



CALL TO DUTY
BOOTS ON THE GROUND



CALL TO DUTY
BOOTS ON THE GROUND

PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

On average, 526 Americans per day reported being sexually assaulted in 2005.

-Calculation based on data from the Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey, 2006

One in 33 men (3%) and one in six women (17%) reported experiencing an attempted or completed rape at some time in their lives.

-Tjaden and Thoennes, Full Report of the Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women, 2000

Over 70 percent of victims know their attacker.

-Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey, 2006

In Calendar Year 2005, there were 2,374 reported sexual assaults involving members of the Military Services. Of these, 169 occurred in Southwest Asia.

-DoD CY05 Annual Report to Congress – Sexual Assault in the Military Services

Out of 435 restricted reports, 108 victims-nearly one in four-later decided to participate in a criminal investigation.

-DoD CY05 Annual Report to Congress – Sexual Assault in the Military Services



“Soldiers must continue to live by the Army Values and treat each other with dignity and respect. By doing so, we will make great strides toward eliminating sexual assault in our Army.”

SMA Kenneth Preston,
Sergeant Major of the Army

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE



Stand Up Against Sexual Assault...
Make a Difference.



All photos courtesy of the US Army





Army Strong, Caring For All

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PROGRAM

The Department of Defense (DoD) remains committed to eliminating sexual assault from the ranks of the military. Sexual assault is a crime. It inflicts incalculable harm on victims and their families; it tears at the very fabric of civilian and military communities; and it destroys trust among individuals and faith in our institutions. DoD has made significant progress in combating sexual assault by introducing a comprehensive sexual assault prevention and response policy and implementing it across the Military Services.

PREVENTION THROUGH EDUCATION AND TRAINING

To combat sexual assault, the Department now requires all service members, both in the Active and Reserve Components, to receive annual awareness training. In FY 2005, the Military Services trained more than 1,000,000 active duty members alone. In addition, sexual assault awareness instruction has become a mandatory component of all initial entry training, professional military education programs, and pre-command courses. A clear definition of sexual assault and easily understood policy provisions have been created to provide service members understandable expectations of their role in preventing this crime: respecting one another; looking out for one's comrades; and refusing to tolerate sexist behavior.

DEDICATED SUPPORT

Each Military Service now maintains a comprehensive victim support network on every major installation and vessel. Coordinating this effort are Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs). They serve as the single point of contact to coordinate sexual assault victim

care and to track the services provided from initial report of a sexual assault through disposition and resolution of the victim's healthcare and support service needs. The policy also stipulates that Victim Advocates (VAs) provide 24/7 direct response to victims. They are not counselors, therapists, or investigators. Instead, VAs help the victim navigate the system and understand options and resources available. Advocate services normally continue as long as needed.

In addition, commands will ensure that victims have access to necessary care and will have agreements in place with civilian providers for services that are unavailable at the military installation.

REPORTING OPTIONS

Sexual Assault is the most underreported crime in our society and in the military. DoD prefers that sexual assault victims receive support and medical services as needed and offenders be held accountable for their crimes. However, DoD recognizes that some victims willingly forego medical and support services to avoid command or law enforcement involvement. The Department's first priority is for victims to be protected, treated with dignity and respect, and to receive the medical treatment, care and counseling that they deserve. Under DoD's Confidentiality Policy, military victims of sexual assault have a choice of two reporting options.

Unrestricted reporting is the preferred reporting option. This option enables victims to receive medical treatment, advocacy, and counseling in addition to notifying command authorities and initiating a criminal investigation.

Restricted reporting allows victims to receive medical treatment and support without triggering a criminal investigation. This affords victims additional time to weigh

their options and seek guidance about whether or not to participate in a criminal investigation at a later time.

Victims must acknowledge their choice of an unrestricted or restricted report in writing on a Victim Reporting Preference Statement. The Preference Statement also lists the exceptions that apply to restricted reporting and how that reporting option may limit the ability of the Government to prosecute the offender. The installation SARC or VA will advise the victim of the reporting options available to him or her, explain the benefits and limitations of each choice, and document the reporting option the victim selects.

IN CLOSING

These initiatives represent only the beginning of DoD's long-term effort to eliminate sexual assault from its ranks. This societal problem has no place in the Armed Forces, and the Secretary of Defense has clearly stated his policy of zero tolerance. In the years to come, the Military Services will continue their efforts to vigorously institutionalize their sexual assault programs and work closely with the Department to refine DoD policies and to establish them as the benchmark for other organizations to follow.

For more information about DoD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program and links to specific Military Service resources, visit www.sapr.mil. Go to www.sexualassault.army.mil for direct access to Army-specific information.

Contact your SARC for information about your local sexual assault prevention and response program.

