



THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC



Thursday, March 24, 2011

Sexual assault prevention, response

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 [here](#).

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.

Handwritten signature of Michael B. Donley in black ink.

Michael B. Donley
Secretary of the Air Force

Handwritten signature of Norton A. Schwartz in black ink.

Norton A. Schwartz
General, USAF
Chief of Staff

Handwritten signature of James A. Roy in black ink.

James A. Roy
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force