

DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Initiatives

As of April 2013

The Department of Defense has implemented a variety of recent initiatives to change the way it works to prevent the crime of sexual assault and how it responds when that crime occurs. These initiatives, organized along the sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) program's five lines of effort, include the following:

Prevention

Major Initiatives Completed

- In Fall 2012, Services launched a wide range of enhanced training programs using interactive and adult learning methods and emphasizing bystander intervention.
- In Fall 2012, SAPRO expanded its outreach and engagement with experts from advocacy groups, legal, educational and law enforcement communities in order to gain constructive criticism and share best practices.
- In March 2013, DoD published revised DoD Sexual Assault Program policy, enhancing procedures and standardizing DoD SAPR efforts.
- As of April 2013, standardized SAPR core competencies and learning objectives are being taught in DoD-wide pre-command and senior NCO training courses.

Ongoing and Future Actions

- Utilizing lessons learned from the Air Force's Lackland AFB investigation, the Services conducted SecDef-directed evaluations of their respective initial military training environments; the results are under senior leader review.
- Services conducted SecDef-directed evaluations of their respective Military Academy all SAPR programs; the assessments are complete and the results are under senior leader review.
- Standardized SAPR core competencies and learning objectives are under development for SAPR training courses for basic training, victim advocates, and continuing professional military education; respective course curricula will be revised by the end of this FY.
- Services are conducting unprecedented senior leader and commander engagements and summits focused on SAPR issues and programs.
- SAPRO is expanding its research on effective support services and preventive programs for male sexual assault.
- DoD is conducting a formal review and revision of the SAPR Prevention Strategy.
- SAPRO is conducting outreach with targeted universities and communities on prevention program best practices.

Investigation

Major Initiatives Completed

- In Sep 2011, revised Sexual Assault Forensic Exam kit to improve victim care and align evidence collection with national standards.
- In Jan 2012, implemented DoD policy to retain investigative documentation for 50 years for Unrestricted Reports.
- In Jan 2013, DoD published new DoD policy on sexual assault investigation standards, requiring all sexual assault investigations are conducted by independent and professional Military Criminal Investigative Organizations (MCIO).
- In Feb 2013, DoD IG completed its evaluation and published findings/recommendations for MCIO initial and annual training.

Ongoing and Future Actions

- DoD is developing policy for Special Victim Capability, in accordance with FY13 NDAA, which will include standardized selection, training, and certification standards for Special Victim investigators.
- DoD IG is conducting a review of sexual assault investigations for investigative sufficiency and compliance; audit is completed and results are under senior leader review.
- DoD IG is conducting a review of Sex Offender Registry Programs and compliance with the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA).

Accountability

Major Initiatives Completed

- In 2012, Services and NGB fielded specialized personnel and/or teams such as Complex Trial Teams, Special Victim Prosecutors and Trial Counsel Assistance programs to deliver enhanced capability in the prosecution of sexual assault cases.
- In June 2012, DoD elevated initial disposition decisions to O-6 level for cases of rape, sexual assault, forcible sodomy & attempts.
- In Jan. 2013, Air Force launched a pilot Special Victim Counsel program to provide victims of sexual assault legal representation during all phases of investigation, prosecution, and victim recovery.
- In Mar 2013, DoD General Counsel conducted a review of UCMJ Article 60; this review will inform SecDef decisions on post-trial powers of court martial convening authorities.

Ongoing and Future Actions

- DoD is developing policy for Special Victim Capability, in accordance with FY13 NDAA, which will include standardized selection, training, and certification standards for Special Victim prosecutors and paralegals.
- In conjunction with Congress, DoD is establishing and supporting the FY13 NDAA-mandated independent Response Systems and Judicial Proceedings Panels.

Advocacy – Victim Assistance

Major Initiatives Completed

- In Apr 2011, launched DoD Safe Helpline to give victims 24/7 global access to crisis support staff.
- In Dec 2011, implemented expedited transfer policy for victims making that request -- from implementation to the end of CY2012, commanders approved 334 of 336 transfer requests.
- In Dec 2011, implemented DoD policy to retain Unrestricted Reports for 50 years.
- In Jan 2012, expanded SAPR Restricted Reporting support services to adult military dependents.
- In Jan 2012, expanded SAPR services during emergency care for DoD civilians stationed abroad and DoD U.S. citizen contractors in combat areas.
- In Jan 2012, Military Rule of Evidence 514 was enacted providing protected communications between victims and advocates.
- In Sep 2012, developed and fielded nationally-recognized SafeHelpline Mobile Application to advance victim support services.
- In Oct 2012, implemented DoD SARC/VA credentialing and certification program with National Organization for Victim Assistance.
- In Feb 2013, conducted the second Survivor Summit to ensure policy making is informed by the voices of victims.
- In Mar 2013, as part of revised DoD SAPR policy, implemented new standards for medical care providers to support victim care and enhance investigations.
- In Mar 2013, implemented DoD policy to retain Restricted Reports for 50 years, upon victim's request.

Ongoing and Future Actions

- In Apr 2013, SAPRO is expanding the DoD Safe Help Line to include a moderated Safe Help Room to advance victim support services.
- Services are expanding the manning of full time equivalent SARC and VA positions to all brigade or equivalent units, as directed in NDAA FY12.
- DoD is developing policy to ensure delivery of victim SAPR services to qualified same sex domestic partners.
- In conjunction with the Dept of VA, DoD intends to develop a continuity of care protocol to ensure continuous quality of victim service through transition from active or reserve duty to veteran status.

Assessment

Major Initiatives Completed

- In 2011, established SAPR Integrated Process Team, comprised of senior OSD and Service SAPR program managers, as a standing body that meets regularly to review and advise on SAPR matters.
- In April 2012, added sexual assault questions to DoD Command Climate Surveys and implemented policy to conduct assessments within 120 days for new commanders and annually thereafter.
- In Oct 2012, fielded Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database as record system for sexual assault case management and data collection.
- In Nov 2012 conducted inaugural Joint Chiefs of Staff quarterly SAPR Joint Executive Council as DoD's senior standing military oversight body for SAPR matters.

Ongoing and Future Actions

- SAPRO and Services continue to prepare NDAA-mandated annual SAPR reports to Congress:
 - *Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the U.S. Military Service Academies*
 - *Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military*
- SAPRO and Services are assessing delivery of SAPR Services in joint base environments.
- SAPRO and NGB intend to assess the National Guard Bureau SAPR program.
- In Apr 2013, the inaugural General Officer/Flag Officer Tri-Service Council on Recruit Basic Training is being conducted. The council will be informed by findings and recommendations from Service respective initial military training environmental assessments.