



## Department of Defense Overview: FISCAL YEAR 2014 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ANNUAL REPORT ON SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE MILITARY

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This overview summarizes the Department of Defense's FY14 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military. This year's report provides final statistical data on reports of sexual assaults and case dispositions from FY14, documents the Department's progress in implementation of legislation and policy initiatives, describes research on male victims of sexual assault in the military, and includes follow on analyses from the 2014 RAND Military Workplace Study. The report illustrates continued progress to include:

- On-going implementation of more than 100 Congressional requirements and 54 Secretary of Defense initiatives, collectively changing the Department's response system since FY12
- Record numbers of reports and case dispositions
- Improved understanding of the problem of sexual assault and how it impacts the military

### SAPR Program Improvements

The Annual Report is structured to align with the lines of effort from the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Strategic Plan. Programmatic highlights include:

- **Prevention:** Prevention efforts include operationalizing the Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy and developing a Community of Practice for SAPR first responders.
- **Investigations:** Improvements to the Special Victims Investigation and Prosecution capability include enhanced training for military criminal investigators.
- **Accountability:** Military justice system reforms have significantly elevated oversight of commanders' authority in these cases, while expanding legal representation and protections for victim' interests, rights, and privacy.
- **Victim Assistance:** The Department offers more dedicated medical, psychological, and legal assistance to victims of sexual assault than any other jurisdiction or institution in the country. The Defense Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program certified 13,000 Sexual Assault Response Coordinators in FY14 and ensures that advocacy professionals provide a consistent, high standard of quality care to survivors of sexual assault. Retaliation is an area of concern that Department leaders will address by ensuring that all Service members understand the destructive nature of retaliation and by instilling confidence in victims to report as a way to connect with support services.
- **Assessment:** This year's reporting and case disposition data were collected and analyzed for the first time using the fully-operational Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database.

### Report Findings

- **Fewer sexual assaults are estimated to have occurred in 2014 than in 2012.** In 2014, the RAND Military Workplace Study employed two different survey measurements of sexual assault. By both measures, estimated past-year prevalence of sexual assault is lower in 2014 than in 2012. The first measure, Unwanted Sexual Contact (USC), was an umbrella term used in prior DoD surveys as a proxy measure to capture sex offenses ranging from unwanted sexual touching to rape. At the request of the Department and as recommended by the Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel, however, RAND also developed a new measure of sexual assault that better aligns with specific language in the Uniform Code of Military Justice and was designed to provide an estimated crime rate.

- Using the Department's USC measure, RAND estimated that 4.3% of active duty women and 0.9% of active duty men experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact in the year prior to being surveyed.
  - Estimates of USC are down approximately 27% over the prior DoD survey in 2012 and are about 50% lower than estimates from 2006.
  - These rates suggest that an estimated 18,900 Service members (10,400 men; 8,500 women) experienced USC in FY14, down from an estimated 26,000 members in FY12.
- Using a new crime rate measure, RAND estimates that 4.9% of active duty women and 1% of active duty men experienced a sexual assault in the year prior to being surveyed
  - These rates suggest that about 20,300 Service members (10,600 men; 9,600 women) experienced a sexual assault in FY14.
  - Top line rates do not differ statistically between the DoD's prior USC measure and the new RAND sexual assault measure.
- **More victims chose to report in 2014.** The Department received 6,131 reports of sexual assault.
  - FY14 reports are 11% more than what was received in FY13, and 70% above the number of reports received in FY12.
- **Reporting data suggests growing confidence in the DoD response system.**
  - The Department estimates that in FY14 it received a report from 1 in 4 Service member victims of sexual assault – up from 1 in 10 in FY12 – indicating greater confidence in reporting.
  - In FY14, victims converted from a Restricted Report to an Unrestricted Report at a rate of 20% – the highest rate seen since the creation of this option in 2005. Conversion from a Restricted Report to an Unrestricted Report facilitates investigation and, as appropriate, prosecution, of sexual assaults.
  - As a highly underreported crime, increased reporting indicates that more victims feel confident that they will be supported and that offenders will be held appropriately accountable. While the overall 25% reporting rate for Service membersP in FY14 is the highest ever recorded for the Department, women reported the crime to DoD at a rate 4 times higher than men.
- **DoD authorities had sufficient evidence to take some kind of disciplinary action against three out of four military subjects considered for action by military commanders.**
- **Experiences of sexual harassment and gender discrimination are closely associated with greater risk of sexual assault.**
  - Using new survey questions designed to align closely with DoD policy on sexual harassment, the RAND Military Workplace Study estimates that about 22% of active duty women and 7% of active duty men indicated having experiences consistent with sexual harassment.
  - Survey respondents who indicated experiencing sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination in the past year were significantly more likely to indicate experience a sexual assault in the past year.

- **There are important gender differences in how sexual assault is experienced.**
  - The RAND Military Workplace Study is the first time the Department had enough data to characterize how sexual assault is experienced by male Service members.
  - Specifically, men who indicated experiencing a sexual assault were more likely than women to experience multiple incidents in the past year, describe the event as hazing intended to humiliate them, and did not think of it as a sexual act.
  - Relative to women, men who indicated experiencing a sexual assault were less likely to tell anyone or file a report and alcohol was less likely to be involved.
  - The gender differences detected by the RAND Military Workplace Study will help the Department refine its messaging to encourage greater reporting by men.
  
- **The Department is committed to the well-being of survivors and to promoting an environment where reporting is supported.**
  - Installation Case Management Groups (CMG) that conduct monthly reviews of ongoing sexual assault cases now actively ask victims and first responders about any allegations with retaliation associated with the sexual assault, and forward any such allegations to Service Inspectors General, criminal investigators, or other DoD authorities.
    - Initial indicators suggest this improvement is working as designed. The CMG process appears to capture allegations of ostracism and maltreatment that are not reported to the Inspector General.
  - In order to better assess survivor experiences and identify potential points for intervention, the Department plans to conduct a systematic review of the retaliation reporting process involving the Service commands and Inspectors General. In addition, the Department will revise its survey questions to better align with Department policy and law addressing reprisal and ostracism.

### Secretary of Defense Initiatives

Secretary Carter required the implementation of the following initiatives to improve the SAPR program:

- **Improve Organizational Culture to Address Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Retaliation Associated with Reporting:** Address the linkages between sexual harassment and sexual assault by incorporating insights derived from the “2014 RAND Military Workplace Study” into prevention training for sexual harassment, sexual assault, and reporting-related retaliation.
- **Evaluate Gender-Focused Treatment Capabilities and Provider Training:** Assess clinical interventions that address the specific needs of men and women who are seeking treatment for sexual assault.
- **Employ a Common Prevalence Survey and Feedback Strategy:** Conduct force-wide sexual assault and sexual harassment prevalence surveys biennially for the Military Services and National Guard, using the measures created for the “2014 RAND Military Workplace Study”. In alternate years, force-wide focus groups will be conducted by the Defense Manpower Data Center to obtain feedback from the field. To better respect Service member survey burden and privacy, all other entities within the Department of Defense will refrain from conducting force-wide surveys for determining the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment.
- **Develop a Department Strategy to Prevent Retaliation Associated with Reporting Crimes and other Misconduct:** Establish a comprehensive strategy to prevent retaliation against Service members who report or intervene on behalf of the victim in instances of sexual assault and other crimes.