

Air Force leaders issue sexual assault prevention, response message

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy issued the following message to the men and women of the United States Air Force:

We must commit to eliminating sexual assault from our Air Force.

The Air Force has focused on sexual assault prevention and response for several years, with special emphasis on victim care. Unfortunately, sexual assault continues to burden our Airmen and degrade our mission effectiveness. Sexual assault is a crime, and there is no place for this behavior in our Air Force. We demand better of ourselves.

Experts tell us sexual assault is the most underreported crime in America. For that reason, we contracted with Gallup, Inc., to conduct an anonymous survey about sexual assault in the Air Force. The results show that in the 12 months prior to the survey, 2,143 (3.4%) women and 1,355 (0.5%) men were sexually assaulted, with the majority of female victims reporting that their assailant was a fellow Airman. The results also confirm that most assaults go unreported. We encourage you to review the complete report at [www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil).

Airmen cannot allow this destructive behavior to persist in our Air Force. Every Airman has the moral obligation and professional duty to intervene appropriately and prevent an assault, even when it means taking difficult or unpopular actions. The Air Force Bystander Intervention training provides you tools and skills to meet those responsibilities—to intervene in situations where fellow wingmen seem vulnerable and to encourage victims to seek help.

We remain committed to meeting this challenge.