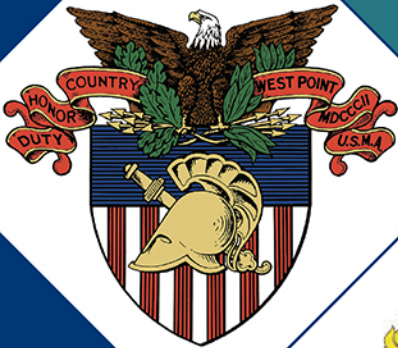




# Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies

## Academic Program Year 2014-2015





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

JAN 06 2016

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Section 532 of 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 "Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the MSAs, APY 2014-2015" provides observations and action items, based on the Department's onsite visits to the MSAs. The report also includes data and analysis on reported cases of sexual harassment and assault involving Academy personnel occurring between June 1, 2014 and May 31, 2015. The Defense Manpower Data Center's "2015 Service Academy Gender Relations Focus Group Report" is a part of this year's report and is also enclosed.

During the onsite assessments, the Department learned of several promising practices at the Academies to establish climates of dignity and respect, to combat sexual harassment and sexual assault, and to care for victims. The Department believes the Academies progressed in APY 14-15 in their abilities to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and assault. The Department of Defense expects the MSAs to continue to progress and work towards implementing all past and new initiatives.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Carson".

Brad Carson  
Acting

Enclosures:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

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

JAN 06 2016

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

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Sincerely,

Brad Carson  
Acting

Enclosures:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member



*Department of Defense  
Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service  
Academies, Academic Program Year 2014-2015*

The estimated cost of report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$1,263,000 in Fiscal Years 2015-2016. This includes \$902,000 in expenses and \$361,000 in DoD labor.

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# Executive Summary

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The Academies' programs comply with Department and Service policies regarding sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention and response. Eliminating sexual harassment and sexual assault are top priorities for Academy leadership, resulting in high functioning programs that progress each year in meeting the Department's action items and initiatives. The Department observed that leadership, at all levels, work to establish a climate of dignity and respect where sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated, ignored, or condoned. The Department believes the Academies progressed in academic program year 2014-2015 in their abilities to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault.

The Department observed several promising practices at the Academies that will have lasting impacts on cadet and midshipmen's understanding of appropriate behavior as members of the Armed Forces. For example, the Superintendent of the United States Military Academy solicits feedback and concerns by holding sensing sessions with cadets on a monthly basis. The United States Naval Academy employs a code of conduct contract, signed by all teams, clubs, and their coaches. With this contract, athletes and coaches vow to abide by expected behavior standards and to represent the Academy in the best possible manner. The United States Air Force Academy's Athletic Department hosts regular, informal sessions where intercollegiate teams speak with officer mentors and the sexual assault response coordinator about dating and healthy relationships.

These are just a few examples of the initiatives that fall within the Academies' sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention and response programs. The Academies' programs meet or exceed recommendations made by the White House's Task Force to Protect Students from

Sexual Assault. The Department and the MSAs have much more to do in their battle against sexual harassment and sexual assault, but the recommended practices from the White House Task Force are benchmark components of the Academies' and the Department's programs.

This report highlights several promising practices from each Academy as suggested enhancements that the Department encourages the other Academies to consider adopting as well. The Department also observed areas for improvement that exist at all of the Academies and provides action items in this report to address these areas.

## Sexual Harassment

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The Academies received a total of 28 sexual harassment complaints during academic program year 2014-2015, up from 20 complaints in the last academic program year. The 28 complaints of sexual harassment included 11 formal complaints and 17 informal complaints. The United States Military Academy received 7 formal complaints, the United States Naval Academy received 13 informal complaints, and the United States Air Force Academy received 4 formal and 4 informal complaints.

## Sexual Assault

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In accordance with the assessment procedures previously noted, a survey to estimate past year prevalence of sexual assault was not conducted this year. However, last year's survey results indicated that rates of sexual assault at the Academies had decreased significantly for women and trended downward for men, when compared to rates measured in April 2012. A survey to update estimated prevalence rates will be conducted in the spring of 2016.

This year the Military Service Academies received a total of 91 reports of sexual assault, an increase of 32 reports over the reports received in academic program year 2013-2014. However, most of the change in reporting occurred at the United States Air Force Academy. This year, sexual assault reporting at the Air Force Academy returned to levels seen in previous Academic Program Years.

The 91 reports received by the three Academies included 54 Unrestricted Reports and 37 Restricted Reports. Eight reports of sexual assault were for incidents prior to military service. The United States Military Academy received 17 reports (15 Unrestricted and 2 Restricted Reports), the United States Naval Academy received 25 reports (12 Unrestricted and 13 Restricted Reports), and the United States Air Force Academy received 49 reports (27 Unrestricted and 22 Restricted Reports). The Academies' detailed reporting data from academic program year 2014-2015 and an analysis of these data are found in Appendices D and E of this report.

## Observations and Action items

The Department noted evidence of progress at all three Military Service Academies. The Department's onsite assessment and focus groups found improvements in overall response program execution, innovative efforts to encourage climates of dignity and respect, incorporation of prevention principles into leadership development, and engagement of cadets and midshipmen to help solve the problems of sexual harassment and sexual assault. This report illustrates these and other areas of progress, and also provides action items and suggested enhancements for the Academies to consider adopting. This report is organized by overarching observations made by the Department during the onsite assessments and review of data call submissions. The suggested enhancements and action items in this report are intended to help the

Academies' programs continue to progress each year.

## Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response

The behaviors that constitute sexual harassment do not often rise to the level of criminal behavior. Such behavior is nonetheless disturbing and disruptive to the target of this unwanted attention. Response to sexual harassment may be as simple as telling the alleged harasser that his/her behavior is unacceptable or as multifaceted as involving an investigation and the military justice system. The formal and informal response processes required by Department policy provide military members the opportunity to resolve sexual harassment at the lowest level. The Department offers a variety of resources to those members who do not want to directly confront the alleged harasser and/or prefer assistance in resolving the matter. While sexual harassment is quite different from sexual assault, research suggests that efforts taken to prevent sexual harassment may have the added benefit of preventing sexual assault as well.

The Department observed that the Academies' sexual harassment prevention and response efforts have not received the same amount of emphasis as their sexual assault prevention and response programs. Participants in the *2015 Service Academies Gender Relations Focus Groups* indicated that the sexual harassment prevention and response programs are not emphasized to the extent the sexual assault prevention and response programs are at the Academies. Military research has consistently identified a strong positive correlation between the occurrence of sexual harassment in a military unit and the occurrence of sexual assault within the unit. The Department identifies the following for the Superintendents action:

- Provide more direct supervision to the Equal Opportunity Office and sexual harassment training/education efforts; and

- Strengthen sexual harassment prevention and response efforts.

### Sexual Assault Response

The Department found that each Academy has thorough and comprehensive programs with several promising practices to respond to sexual assault that go beyond the requirements in Department policy. This report highlights several of these promising practices as suggested enhancements. The suggested enhancements for the Academies to consider adopting are:

- Ensure sexual assault response phone systems have redundancy to ensure prompt victim care; and
- Develop sexual assault procedures for representatives leading off-campus activities.

The Department provides action items that are intended to ensure that the Academies' response systems continue to function as required by Department standards and policies. These action items are:

- Continue efforts to improve sexual assault reporting by cadets and midshipmen;
- Make available and require use of government-provided means to communicate with and transport victims to the hospital and other appointments;
- Enhance feedback to cadets and midshipmen by using case studies that represent the broad range of sexual assault case outcomes; and
- Provide military officers, in the chain of command overseeing cadets and midshipmen, a clear case status during case management group meetings to fulfill their responsibility of updating the victim.

### Program Assessment

The Academies have yet to identify their own metrics to measure program progress, which is necessary to track progress of these programs. The Academies have the

opportunity to set national standards for collegiate programs to address sexual harassment and sexual assault, and the Department's suggested enhancement and action item will assist with this task.

The Department identifies the following for action:

- Adapt the Department's sexual assault prevention and response metrics to create Academy program metrics.

The suggested enhancement for the Academies to consider adopting is:

- Use formalized sensing sessions with cadets and midshipmen to capture feedback.

### Character Development

The Academies continue to take a variety of steps to address character development throughout their academic, athletic, and military training programs. The Department learned of several promising character development practices at the Academies. The Department encourages all three Academies to consider adopting these suggested enhancements, which are:

- Examine cadet and midshipman social media footprints and promote appropriate online behavior;
- Adopt code of conduct contract for sports teams, clubs, and coaches; and
- Use sports teams and clubs as agents of change to promote healthy relationships.

### White House Task Force Recommendations

The President established the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault to strengthen federal enforcement efforts and provide schools with additional tools to help combat sexual assault on their campuses. The Task Force released its first set of action steps and recommendations in the report, *Not Alone*:

*The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* in April 2014.<sup>ii</sup> Several of the Department's sexual assault program components were leveraged as benchmark practices in the White House report.

In sum, the Academies are building a climate where cadets and midshipmen are

empowered and trained to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault. In addition, the Academies have mature response systems to support victims throughout the military justice process. Cadet and midshipman partnership in prevention and response efforts is essential to the overall Department-wide effort to reduce, with a goal to eliminate, sexual assault in the military.