



# DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

## Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies

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Academic Program Year 2013– 2014

February 2015





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

**PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS**

**FEB 10 2015**

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Section 532 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109-364) requires an annual report during each Academic Program Year (APY) on the effectiveness of the policies, training, and procedures of each Military Service Academy (MSA) with respect to sexual harassment and violence involving Academy personnel.

The enclosed "Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies, Academic Program Year 2013-2014" provides an assessment of the Academies in the areas of prevention, investigation, accountability, victim advocacy/assistance, and assessment with regards to sexual harassment and assault, as well as data and analysis on reported cases of sexual harassment and assault involving Academy personnel occurring between June 1, 2013 and May 31, 2014. Also enclosed, as part of this year's report, is the Defense Manpower Data Center's "2014 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey Overview Report."

Our Armed Forces rely on our MSAs to develop future officers of the highest character. As such, it is essential that we train and develop our young men and women to foster a climate of dignity and respect, where sexual assault, sexual harassment, and inappropriate behavior and attitudes are not condoned, tolerated, or ignored. This commitment notwithstanding, sexual assault remains an underreported crime in our society, in our military, and at our nation's MSAs. Results from this year's report demonstrate that estimated instances of sexual assault and sexual harassment at the MSAs greatly outnumber reports made to authorities. We must redouble our efforts at the MSAs to encourage victims to report and ensure our cadets and midshipmen share a common understanding of healthy relationships and appropriate conduct.

To this end, Secretary Hagel is directing my office to host a senior summit each APY for Service Academy leadership and others as appropriate, and to incorporate senior Service Academy leadership into the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Executive Integrated Product Team forum to facilitate collaboration and exchange of best practices. My office is also directed to develop and deploy an anonymous, self-guiding educational program to help restore resiliency of cadets, midshipmen, and other military members who have been victims of sexual assault or abuse. Furthermore, the Secretary of Defense is directing the Secretaries of the Military Departments to develop and conduct specific prevention programming and initiatives for cadets and midshipmen at the conclusion of their first APY in order to address professional relationship expectations and the higher rates of sexual assault experienced during

the Academy third-class year. To encourage greater reporting of sexual assault, the Secretary is directing the Superintendents of the Military Service Academies, in collaboration with the my office and the Military Departments' SAPR Program offices, to assess their individual Academy climates and develop a plan to promote greater reporting of these crimes by cadets and midshipmen.

I am sending a similar letter, with the Department's report, to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Armed Services.

Sincerely,

  
Jessica L. Wright

Enclosures:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member



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

PERSONNEL AND  
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FEB 10 2015

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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cc:  
The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 532 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109-364) requires the Department of Defense to conduct an annual assessment of the Military Service Academies to determine the effectiveness of policies, training, and procedures with respect to sexual harassment and sexual violence involving Academy personnel. Also included are self-assessment reports from each Academy covering academic program year June 1, 2014 through May 31, 2014.<sup>1</sup> This year, the report contains results from the *2014 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* of cadets and midshipmen conducted by the Defense Manpower Data Center.<sup>2</sup>

The Defense Manpower Data Center conducted the anonymous *2014 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* during the spring of 2014. According to the survey, 48% of Academy women and 10% of Academy men indicated perceiving some form of sexual harassment in academic program year 2013-2014.<sup>3</sup> Overall, the rates of sexual harassment for Academy women decreased from 51% in 2012. It should be noted, the overall decrease in prevalence for female cadets stems from a large decline in prevalence for Naval Academy women.<sup>4</sup> The perceived sexual harassment prevalence rate for Academy men in 2014 is the same as 2012.

The *2014 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* also showed that 8.2% of Academy women and 1.1% of Academy men experienced unwanted sexual contact<sup>5</sup> in academic program year 2013-2014.<sup>6</sup> This is a decrease from academic program year 2012-2013 in which 12.4% of Academy women and 2.0% of Academy men experienced unwanted sexual contact. Each Military Service Academy is showing a statistically

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<sup>1</sup> The Academies' complete self-assessments are included as enclosures to this report.

<sup>2</sup> In academic program years beginning in odd-numbered years, the annual assessment consists of the Academies' self-assessments and the biennial *Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* conducted by the Defense Manpower Data Center. In academic program years beginning in even-numbered years, the Department reviews the Academies' self-assessments from the previous year, conducts site visits to each Academy, and analyzes data call submissions consisting of the Academies' policies, trainings, and outreach materials. Also included in even-numbered academic program year reports are the results of the biennial *Service Academy Gender Relations Focus Group Report* covering topics such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, reporting, leadership response, training, and bystander intervention. The *Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* is conducted every 2 years, as directed by Section 532 of Public Law 109-364. Given the high number of surveys administered to cadets and midshipmen each year on a wide variety of topics, Congress agreed to help the Department minimize survey fatigue by alternating surveys with focus groups, every other year. The assessment in the academic program year 2012-2013 report included focus group feedback. The current report's assessment includes a survey to update prevalence rates of USC and sexual harassment.

<sup>3</sup> Margins of error range for men and women from  $\pm 1\%$  to  $\pm 2\%$ .

<sup>4</sup> The sexual harassment prevalence rate for Naval Academy women decreased significantly from 61% in 2012 to 44% in 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Although the term "unwanted sexual contact" does not appear in Articles 120, 125, or 80 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, for the purposes of the *Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* and this report, it is used to refer to a range of activities that the Uniform Code of Military Justice prohibits. These offenses include completed or attempted oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by a body part or an object, and the unwanted touching of genitalia, buttocks, breasts, or inner thighs when the victim did not or could not consent. Respondents to the survey are asked about their experiences of USC in the 12 months that constitute the academic program year (June 1 to May 31). The definition of unwanted sexual contact used in the *Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* is behaviorally based and not intended to designate specific UCMJ offenses.

<sup>6</sup> Margins of error range from  $\pm 0.2\%$  to  $\pm 0.7\%$ . It should be noted that the timeframe covered by the *Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* question pertains to unwanted sexual contact experienced in the academic program year. While the *Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* victim numbers are only estimates, the Department uses these data to gauge the extent of victimization at each of the Academies.

significant decrease in its unwanted sexual contact rate or is at least trending downwards from the rates in 2012.<sup>7</sup>

During academic program year 2013-2014, the Academies received 20 complaints of sexual harassment, comprised of 1 formal complaint and 19 informal complaints.<sup>8</sup> The United States Military Academy received 1 formal complaint, the Naval Academy received 15 informal complaints, and the Air Force Academy received 4 informal complaints. This represents an overall increase in reporting of sexual harassment complaints from academic program year 2012-2013, during which the Academies received 11 informal complaints.

In academic program year 2013-2014, there were a total of 61 reports of sexual assault, comprised of 36 Unrestricted Reports<sup>9</sup> and 25 Reports remaining Restricted.<sup>10</sup> Initially, the Military Service Academies received 27 Restricted Reports, but 2 converted to Unrestricted Reports at the victims' request. Furthermore, 2 of the 61 reports were for incidents that occurred prior to the victims' military service. The 61 reports represent a decrease of 9 reports from the 70 reports received in academic program year 2012-2013. The increase in sexual assault reporting seen in the active force in Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 did not occur at the Military Service Academies during academic program year 2013-2014.<sup>11</sup> The recent trend has been a decrease in reporting since the academic program year 2011-2012. Given that sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes in the United States, the Department encourages all victims to report sexual assault. The Academies need to strengthen their efforts to improve victim reporting and participation in the military justice process.

Sixteen percent, or about 1 in 6 of the estimated 327 cadet/midshipman victims who experienced unwanted sexual contact made a Restricted or Unrestricted Report. In academic program year 2011-2012, 11%, or about 1 in 10 of the estimated cadets and midshipmen who experienced the crime reported it. The estimated 16% reporting rate in academic program year 2013-2014 is the highest ever recorded for the Military Service Academies. In other words, the gap between reporting and prevalence among cadets/midshipmen has decreased to its lowest point in academic program year 2013-2014. When cadets and midshipmen who experienced sexual assault come forward to make a report, the Department can provide victims with support and hold offenders appropriately accountable.

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<sup>7</sup> Each Military Service Academy's unwanted sexual contact rate is discussed in further detail below. A comprehensive discussion of all statistical data on sexual harassment and assault can be found in Appendix A and Appendix E of this report.

<sup>8</sup> Please see Appendix F of this report for the definitions of formal and informal sexual harassment complaints.

<sup>9</sup> An Unrestricted Report of sexual assault is a report that is provided to command and/or law enforcement for investigation.

<sup>10</sup> Restricted Reporting allows victims to confidentially access medical care and advocacy services without triggering an investigation.

<sup>11</sup> There was an increase of 50% in reports received by the active force in Fiscal Year 2013 over what was received in Fiscal Year 2012. Reports of sexual assault in Fiscal Year 2014 increased 8% over what was received in Fiscal Year 2013.

Furthermore, while overall sexual assault reporting decreased, Unrestricted Reports increased from 29 in the previous academic program year to 36 in academic program year 2013-2014. Reports remaining Restricted decreased from 41 in academic program year 2012-2013 to 25 in 2013-2014. The increase in Unrestricted Reports indicates that more victims at the Military Service Academies chose to participate in the military justice process, suggesting greater confidence in the system. Furthermore, among the victims who do report, satisfaction with the response process is generally high. Specifically, according to the *2014 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey*, of the cadets and midshipmen who experienced unwanted sexual contact and made a Restricted or Unrestricted Report, 84% indicated that they would make the same decision again.

## Summary for the Military Service Academies

### United States Military Academy



This year, the United States Military Academy experienced a statistically significant decrease in past year prevalence of unwanted sexual contact among women. The unwanted sexual contact prevalence rate for Academy women decreased from 10.7% in 2012 to 6.5% in 2014. The unwanted sexual contact prevalence rate for men in 2014 is 0.8%, which is statistically unchanged from 2012.<sup>12</sup>

The sexual harassment prevalence rate for Academy women increased from 49% in 2012 to 55% in 2014. The sexual harassment prevalence rate for Academy men also increased from 8% in 2012 to 12% in 2014.<sup>13</sup> Increases in the sexual harassment prevalence rate are statistically significant for Academy men and women.

In academic program year 2013-2014, the Academy received 11 total reports of sexual assault (9 Unrestricted Reports and 2 Restricted Reports), which is an increase of 1 report from the last academic program year. The Academy received one formal complaint and zero informal complaints of sexual harassment.

The Academy's self-assessment indicated that leadership took action to advance dignity and respect among cadets. For example, the Superintendent along with his Board of Directors have made the prevention and elimination of sexual harassment and assault their number one priority and have communicated this through the chain of command. Additionally, the Academy has fostered a sense of cadet ownership in the sexual harassment and assault response and prevention program by soliciting cadet feedback through a command climate survey and a cadet club assessment. The Cadets Against Sexual Harassment/Assault program also hosted a colloquium for their counterparts at other Military Service Academies to discuss and share best practices in programs to enhance student development.

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<sup>12</sup> Margins of error for women and men range from  $\pm 0.2\%$  to  $\pm 0.9\%$ .

<sup>13</sup> Margins of error for women and men range from  $\pm 1\%$  to  $\pm 2\%$ .



Thirteen of the Academy's 18 pending actions were completed in academic program year 2013-2014. Of the remaining five pending actions, there are two directives from the Secretary of Defense that require additional work.

### United States Naval Academy



The United States Naval Academy also experienced a statistically significant drop in the past year prevalence of unwanted sexual contact. The unwanted sexual contact prevalence rate for female midshipmen decreased from 15.1% in 2012 to 8.1% in 2014. The unwanted sexual contact prevalence rate for male midshipmen decreased from 2.6% in 2012 to 1.3% in 2014.<sup>14</sup> The sexual harassment prevalence rate for Naval Academy women decreased significantly from 61% in 2012 to 44% in 2014. The sexual harassment prevalence rate for Naval Academy men in 2014 is 9%, which is statistically unchanged from the rate in 2012.<sup>15</sup>

In academic program year 2013-2014, the Naval Academy received 23 total reports (14 Unrestricted Reports and 9 Restricted Reports) of sexual assault, which represents an increase of 8 reports from the previous academic program year. The Academy received 15 informal complaints of sexual harassment.

USNA's self-assessment indicated that the Academy infused structure and oversight into its sexual assault and harassment prevention and response programs by creating a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Advisory Panel. This group is comprised of a diverse group of faculty, staff, chaplains, coaches, and midshipmen. The panel developed the Academy's strategic plan, as directed by the Secretary of Defense in 2014, and remains in an advisory role to oversee the execution of the plan.

Fifteen of the Academy's 19 pending actions were completed in academic program year 2013-2014. Of the remaining four pending actions, there is one directive from the Secretary of Defense that requires additional work.

### United States Air Force Academy



The unwanted sexual contact prevalence rate for Air Force Academy women trended downward from 11.2% in 2012 to 9.7% in 2014, but this decrease did not reach statistical significance. The unwanted sexual contact prevalence rate for Academy men also trended downward from 1.7% in 2012 to 1.4% in 2014, but this difference was not statistically significant.<sup>16</sup> The sexual harassment prevalence rate for Air Force Academy women rose from 44% in

<sup>14</sup> Margins of error for women and men range from  $\pm 0.4\%$  to  $\pm 1.3\%$ .

<sup>15</sup> Margins of error for women and men range from  $\pm 1\%$  to  $\pm 2\%$ .

<sup>16</sup> Margins of error for women and men range from  $\pm 0.4\%$  to  $\pm 1.3\%$ .

2012 to 48% in 2014, a statistically significant increase. The rate of sexual harassment prevalence for Air Force Academy men in 2014 (9%) have remained statistically unchanged from the rate in 2012.<sup>17</sup>

In academic program year 2013-2014, the Air Force Academy received 27 total reports (13 Unrestricted Reports and 14 Restricted Reports) of sexual assault, which represents a decrease of 18 reports from the previous academic program year. The Academy received four informal complaints of sexual harassment.

USAFA's self-assessment indicated that the Superintendent took a significant measure in academic program year 2013-2014 to combat sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any form of violence by creating the Directorate for Culture, Climate, and Diversity. The director of this organization is charged with coordinating agencies and programs active in the Academy's culture, climate, and diversity arenas in an effort to streamline reporting, leverage resources, document efforts, and institutionalize outcomes. This directorate also worked to develop the Academy's strategic plan and reports directly to the Superintendent.

Fourteen of the Academy's 25 pending actions were completed in academic program year 2013-2014. Of the remaining 11 pending actions, there are 3 directives from the Secretary of Defense that require additional work.

### Assessment of Progress

As reflected in Exhibit 1, cadet and midshipman reporting for incidents that occurred during military service remained about the same from academic program year 2012-2013 to academic program year 2013-2014. The 53 cadet/midshipman victims who reported a sexual assault in academic program year 2013-2014, for an incident that occurred while they were in military service, is the same number as in academic program year 2012-2013.<sup>18, 19</sup> However, overall reporting of sexual assault at the Academies decreased during the past academic program year.

While sexual assault reporting decreased in academic program year 2013-2014, the unwanted sexual contact prevalence rate for both Academy men and women also decreased to the lowest levels seen since 2005. Estimates suggest that nearly 200

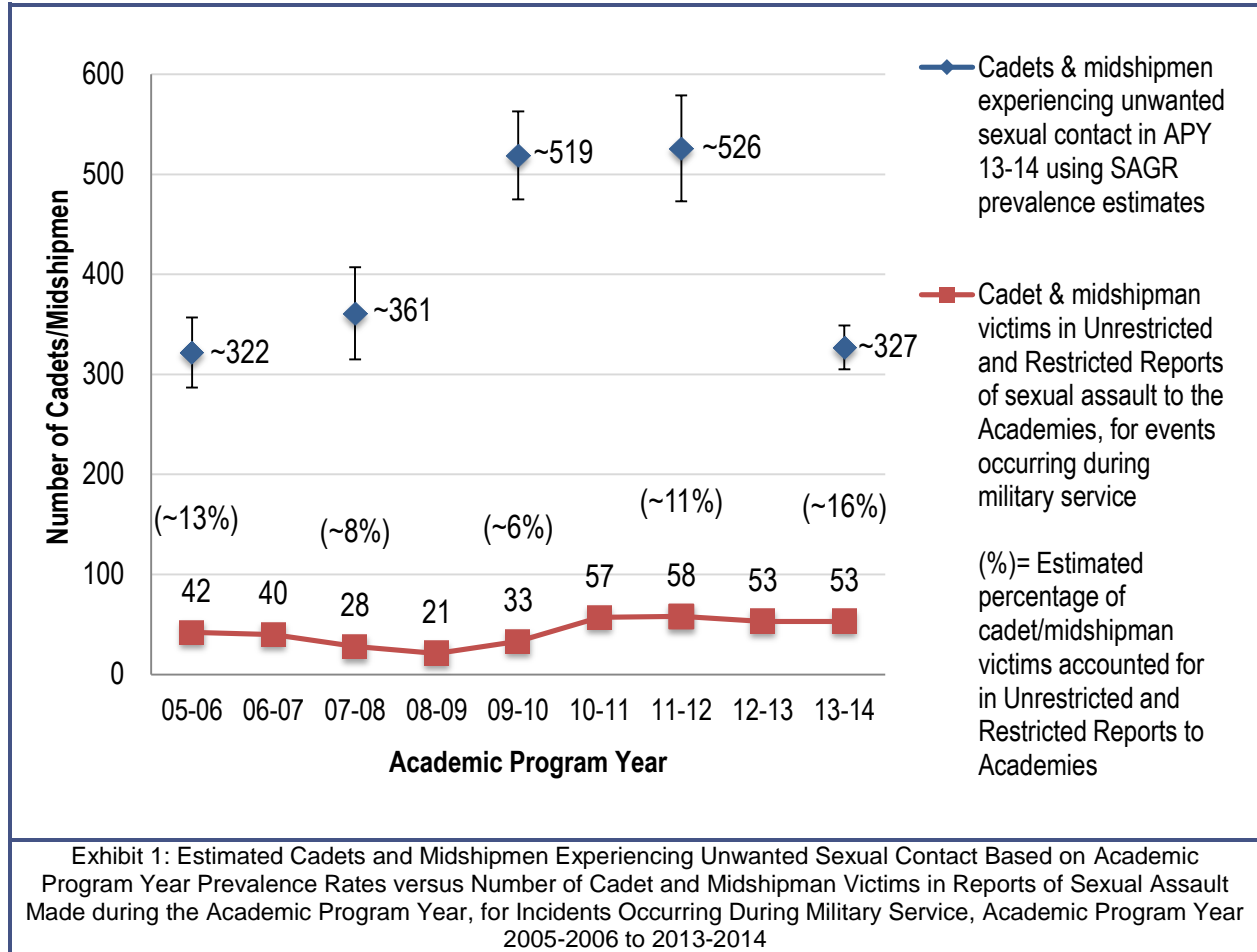
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<sup>17</sup> Margins of error for women and men range from  $\pm 1\%$  to  $\pm 2\%$ .

<sup>18</sup> A total of 70 Unrestricted and Restricted reports were actually received in academic program year 2012-2013, but 11 of the reports were for events that occurred to cadets and midshipmen before they entered military service. An additional five reports involved civilian victims who reported being sexually assaulted by a cadet or midshipman, and one cadet was the victim in two separate Unrestricted Reports. Civilian victim reports that involve a cadet or midshipman as the alleged offender are fully investigated, but are not included in this analysis so as to better provide an understanding of the victimization of cadets and midshipmen at the Military Service Academies.

<sup>19</sup> A total of 61 Unrestricted and Restricted reports were actually received in academic program year 2013-2014, but two of the reports were for events that occurred to cadets and midshipmen before they entered military service. An additional four reports involved civilian victims who reported being sexually assaulted by a cadet or midshipman, and two cadets each made two Unrestricted Reports for different incidents. Civilian victim reports that involve a cadet or midshipman as the alleged offender are fully investigated, but are not included in this analysis so as to better provide an understanding of the victimization of cadets and midshipmen at the Military Service Academies.

fewer sexual assaults occurred in academic program year 2013-2014 than in academic program year 2011-2012.



## WAY AHEAD

Preventing sexual harassment and sexual assault at the Military Service Academies, as well as across the total force, remains a priority for the Department. Throughout academic program year 2013-2014, the Military Service Academies worked towards meeting the essential measures outlined in the Secretary of Defense’s January 2014 memorandum. However, fully implementing these measures and assessing their effectiveness will take time. The Department expects the Academies to make further progress in implementing the initiatives directed by the Secretary of Defense, complete outstanding action items and recommendations from previous academic program years, and implement and consider new solutions for addressing areas of concern identified through the *2014 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey*.

The Department’s dual goals are to use prevention initiatives to reduce the number of incidents of sexual harassment and assault, and at the same time, encourage reporting, so that reports of sexual harassment and assault to the DoD account for a greater proportion of the survey-estimated incidents.

To further support the Department's dual goals and the Academies' efforts to make further progress, the Secretary of Defense is directing the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to host a senior summit each academic program year for Service Academy leadership and others to facilitate collaboration and exchange of best practices and lessons learned in prevention and response policies. Service Academy leadership will also be incorporated into the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Executive Integrated Product Team forum. Furthermore, the Secretary of Defense is directing the Secretaries of the Military Departments to develop and conduct specific prevention programming and initiatives for cadets and midshipmen at the conclusion of their first academic program year. This training will address professional relationship expectations and the factors behind higher rates of sexual assault experienced during the Academy third-class year. The Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office is directed to develop and deploy an anonymous, self-guided education program designed to address and support those cadets, midshipmen, and other military members who may have been victims of sexual assault or abuse prior to military service. To encourage greater reporting of sexual assault, the Secretary is directing the Superintendents of the Military Service Academies, in collaboration with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and Military Department Sexual Assault Prevention And Response program offices, to assess their individual Academy climates and develop a plan to promote greater reporting of these crimes by cadets and midshipmen.

Onsite assessments are planned for the spring of 2015 to be conducted by a team from the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office and the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity. During the assessment, the team will follow up on the Military Service Academies' sexual assault prevention and response and prevention of sexual harassment programs to track implementation and assess effectiveness. Additionally, the Defense Manpower Data Center will conduct focus groups to follow up on items identified in the *2014 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey*.