



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

OCT 1 2004

**PERSONNEL AND
READINESS**

**MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
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ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
DIRECTOR, PROGRAM ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION
DIRECTOR, NET ASSESSMENT
DIRECTOR, FORCE TRANSFORMATION
DIRECTORS OF DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES**

SUBJECT: Domestic Violence Awareness Month - October

Domestic Violence Awareness Month originated with the Day of Unity, first observed in October 1981 by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The intent was to connect the nation's advocates of battered women with one another in observance of their common fight to end violence against women and their children. The Day of Unity soon evolved into a special week of activities observed at local, state, and national levels. In October 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed. In 1989, Congress passed the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month Commemorative Legislation. Congress has continued to pass similar commemorative legislation each year since 1989.

As we begin our 2004 observance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, let me unequivocally state that domestic violence in our military communities will not be tolerated by the Department of Defense. It is criminal, it harms individuals, it ruins families, it weakens communities, it undermines military readiness, and it is an affront to the institutional values of the Armed Forces of the United States of America. I




call upon commanders at every level to continue their efforts to prevent domestic violence, inform military personnel and their families of available resources, investigate incidents of domestic violence, and devote their attention to matters of victim safety and appropriate offender accountability.

During the past year, DoD has made substantial progress implementing new domestic violence policy (available at www.commanderspage.dod.mil) to assist commanders in their efforts to respond effectively to domestic violence. Those policies provide guidance on an array of subjects, such as issuing military protection orders; enforcing the Lautenberg Amendment to the Gun Control Act and the Armed Forces Domestic Security Act; developing memoranda of understanding with civilian organizations and agencies tasked with responding to domestic abuse; and conducting domestic violence and child abuse fatality reviews. The Department has also issued policy establishing domestic violence training requirements for commanding officers, senior enlisted advisors, chaplains, and health care providers.

Please be advised that in addition to local installation assets, the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE; www.ndvh.org), and Military OneSource (1-800-342-9647; www.militaryonesource.com) are available to assist victims of domestic violence and their families.

Thank you for the variety of commemorative events planned for Domestic Violence Awareness Month--and for your support in this critical initiative.



David S. C. Chu