during the deployment that you feel were unique for women?**

- Health care (e.g., OB/GYN) for deployed women
- Differential treatment
- Harassment

13. Now please consider your experiences 'post-deployment'— that is, during the days and weeks immediately following your return. What are the challenges you and your family members faced during this period?

- Financial difficulties
- Administrative problems
- Difficulties with reunion and readjustment
- Changes the roles of family members
- Children's reactions

14. For those of you who have very young children, please share the specific challenges they faced during the deployment process. What issues did you encounter with school-aged children? Teenagers?

15. When some Service members return home early from a deployment or did not deploy at all due to personal reasons (e.g. emergency leave), what effect do these events have on individual and unit morale?

16. What recommendations would you give to improve future deployments?

SEXUAL ASSAULT

The following questions deal with unit climate and are meant for everyone, regardless of whether or not you have been deployed. When we say "unit climate", we are referring to the personal and social dynamics in your unit, including factors such as unit morale, the extent to which unit members have trust in one another, whether unit members believe they are treated fairly, and the degree to which members feel unit leaders are concerned about the well-being of their [Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines]. As senior NCOs and Officers who have often had the opportunity to lead Soldiers, Sailors Airmen and Marines, we feel you are uniquely qualified to answer these questions.

17. When you consider the definition we have just read, to what extent do you think unit climate factors affect the decision to stay or leave the military?

18. How would you describe the current climate in your unit, or units you have been in?

    Probes:
- What is morale like in the unit?
- Do unit members trust one another?
- Do unit leaders appear concerned with the well-being of their subordinates?
- Are people treated fairly?
- Is there a great deal of internal conflict in the unit?
- Is there sexual harassment and or gender harassment in the unit?

The next few questions concern the topic of sexual assault. I want to emphasize once again that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law and will not be attributed to you individually. Again , your unique experiences as leaders is important in addressing these issues. For our purposes today, what we mean by sexual assault is: Any of several sexual offenses in which there is no lawful consent. For the purposes of this definition, the sexual offenses are rape, forcible sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault, or an attempt to commit any of these offenses.

19. Considering this definition, in your military experience are you aware of incidents of sexual assault in your unit, installation or during deployment?

    Probes: (if yes):

- Clarify location of assault: unit, installation or deployment
- Was the incident(s) reported?
- If it was not reported, do you know why?
- Is sexual assault in the military widespread or rare?

20. If the sexual assault(s) was reported to military authorities, what was the outcome or the action taken by the authorities?

    Probes:
- How was the one who reported the assault treated?
- Was the action taken satisfactory/appropriate?

21. What resources are available to address sexual assault when it occurs?

Probes:
- Specific personnel (Commanders, physicians, MPs, etc.)
- Agencies, programs or services
- Civilian care providers
- Are these resources adequate?

22. What, if any, are the barriers that might prevent a Service member from reporting TO SOMEONE IN THE MILITARY that they have been the victim of a sexual assault by another Service member?

Probes:
- Fear of retribution
- Impact on Service member's career
- Lack of confidence or trust

23. What efforts should the command make to prevent sexual assault?

Probes:
- Leadership responsibility
- Training initiatives

24. Are there any other topics that you would like to mention?

END

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions and experiences with us. Your thoughts are invaluable to our efforts to inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense on these matters. We will be available for a few more minutes if you would like to mention anything else to us privately.

Once again, thank you very much.

APPENDIX G

FINAL RESERVE/NATIONAL GUARD PROTOCOL: E1-E6, W1-W3, O1-O3

Installation: _____

Date: _____   Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Recorder: _____

# of Participants Present for Entire Session: _____

# of participants excused: _____

Reason(s) they were excused:
_____
_____

For demographic variables below, recorder please highlight in **bold type** the appropriate category:

Paygrade: E1-E4   E5-E6   USMC E1-E3   USMC E4-E5   W1-W2/O1-O3   O4-O5

Gender: Male   Female

Service: USA   USN   USAF   USMC   USCG

Military Status: Active Duty   **Reserve/National Guard**

General Description of Participants (e.g. tired, non-responsive, peppy, …):
_____
_____
_____
_____

General Description of Room/Facility:
_____
_____
_____
_____

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening and welcome to our session. Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion. Mutter: And thank you for your service. We're very proud of all you do! My name is (your name) and my colleague is (team member's name). We are civilian volunteers serving on the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services—also known as DACOWITS.

For groups with contracted recorders:
Today we also have with us (Caliber staff member name), an employee of Caliber Associates. Caliber is a civilian research firm contracted by DACOWITS to record today's discussion.

DACOWITS was established in 1951 and was re-chartered in 2002 by the Secretary of Defense. The Committee is composed of 12 civilian volunteers who are responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the Department of Defense on issues relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces. We are also tasked to examine family issues related to the recruitment and retention of a highly qualified professional military.

PROCESS

We are visiting installations throughout the country and overseas and talking to members of all branches of the military, male and female, to learn about your concerns. We are also speaking to family members to learn about their particular issues. The issues we will discuss with you today include personnel retention, deployment, and sexual assault.

We want to emphasize that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law. The findings and recommendations of our Committee are based on data pooled from all installations we visit, and are communicated directly to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. We will not attribute any information to you individually or provide anyone, including commanders, information that would identify you. Our report will communicate the overall substance of the views and concerns military personnel and family members share with us.

We invite you to participate in today's discussions because we are interested in learning about your experiences and your views about military life. There is no right or wrong answer. Please feel free to share your point of view, even if it differs from what others say during our discussion.

GROUND RULES

Before we begin, let me talk about the ground rules we would like you to observe.

- ***We are very interested in your individual opinions and experiences.*** Keep in mind that we are interested in all of your comments, positive and negative. In most groups, some people are talkers and others prefer to stay quiet. We value everyone's thoughts and may ask you directly to contribute your thoughts to the group, or may have to cut you short in order to get more participation.

- *Please speak loud and clear.* Only one person should talk at a time. If several people are talking, we will not hear all of your comments. Also, let me emphasize the importance of respecting one another's views—all of your individual comments are important to us.

- *Our session will take about an hour-and-a-half.* We will not take a formal break..

- **(FOR THOSE WITH TAPE RECORDERS ONLY)** *We would like to tape record the session.* Your opinions are important to us and we don't want to miss any of your comments. Tape recording the discussion will help us accurately present your views. No one but members of our Committee will have access to the recording. Unless there are any objections, we will be tape recording today's session.

NOTE FOR MEMBERS: From hereon, the bold items are those that should be stated out loud. All items that are not in bold are for you to select the appropriate wording, are optional, or are further instructions for you. Also note that there will be unique issues for single members, so ensure your questions/probes include them.

<div align="center">

WARM-UP

</div>

1. **Let's begin by finding out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Please introduce yourself by telling us your name or nickname and how long you have served in the** [Army Reserve/National Guard, Air Force Reserve/National Guard, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve]**, and why you joined.**

<div align="center">

PERSONNEL RETENTION

</div>

2. **By a show of hands, we'd like you to tell us about your intentions regarding your service in the Reserve/National Guard. After your current obligation, do you intend to remain in the Reserve/National Guard, leave the Reserve/National Guard, or are you undecided?**

   a. **How many of you intend to remain in the Reserve/National Guard?** Record numbers

   b. **Leave the Reserve/National Guard?**

   c. **Are undecided?**

2a. For those of you who plan to stay in the Reserve/National Guard, what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

Probes:
- Pay, benefits, bonus money
- Views of family members
- Opportunity to mobilize or deploy
- Promotion, career opportunities
- Service to country
- Enjoyment of being in the Reserve/National Guard

2b. For those of you who will leave the Reserve/National Guard after your current obligation, what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

Probes:
- Pay, benefits
- Leaving to pursue education opportunities/use G.I. Bill benefits
- Impact of mobilization/deployment on family
- Impact of mobilization/deployment on career or employer
- Family stresses related to health or childcare
- Leadership/climate in the unit
- Not being used in my MOS

2c. For those of you who are undecided, what are the main factors that will influence your decision?

3. Are you currently working in the job you were trained to do when you entered the Reserve/National Guard?

> If necessary for clarification:
> USMC enlisted and officer and Army enlisted: **MOS**
> For Army officer: **Area of Concentration**
> Air Force enlisted and officer: **Career Specialty**
> Navy and Coast Guard enlisted: **Rating**
> Navy officer: **Designator**
> Coast Guard officer: no specializations

Probe
- If not, how will this impact your decision to stay in the Reserve/National Guard?

4. **Have your opinions about staying in the Reserve/National Guard been affected by the intention to increase the deployment of the Reserve/National Guard to support operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.**

   Probe
   - Do you think this will have a negative effect on the retention of your fellow Reserve/National Guard?

5. **Many skills found in the Reserve/National Guard are in high demand in the civilian market, like the ability to speak foreign languages, work with communications technology, or pilot aircraft. What are the one or two main things the Reserve/National Guard should do differently to recruit and retain people with high demand skills and characteristics?**

DEPLOYMENT

Now we would like to discuss your deployment experiences.

6. **Please tell us by a show of hands:**

   a. **How many of you have ever been deployed?** Record number.

   b. **Of those of you who have deployed, how many of you have family members in your home? What about singles with pets?**

   For those of you who have been deployed, please answer the following questions based on your most recent deployment. If you have never been deployed, please answer based on what you anticipate the experience would be like.

7. **We would like to know, which phase of the deployment was most challenging for you and your family members, or do you anticipate being the most challenging: pre-deployment—that is, the period days and weeks immediately prior to your departure—the deployment itself, or post-deployment—the days and weeks immediately following your return.**

   Please tell us by a show of hands which phase of deployment was the most difficult:

   a. **Pre-deployment** (Record number.)

   b. **Deployment**

   c. **Post-deployment**

8. **We would like you to first consider the pre-deployment phase, prior to your departure. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced – or that you anticipate having to face – during this period?**

   Probes:
   - Amount of advance notice
   - Knowledge of installation/unit support services (e.g., family support center, ombudsman, key volunteers, unit family support group or family readiness group)
   - Adequacy and convenience of programs/services to prepare for deployment
   - Financial and/or legal arrangements (e.g., bank, will, powers of attorney, credit cards)
   - Childcare arrangements
   - Pet arrangements
   - Family Care Plan
   - Establishing points of contact with unit
   - Farewells to family/multiple goodbyes due to changed deployment dates
   - Information on how to stay in communication with loved ones
   - Issues with you or your spouse's civilian employer

9. **Now please consider your experience during the deployment itself. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced during this period?**

   Probes:
   - Access to installation/unit support services (e.g., family support center, ombudsman, key volunteer, unit family support group or family readiness group)
   - Difficulties with pay, benefits or other administrative problems (e.g., changes in health care providers, such as switching to TRICARE)
   - Loneliness/isolation/depression
   - Marital/family difficulties
   - Communication w/ family or service member
   - Getting information about the deployment (e.g., duration, possible R&R etc.)
   - Adjustment to one-parent household/role changes
   - Impact on children (e.g., problem behaviors, poor academic performance or emotional adjustment).
   - Special challenges for teenagers
   - Lack of childcare or activities for youth
   - Issues with your or your spouse's civilian employer

10. [FEMALE FOCUS GROUPS ONLY] **What challenges or hardships did you experience during the deployment that you feel were unique for women?**

Probes:
- Health care (e.g., OB/GYN) for deployed women
- Differential treatment
- Harassment

11. **Now please consider your experiences 'post-deployment'— that is, during the days and weeks immediately following your return. What were the challenges you and your family members faced during this period?**

Probes:
- Financial difficulties/difficulties re-establishing civilian employment
- Administrative problems (e.g., receipt of pay and benefits; TRICARE)
- Difficulties with reunion and readjustment with spouse and/or children
- Changes in the roles of family members
- Children's reactions
- Psychological effects of deployment, including access to needed care (e.g., counseling for PTSD)

12. **Did the deployment impact your family's income or cause any problems for your civilian employer?**

Probes:
- Did your family lose income, stay the same, or gain income?
- Was your employer supportive?
- Did you feel you were at a significant disadvantage in the workplace after having returned from the deployment as a result of being gone (e.g., lost opportunity for promotion, etc.)?

13. **Are you aware if Reserve/National Guard family members take advantage of installation and/or unit support programs and services, such as family support groups and programs, support centers, volunteer networks or ombudsmen?** [Note: programs are service-specific; list as appropriate].

Probes:
- Do Reserve/National Guard family members know about these services?
- Did they use these services?
- Were these services convenient to use, and easy to access?
- Was spouse's distance from base a factor?
- Can you tell us how to make family members more aware of these services, or how they can be made more accessible?

14. For those of you who have very young children, please share the specific challenges they faced during the deployment process. What issues did you encounter with school-aged children? Teenagers?

15. When some Reserve/National Guard members return home early from a deployment or did not deploy at all due to personal reasons (e.g. emergency leave), what effect do these events have on individual and unit morale?

16. What recommendations would you give to improve future deployments?

SEXUAL ASSAULT

The following questions deal with unit climate and are meant for everyone, regardless of whether or not you have been deployed. When we say "unit climate", we are referring to the personal and social dynamics in your unit, including factors such as unit morale, the extent to which unit members have trust in one another, whether unit members believe they are treated fairly, and the degree to which members feel unit leaders are concerned about the well-being of their [Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines].

17. When you consider the definition we have just read, to what extent do you think unit climate factors affect the decision to stay or leave the military?

18. How would you describe the current climate in your unit, or units you have been in?

Probes:
- What is morale like in the unit?
- Do unit members trust one another?
- Do unit leaders appear concerned with the well-being of their subordinates?
- Are people treated fairly?
- Is there a great deal of internal conflict in the unit?
- Is there sexual harassment and or gender harassment in the unit?

The next few questions concern the topic of sexual assault. I want to emphasize once again that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law and will not be attributed to you individually. Again , your unique experiences as leaders is important in addressing these issues. For our purposes today, what we mean by sexual assault is: Any of several sexual offenses in which there is no lawful consent. For the purposes of this definition, the sexual offenses are rape, forcible sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault, or an attempt to commit any of these offenses.

19. Considering this definition, in your military experience are you aware of incidents of sexual assault in your unit, installation or during deployment?

Probes: (if yes):
- Clarify location of assault: unit, installation or deployment
- Was the incident(s) reported?
- If it was not reported, do you know why?
- Is sexual assault in the military widespread or rare?

20. If the sexual assault(s) was reported to military authorities, what was the outcome or the action taken by the authorities?

Probes:
- How was the one who reported the assault treated?
- Was the action taken satisfactory/appropriate?

21. What resources are available to address sexual assault when it occurs?

Probes:
- Specific personnel (Commanders, physicians, MPs, etc.)
- Agencies, programs or services
- Civilian care providers
- Are these resources adequate?

22. What, if any, are the barriers that might prevent a Reserve/National Guard member from reporting TO SOMEONE IN THE MILITARY that they have been the victim of a sexual assault by another Service or Reserve/National Guard member?

Probes:
- Fear of retribution
- Impact on Reserve/National Guard member's career
- Lack of confidence or trust

23. What efforts should the command make to prevent sexual assault?

Probes:
- Leadership responsibility
- Training initiatives

24. Are there any other topics that you would like to mention?

END

APPENDIX H

FINAL RESERVE/NATIONAL GUARD PROTOCOL: E-7 to E-9 and 04 to 06, W4-W5

Installation: _____

Date: _____   Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Recorder: _____

# of Participants Present for Entire Session: _____

# of participants excused: _____

Reason(s) they were excused:
_____
_____

For demographic variables below, recorder please highlight in **bold type** the appropriate category:

Paygrade: E7-E9   USMC E6-E9   W3-O6

Gender: Male   Female

Service: USA   USN   USAF   USMC   USCG

Military Status: Active Duty   **Reserve/National Guard**

General Description of Participants (e.g. tired, non-responsive, peppy, …):
_____
_____
_____
_____

General Description of Room/Facility:
_____
_____
_____
_____

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon/evening and welcome to our session. Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion. Mutter: And thank you for your service. We're very proud of all you do! My name is (your name) and my colleague is (team member's name). We are civilian volunteers serving on the Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services—also known as DACOWITS.

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PROCESS

We are visiting installations throughout the country and overseas and talking to members of all branches of the military, male and female, to learn about your concerns. We are also speaking to family members to learn about their particular issues. The issues we will discuss with you today include personnel retention, deployment, and sexual assault.

We want to emphasize that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law. The findings and recommendations of our Committee are based on data pooled from all installations we visit, and are communicated directly to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. We will not attribute any information to you individually or provide anyone, including commanders, information that would identify you. Our report will communicate the overall substance of the views and concerns military personnel and family members share with us.

We invite you to participate in today's discussions because we are interested in learning about your experiences and your views about military life. There is no right or wrong answer. Please feel free to share your point of view, even if it differs from what others say during our discussion.

GROUND RULES

Before we begin, let me talk about the ground rules we would like you to observe.

- ***We are very interested in your individual opinions and experiences.*** Keep in mind that we are interested in all of your comments, positive and negative. In most groups,

some people are talkers and others prefer to stay quiet. We value everyone's thoughts and may ask you directly to contribute your thoughts to the group, or may have to cut you short in order to get more participation.

- *Please speak loud and clear.* Only one person should talk at a time. If several people are talking, we will not hear all of your comments. Also, let me emphasize the importance of respecting one another's views—all of your individual comments are important to us.

- *Our session will take about an hour-and-a-half.* We will not take a formal break..

- **(FOR THOSE WITH TAPE RECORDERS ONLY)** *We would like to tape record the session.* Your opinions are important to us and we don't want to miss any of your comments. Tape recording the discussion will help us accurately present your views. No one but members of our Committee will have access to the recording. Unless there are any objections, we will be tape recording today's session.

NOTE FOR MEMBERS: From hereon, the bold items are those that should be stated out loud. All items that are not in bold are for you to select the appropriate wording, are optional, or are further instructions for you. Also note that there will be unique issues for single members, so ensure your questions/probes include them.

WARM-UP

1. **Let's begin by finding out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Please introduce yourself by telling us your name or nickname and how long you have served in the** [Army Reserve/National Guard, Air Force Reserve/National Guard, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve**] and why you joined.**

PERSONNEL RETENTION

2. **By a show of hands, we'd like you to tell us about your intentions regarding your service in the Reserve/National Guard. Will you will be staying to retirement, or beyond 20 years?**

    a. **How many of you will be staying in the Reserve/National Guard until 20 years?**
    Record numbers

    b. **Staying beyond 20 years?**

    c. **Are undecided?**

2a. For those of you continuing to 20 years and beyond in the Reserve/National Guard, what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

> Probes:
> - Pay, benefits, bonus money
> - Views of family members
> - Opportunity to mobilize or deploy
> - Promotion, career opportunities
> - Service to country
> - Enjoyment of being in the Reserve/National Guard

2b. For those of you who will leave the Reserve/National Guard before 20 years or at 20 years, what are the main factors that influenced your decision?

> Probes:
> - Pay, benefits
> - Leaving to pursue education opportunities/use G.I. Bill benefits
> - Impact of mobilization/deployment on family
> - Impact of mobilization/deployment on career or employer
> - Family stresses related to health or childcare
> - Leadership/climate in the unit
> - Not being used in my MOS

2c. For those of you who are undecided, what are the main factors that will influence your decision?

3. What were the main factors that influenced your decision to stay in the Reserve/National Guard past your first term or obligation, and then to make the Reserve/National Guard a career?

4. Are you currently working in the career field you chose when you entered the Reserve/National Guard?

> | |
> | --- |
> | <u>If necessary for clarification:</u>
USMC enlisted and officer and Army enlisted: **MOS**
For Army officer: **Area of Concentration**
Air Force enlisted and officer: **Career Specialty**
Navy and Coast Guard enlisted: **Rating**
Navy officer: **Designator**
Coast Guard officer: no specializations |

> Probe
> - If not, has this ever influenced your decision about staying in or leaving the Reserve/National Guard?

5. Have your opinions about staying in the Reserve/National Guard been affected by the intention to increase the deployment of the Reserve/National Guard to support operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Probe
- Do you think this will have a negative effect on the retention of your fellow Reserve/National Guard?

6. Many skills in the military are in high demand in the civilian market, like the ability to speak foreign languages, work with communications technology, or pilot aircraft. What are the one or two main things the Reserve/National Guard should do differently to recruit and retain the people with high demand skills and characteristics?

DEPLOYMENT

Now we would like to discuss your deployment experiences.

7. Please tell us by a show of hands:

    a. **How many of you have been deployed? Record numbers**
    b. **Of those of you who have deployed, how many of you have family members in your home? What about singles with pets?**

For those of you who have been deployed, please answer the following questions based on your most recent deployment. If you have never been deployed, please answer based on what you anticipate the experience would be like.

8. We would like to know, which phase of the deployment was most challenging for you and your family members, or do you anticipate being the most challenging: pre-deployment—that is, the period days and weeks immediately prior to your departure—the deployment itself, or post-deployment—the days and weeks immediately following your return?

Please tell us by a show of hands which phase of deployment was the most difficult:

    a. **Pre-deployment** Record numbers

    b. **Deployment**

    c. **Post-deployment**

9. **We would like you to first consider the pre-deployment phase, prior to your departure. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced – or that you anticipate having to face – during this period?**

    Probes:
    - Amount of advance notice
    - Knowledge of installation/unit support services (e.g., family support center, ombudsman, key volunteers, unit family support group or family readiness group)
    - Adequacy and convenience of programs/services to prepare for deployment
    - Financial and/or legal arrangements (e.g., bank, will, powers of attorney, credit cards)
    - Childcare arrangements
    - Pet arrangements
    - Family Care Plan
    - Establishing points of contact with unit
    - Farewells to family/multiple goodbyes due to changed deployment dates
    - Information on how to stay in communication with loved ones
    - Issues with you or your spouse's civilian employer

10. **Now please consider your experience during the deployment itself. What were the most difficult challenges you and your family members faced during this period?**

    Probes:
    - Access to installation/unit support services (e.g., family support center, ombudsman, key volunteer, unit family support group or family readiness group)
    - Difficulties with pay, benefits or other administrative problems (e.g., changes in health care providers, such as switching to TRICARE)
    - Loneliness/isolation/depression
    - Marital/family difficulties
    - Communication w/ family or service member
    - Getting information about the deployment (e.g., duration, possible R&R etc.)
    - Adjustment to one-parent household/role changes
    - Impact on children (e.g., problem behaviors, poor academic performance or emotional adjustment).
    - Special challenges for teenagers
    - Lack of childcare or activities for youth
    - Issues with your or your spouse's civilian employer

11.   [FEMALE FOCUS GROUPS ONLY] **What challenges or hardships did you experience during the deployment that you feel were unique for women?**

- Health care (e.g., OB/GYN) for deployed women
- Differential treatment
- Harassment

12. **Now please consider your experiences 'post-deployment'— that is, during the days and weeks immediately following your return. What are the challenges you and your family members faced during this period?**

Probes:
- Financial difficulties/difficulties re-establishing civilian employment
- Administrative problems (e.g., receipt of pay and benefits; TRICARE)
- Difficulties with reunion and readjustment with spouse and/or children
- Changes in the roles of family members
- Children's reactions
- Psychological effects of deployment, including access to needed care (e.g., counseling for PTSD)

13. **Did the deployment impact your family's income or cause any problems for your civilian employer?**

Probes:
- Did your family lose income, stay the same, or gain income?
- Was your employer supportive?
- Did you feel you were at a significant disadvantage in the workplace after having returned from the deployment as a result of being gone (e.g., lost opportunity for promotion, etc.)?

14. **Are you aware if Reserve/National Guard family members take advantage of installation and/or unit support programs and services, such as family support groups and programs, support centers, volunteer networks or ombudsmen?** [Note: programs are service-specific; list as appropriate].

Probes:
- Do Reserve/National Guard family members know about these services?
- Did they use these services?
- Were these services convenient to use, and easy to access?
- Was spouse's distance from base a factor?
- Can you tell us how to make family members more aware of these services, or how they can be made more accessible?

15. For those of you who have very young children, please share the specific challenges they faced during the deployment process. What issues did you encounter with school-aged children? Teenagers?

16. When some Reserve/National Guard members return home early from a deployment or did not deploy at all for personal reasons (e.g. emergency leave), what effect do these events have on individual and unit morale?

17. What recommendations would you give to improve future deployments?

SEXUAL ASSAULT

The following questions deal with unit climate and are meant for everyone, regardless of whether or not you have been deployed. When we say "unit climate", we are referring to the personal and social dynamics in your unit, including factors such as unit morale, the extent to which unit members have trust in one another, whether unit members believe they are treated fairly, and the degree to which members feel unit leaders are concerned about the well-being of their [Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines]. As senior NCO and Officers who have often had the opportunity to lead Soldiers, Sailors Airmen and Marines, we feel you are uniquely qualified to answer these questions.

18. When you consider the definition we have just read, to what extent do you think unit climate factors affect the decision to stay or leave the military?

19. How would you describe the current climate in your unit, or units you have been in?

Probes:
- What is morale like in the unit?
- Do unit members trust one another?
- Do unit leaders appear concerned with the well-being of their subordinates?
- Are people treated fairly?
- Is there a great deal of internal conflict in the unit?
- Is there sexual harassment and/or gender harassment in the unit?

The next few questions concern the topic of sexual assault. I want to emphasize once again that all of the information you choose to share with us is confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law and will not be attributed to you individually. Again, your unique experiences as leaders is important in addressing these issues. For our purposes today, what we mean by sexual assault is: Any of several sexual offenses in which there is no lawful consent. For the purposes of this definition, the sexual offenses are rape, forcible

sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault, or an attempt to commit any of these offenses.

20. Considering this definition, in your military experience are you aware of incidents of sexual assault in your unit, installation or during deployment?

Probes: (if yes):

- Clarify location of assault: unit, installation or deployment
- Was the incident(s) reported?
- If it was not reported, do you know why?
- Is sexual assault in the military widespread or rare?

21. If the sexual assault(s) was reported to military authorities, what was the outcome or the action taken by the authorities?

Probes:
- How was the one who reported the assault treated?
- Was the action taken satisfactory/appropriate?

22. What resources are available to address sexual assault when it occurs?

Probes:
- Specific personnel (Commanders, physicians, MPs, etc.)
- Agencies, programs or services
- Civilian care providers
- Are these resources adequate?

23. What, if any, are the barriers that might prevent a Reserve/National Guard member from reporting TO SOMEONE IN THE MILITARY that they have been the victim of a sexual assault by another Service or Reserve/National Guard member?

Probes:
- Fear of retribution
- Impact on Reserve/National Guard member's career
- Lack of confidence or trust

24. What efforts should the command make to prevent sexual assault?

Probes:
- Leadership responsibility
- Training initiatives

25. Are there any other topics that you would like to mention?

END

APPENDIX I

BRIEFINGS PRESENTED TO DACOWITS DURING FY04 BUSINESS MEETINGS

"Personnel Tempo: Active and Reserve Components," presented by Mr. Terry Mintz, Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy.

"Service Tempo Definitions," introduced by LCDR Shannon Thaeler, DACOWITS, and presented by each of the Service Points of Contact (POCs): Captain Carol Schmidt, U.S. Navy; Scott II, James Colonel, U.S. Army Reserve National Guard; Coplen, Lorelei E. W. Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army; Surman, Katherine Commander, U.S. Navy; Bauer, Larry, U.S. Marine Corps; U.S. Marine Corps; Flattery, Melissa L. Major, U.S. Air Force.

"U.S. Navy Perstempo Briefing," presented by LT Sarah T. Self-Kyler, Office of Women's Policy, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower and Personnel).

"Headquarters Marine Corps Status of Forces Brief," presented by LtCol James Western, Exercise Plans Officer, Commandant of the Marine Corps Plans, Policy and Operations.

"Marines Corps Climate Assessment Task Force," presented by LtCol Denice Williams, Program Liaison Officer, Equal Opportunity Branch, Manpower Plans and Policy Division, Headquarters Marine Corps and MGySgt Michael McNeal, Senior Equal Opportunity Advisor, Manpower Equal Opportunity Management Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps.

"Concurrent Operations – A Review of Army OPTEMPO 2003 and 2004," presented by LTC Thomas Steinbrunner, Army Operations Center Briefing Team Supervisor.

"USAF OPS/PERSTEMPO," presented by Brig Gen Teresa Marne Peterson, Director, Operations and Training, Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations, Headquarters Air Force.

"Retention and the USCG Survey System," presented by Stephen B. Wehrenberg, Ph.D., Chief of Human Resource Capability Development, United States Coast Guard, and Director of *Future Force*.

"USAF Retention Related Survey," presented by MSgt Maria Cornelia, Chief, Accession and Retention Bonus Programs for the USAF.

"Argus [Navy] Officer Retention," presented by Dr. Jacqueline Mottern, Director, Selection and Classification, Navy Personnel Research, Studies and Technology Department.

"Marine Corps Retention," presented by Capt Parke Paulson, Program Analyst, Manpower Plans and Policy, Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

"Women in the Army: Officer Career Plans, Officer Reasons for Leaving, and Officer and Enlisted Trends in Attitudes," presented by Dr. Bonita J. Soley, Survey Statistician, Army Personnel Survey Office, U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

"Army Non-Deployable Briefing," presented by LTC Joel Williams, Readiness Policy Officer, Army G-1.

"Fiscal Year 2003 Commissioned Officer Rates of Active Duty and Selected Reserve Separations," presented by Ms. Samantha Walker and Ms. Angela McGinnis, Information Technology Specialists on the Users Team, Management, Information and Analysis Division (MI&AD), Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC).

"FY03 Female Healthcare Issues in the CENTCOM AOR (Central Command Area of Responsibility)," ideas presented by Capt Kate Surman, the Health Affairs POC, and Ms. Cynthia Bingham, the Joint Staff.

"Embedded Media and Military Families," presented by Dr. Morten Ender, Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership, United States Military Academy.

"National Military Family Association (NMFA) Study on Families and Deployment," presented by Joyce Wessel Raezer, Director Government Relations, NMFA.

"Department of Defense Task Force Report on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault," presented by Ellen P. Embrey, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Force Health Protection and Readiness and Task Force Director.

"Armed Forces 2002 Sexual Harassment Survey," presented by Rachel Lipari, Social Science Analyst in Program Evaluation Branch.

"Navy Sexual Assault Victim Intervention Program (SAVI)," presented by the Survey and Program Evaluation branch at DMDC by Ms. Julia Powell, Navy SAVI Program Manager.

"Army Sexual Assault Procedures," presented by Col Bill Condron, Office of the Judge Advocate General, U.S. Army.

"Air Force Sexual Assault Procedures," presented by Mrs. Charlene Bradley, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Air Force Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

"Marine Corps Sexual Assault Procedures," presented by Major Chris Carlson, Deputy, Military Law Branch, Headquarters USMC.

"Coast Guard Rape and Sexual Assault," presented by Capt Ruth Torres, U.S. Public Health Service, Human Resources Directorate, Chief Individual and Family Support Division, Office of the Work-life.

"Reserve Survey Results," presented by Col James L. "Scotty" Scott II, Director, Individual & Family Support Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs.

"Navy Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) Retention," presented by Capt Dan Holloway, PERS-41, Head of Surface Warfare Assignments.

"Army Pregnancy Policy," presented by Ms. Lisa J. Young, Health Educator/Project Leader at the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine in the Directorate of Health Promotion and Wellness at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.

"Navy Pregnancy Policy," presented by LT Sarah Self-Kyler, Office of Women Policy, Headquarters, U.S. Navy.

"Air Force Pregnancy Policy," presented by Col Jon R. Pearse, Chief of Policy, Medical Operations Office of the Surgeon General, USAF and Lt Col Leslie Formolo, Headquarters Air Force Personnel Policy.

"Coast Guard Pregnancy Policy," presented by Master Chief Yeoman Lori McNaught, Human Resources Directorate, Enlisted Policy.

"OSD Health Affairs Civilian and Military Care Centers," presented by Capt Katherine A. Surman, NC, USN and Ms. Patricia Collins, Tri-Care Management Agency.

APPENDIX J

SELECTED ISSUE DISCUSSIONS

Counseling: DOD is building upon the new One Source by implementing a program of face-to-face, non-medical counseling for military families experiencing the normal stress of deployments and reunions. The lack of counseling services to assist troops and families cope with stress results in increased family deterioration, frequent duty disruptions, and dissatisfaction with military life. This situation, in turn, negatively impacts unit readiness and compounds retention problems. As a result, the Department has begun to provide counseling services that are short-term, solution-focused, and targeted to situational problems. Counselors will address stress-related work-life problems associated with the unique demands of the military lifestyle, especially those associated with a high tempo environment. The counseling services are provided by individuals trained in an appropriate social or behavioral science discipline who are licensed, certified, or credentialed for independent practice.[99]

Childcare: Deployment produces a critical and unrelenting need for additional childcare. To reduce interruptions in family routines, military child development centers develop and activate Childcare Mobilization and Contingency Plans as needed. These plans augment normal operations in a variety of ways:

- Childcare hours of operation may be adjusted to support an extended duty day or provide more hourly care to support unit briefings.

- Pre-identified alternative childcare sites are employed to expand capacity.

- Staff recruitment and background check actions are expedited to replace family member employees and to accommodate the increase in the number of children to be served.

- Augmented safety and security measures may include the designation of childcare staff as "mission essential personnel" in order to provide childcare services to other mission essential personnel.

- In support of the mission, childcare fees are often reduced, operating hours are sometimes extended, and this care is provided at little or no cost to Service members.[100]

Outreach: Another key element is command outreach to members, their families, and the communities in which they live on a continuing basis rather than just during deployments. There is also a need for more outreach to Service members' parents, siblings, and significant others. This task is complicated by the geographic separation of military members' extended family or lack of access to military installations. To address this issue, ongoing deployment training stresses that, prior to any deployment, Service members should provide their parents and significant others with multiple sources for obtaining information during the Service member's absence.[101]

Commissary and Exchanges: In support of current deployments, there are 52 Tactical Field Exchanges, 69 exchange supported/unit run field exchanges, and 15 ship stores in the OIF/OEF theaters providing quality goods at a savings and quality services necessary for day-to-day living. Goods and services offered include phone call centers, satellite phones, Internet cafes, video films, laundry and tailoring, photo development, health and beauty products, barber and beauty shops, vending and amusement machines, food and beverages, and name-brand fast food operations. Goods and services vary by location and are based on troop strength and unit mission requirements. [102]

Community Partnerships: Attention needs to be paid to community building among military families, with particular support for those families who have deployed members. This community building takes two basic forms:

- Enhancing the cohesiveness and interaction between the military unit, its family support structure, and military families.

- Encouraging and enhancing the connections between the military community and the surrounding civilian community.

- Unit leadership, Family Center services, and outreach programs are the keys to building a strong sense of community among the personnel and families associated with the unit. In the current environment, the focus of their efforts must be the mobilization, deployment, and return/reunion initiatives crucial to the unit mission.[103]

Strategic Responses: DoD and the Services recognize that unpredictability surrounding deployments (e.g., not knowing how long they will last, confusion about departure/return dates, etc.) magnifies the stress associated with separation. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recently noted, the Department has been working hard to provide as much predictability as possible in the lives of Service members.[104] Among the changes underway to improve the mobilization and deployment process, the Secretary of Defense and leaders within the individual Services have initiated efforts to:

- **Give Service members the longest notice possible**, so that they, their families, and— in the case of Reserve and National Guard — their employers, have as much time as possible to plan and prepare.

- **Limit the length of tours**: "The goal is to have Army mobilizations of up to a maximum of 18 months, including accrued leave…for a maximum of 12 months boots on the ground in Iraq, and Marine mobilizations up to 12 months, with up to 7 months boots on the ground."

- **Use active component forces from all the Services, including support forces, to the maximum extent possible.**

- **Transition forces such that the process is staggered,** "with sufficient overlap so that there can be a transfer of relationships, and so the situational awareness…is passed on to [the] replacements."

- **Use contractors, when possible**, to provide logistics support, training support, and other functions.

- **Establish quality of life initiatives** to support the up-to-12 month tour length.

- **Deploy or extend forces who volunteer for the deployment or extension to the maximum extent possible.**

- **Ensure that Service members, including Guard and Reserve forces, are dealt with respectfully**, just as each of them has demonstrated their respect and love for the country by volunteering to serve.

DoD Social Compact: An important step in an overall program to meet the needs of military Service members and their families is DoD Social Compact. The new Social Compact is DoD's philosophical statement of the government's responsibility to underwrite military family support programs. It is both a report and database that identifies regulatory requirements in the areas of healthcare, housing, off-duty education, military child education, childcare, recreation and fitness, personal financial stability, military spouse education and employment, and strengthening support to the Reserve forces and employer support programs.[105] http://www.mfrc-dodqol.org/socialcompact/

Partnerships: "Operation Purple" is a week-long program sponsored by a unique combination of non-profit (National Military Family Association), corporate (Sears and Roebuck, Inc.), and DoD organizations to meet the needs of military children with deploying parents. It is conducted in 11 states and helps children deal with the anxiety of separation. Approximately 1,000 military children participated in 2004. The youth camps are cost-free, except for a small registration fee, for children of Active, Reserve, and National Guard members. http://www.nmfa.org/

National Organizations: The National Association of Childcare Referral Services has launched Operation Childcare countrywide. More than 5,000 childcare providers have pledged free childcare for children of National Guard and Reserve personnel while they are home on leave. http://www.naccrra.net/

Military One Source: DoD has combined the assistance programs of each Service branch into one program called Military One Source. This is a one-stop place to go 24/7 whenever Service members or family members need assistance. This program also offers 6 sessions of counseling for Service members, their families, and/or their children. This counseling is anonymous and can be used any time.

DoD Youth Services: The *Report of the First Quadrennial Quality of Life Review* notes there is a need for supervised options for youth who may be stressed by the fear of physical harm to their parents while deprived of the guidance, support, and nurturing normally provided by deployed parents. DoD has 350 youth centers that provide safe and secure environments where military

youth can connect with their peers and participate in recreation and sports programs. Programs have been expanded considerably through partnerships with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the 4-H Clubs, and other national organizations.[106]

DoD Outreach To Public Education Services: Communication in the public school systems that educate the children of deployed personnel is essential. The Department has expanded their partnership with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Safe and Drug Free Schools to include work with the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (sponsored by UCLA, Duke University, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). The Department has developed and made available the following information booklets: *Educator's Guide to the Military Child During Deployment, Educator's Guide to the Military Child During Post Deployment: Challenges of Family Reunion,* and *Parent's Guide to the Military Child in Deployment*.[107]

Operation Homecoming: Writing the Wartime Experience: The National Endowment for the Arts is sponsoring a writing program for U.S. military personnel and their families. This unique literary program is aimed at preserving the stories and reflections of American troops who have served our nation on the frontlines — as in Afghanistan and Iraq — and stateside defending the homeland. In coordination with all four branches of the Armed Forces and DoD, the Arts Endowment is sponsoring writing workshops for returning troops and their families at military installations from Alaska to Florida, New York to California, and numerous sites in between. The workshops will also be held at bases overseas. Taught by some of America's most distinguished novelists, poets, historians, and journalists, these workshops will provide Service men and women with the opportunity to write about their wartime experiences in a variety of forms — from fiction, verse, and letters to essay, memoir, and personal journal. The visiting writers, many of whom are war veterans themselves, will help the troops share their stories with current and future generations. The Arts Endowment has also produced an accompanying audio CD for this program. Moving from a heart-rending letter from the Civil War to poems and memoirs about World War II to Vietnam War fiction, the CD explores the variety of literary responses by those who have come through similar experiences.
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