



**1. PURPOSE.** To empower and encourage leaders at all levels to communicate to their people and other appropriate audiences on the issue of sexual assault.

**2. COMMUNICATION POSTURE.** Active. MAJCOM and installation leaders will advocate and facilitate regular and recurring conversation on this issue through commander's calls, town hall meetings, community engagements, media interviews, and other communication avenues as appropriate.

**3. BACKGROUND.** The Air Force, like the Department of Defense, has zero tolerance for sexual assault, which harms Airmen, undermines mission focus and contradicts our core values of Integrity, Service and Excellence. We are unequivocal in our commitment to prevent incidents of sexual assault; to provide victim care where assault has occurred; and to hold those who commit such acts accountable, while protecting the due process rights of the accused.

The AF Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program's core elements provide a strong foundation for our sexual assault prevention and response efforts, but it is only part of what we must do to eliminate this crime from the Air Force – we must also continually build trust through open and candid two-way conversation.

Leaders must set the example and talk with their people on this issue. This document contains a variety of resources and information on the subject of sexual assault. We must continue to reinforce that it is every Airman's duty to detect, deter and ultimately report misconduct immediately.

The Air Force is committed to preventing sexual assault and we will continue to evaluate and update our strategy for combating it.

Questions outside the scope of this document should be referred to SAF/PA.

#### **4. SENIOR LEADER PUBLIC STATEMENTS.**

“Sexual assault crimes strike at the health, welfare and dignity of our Servicemembers and undermine the readiness of our Force. As military professionals we must fully understand the destructive nature of these acts, lead our focused efforts to prevent them, and promote positive command climates and environments that reinforce mutual respect, trust and confidence. **Sexual assault among Servicemembers is a problem we face together, one that can only be solved together.** In doing so, we will Keep Faith with Our Military Family—they should expect nothing less, and Renew Our Commitment to the Profession of Arms—we should demand nothing less”

*“32-Star” Strategic Direction to the Joint Force on SAPR*

**“If we don’t take steps to deal with it -- if we don’t exercise better leadership to confront it -- it’ll get worse.** And that’s why it’s really important that we take the responsibility to ensure that it doesn’t have a place in the military. I have men and women in the military who put their lives on the line ... to protect this country. Surely we owe it to them to be able to protect them.”

*Leon E. Panetta, Secretary of Defense*

**“We hold Airmen to high standards because that’s what is expected of us, and what we expect of each other**—to set the example; to treat people with dignity and respect; to act promptly to right a wrong; to protect people under our charge; and to live by Air Force Core Values.

*Hon. Michael Donley, Secretary of the Air Force*

“Leaders at every level have an obligation to adhere to and enforce Air Force standards, and to establish and maintain a unit climate and culture that reflects what we stand for. This is family business. Nobody will do this for us. **We must do it for ourselves, for our Airmen, and for our Air Force.** And I have every confidence that we will confront this challenge, and come out a stronger and better Air Force on the other side.”

*Hon. Michael Donley, Secretary of the Air Force*

“This business is all about people—it’s all about people. **Our people deserve to be treated with respect.** My principle job is to make sure that they are well cared for, that they are well equipped, that they are well trained, that they are able to do the work that the Nation expects them to do—which is to fight and win our wars.”

*Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, Air Force Chief of Staff*

**“The goal for sexual assault in the United States Air Force is zero.** If you're a commander or a supervisor and you are not directly and aggressively involved in speaking up about this issue in your unit, then you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.”

*Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, Air Force Chief of Staff*

“The first thing you need to do is realize you have a problem. Let's be bold about this. **Yes, we do have a sexual assault problem, and it's up to us to fix it.** If you're the bystander, are you bold enough to stand up to that action? That's the kind of leadership I'm talking about. That's the kind of leadership we need in the United States Air Force.”

*CMSgt James A. Roy, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force*

## **5. AIR FORCE TALKING POINTS.**

### *Overarching*

- Sexual assault is a crime and has no place in the Air Force. It violates our core values and erodes both morale and unit effectiveness.

- The Air Force has zero tolerance for the crime of sexual assault.
- Airmen must adhere to our core values and the highest standards of professionalism. This isn't optional.

#### *AF SAPR Program*

- The Air Force established a Sexual Assault and Prevention Response (SAPR) program in 2005 focusing on victim care, prevention, and accountability.
- The purpose of the AF SAPR program is to prevent and respond to sexual assault through a balance of focused education, compassionate advocacy and accountability to promote respect and dignity throughout the Air Force.
- The Air Force employs fulltime Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) at all installations and more than 3,000 trained military and civilian volunteer Victim Advocates (VA).
- The Air Force launched Bystander Intervention (BIT) training in January 2010 as a prevention effort. BIT training is mandated for all military across the total force (active duty, ANG, and AFRC) and civilians who supervise military.

#### *Military Justice*

- We have great confidence in our military justice system, which helps to enforce our standards while protecting the constitutional rights of all military members.
  - The military justice system is critical to establishing and maintaining good order and discipline in the ranks.
  - Our commanders are a critical part of this justice system and we cannot separate them from their duty to ensure justice.
- The Air Force is committed to preventing sexual assault, and we will continue to evaluate and update our current strategy for combating it.
- Our goals are to ensure:
  - Every Airman knows that sexual assault will not be tolerated.
  - Victims, and Airmen who are aware of sexual assault committed by others, feel the freedom and obligation to report the crime.
  - Commanders and supervisors sustain an environment of zero tolerance and hold offenders accountable.

## *Wingman Culture*

- The term Wingman stems from a time-honored tradition that essentially says a lead pilot will never lose his/her Wingman. It's a promise, a pledge, a commitment between Airmen.
- There are responsibilities and accountabilities to being a wingman. A wingman is there to step in, to act and to protect -- not just to watch and be there when it happens.
- Airmen at all levels of command have a role as Wingmen.
- All Airmen are encouraged to lead by example -- to be good Wingmen, by taking care of themselves and those around them -- and taking action when needed.

**6. RESOURCES.** Click the below links for more information about the SAPR program.

### **[“32-Star” Strategic Direction to the Joint Force on SAPR](http://www.jcs.mil/content/files/2012-05/050812085404_Joint_Strategic_Direction_on_Sexual_Assault_(7_May_12).pdf)**

[http://www.jcs.mil/content/files/2012-](http://www.jcs.mil/content/files/2012-05/050812085404_Joint_Strategic_Direction_on_Sexual_Assault_(7_May_12).pdf)

[05/050812085404 Joint Strategic Direction on Sexual Assault \(7 May 12\).pdf](http://www.jcs.mil/content/files/2012-05/050812085404_Joint_Strategic_Direction_on_Sexual_Assault_(7_May_12).pdf)

“Commanders and leaders must personally read, understand and implement this strategy. We are fully committed to supporting your efforts to put this Strategic Direction into action and operationalize SAPR within your commands across the Joint Force. We will set the conditions for you to take positive actions that reinvigorate our military culture and create command climates and environments based on mutual respect, trust and confidence.”

### **[Letter to Airmen – Sexual Assault Prevention](http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-121116-011.pdf)**

<http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-121116-011.pdf>

"There is no place for sexual assault in our Air Force. When it comes to combating this challenge, every Airman is either part of the solution or part of the problem. We must be united in our commitment to intervene when we see the potential for harm, to act affirmatively when we observe tolerance of sexist behavior and attitudes, and to provide victim care. The only way to stop sexual assault is for Airmen to take action. ... Become personally involved. Recommit yourself to our core values. Be an advocate for professionalism and discipline. Most importantly, if you are aware of sexual assault in your unit, report it."

### **[Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program](http://www.afpc.af.mil/library/sapr/index.asp)**

<http://www.afpc.af.mil/library/sapr/index.asp>

The purpose of the AF SAPR program is to prevent and respond to sexual assault through a balance of focused education, compassionate advocacy and accountability to promote respect and dignity throughout the Air Force.

### **[Wing Commander’s Guide](http://www.afpc.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-121109-048.pdf)**

<http://www.afpc.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-121109-048.pdf>

“You, as an Air Force Commander, can make it unequivocally known that this issue is a priority to you. If in both formal and informal contexts, those under your command understand they will be held accountable by you for their response to this issue - the rest will follow.”

### **DoD Sexual Assault and Prevention Office**

<http://www.sapr.mil/>

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) is responsible for oversight of the Department's sexual assault policy. SAPRO works hand-in-hand with the Services and the civilian community to develop and implement innovative prevention and response programs.

### **SAPR Toolkit**

<http://www.sapr.mil/index.php/toolkit>

From DoD SAPRO office; provides checklists and a wide array of information and forms.

### **DoD Safe Helpline**

<http://www.safehelpline.org>

Sexual Assault Support for the DoD Community. Help is just a click away. The Online Helpline provides live, confidential support, 24/7, or call the Telephone Helpline at 877-995-5247.

### **MyDuty.mil**

<http://www.myduty.mil>

“I have been sexually assaulted, or know someone who has. What are my options?” Find out at myduty.mil.

### **Air Force SARC Contact Roster**

<http://www.afpc.af.mil/library/sapr/sarcontacts.asp>

Provides contact information for Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, organized by base. Click on the base name to see the local SARC representative in your area.

**7. POINT OF CONTACT.** The point of contact for this document is SAF/PAO at (703) 695-0640 or DSN 225-0640.