



CJTF Phoenix VII Equal Opportunity and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Programs Newsletter



EO/SAPR Team: LTC VanCort and MSG Misericordia

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Welcome from the EO/SAPR Team for CJTF Phoenix VII, we hope that you find this newsletter beneficial in the performance of your duties as an Equal Opportunity Leader (EOL) and/or Victim Advocate (VA). We have placed many useful tools on the CJTF PHX VII intranet site at: <https://tfphx.oneteam.centcom.mil/Pages/default.aspx>. You can find guidance, procedures, forms, posters, training packages, etc for both Equal Opportunity and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response. We welcome your feedback, comments, suggestions, etc.

Thank you for accepting this critical duty appointment as either an Equal Opportunity Leader (EOL) or Unit Victim Advocate (UVA). This duty may seem insignificant day-to-day but will be invaluable to any Warrior who may require your assistance. All the efforts put into prevention of discrimination, harassment or assault will reap benefits and keep our unit's mission ready. Let us know when your evaluation is due. We will provide you or your rater with feedback on your critical additional duty for consideration in your evaluation. When it comes time for you to depart the CJTF, remind your ARSIC Command of your impending departure and the need to identify and/or train a replacement; take the time to transition your replacement if time/personnel allows; and advise this office 30 days prior to your departure from theater so we can acknowledge all our EOLs and UVAs for their service. Thank you for all you do for the CJTF Phoenix Warriors

Equal Opportunity and Prevention of Sexual Harassment

With current OPTEMPO, transition of Warriors the Equal Opportunity Leaders training course from 4-9 August 2008 has been postponed. CJTF101 is conducting training at Bagram AFB 11-16 August in which the three (3) Warriors we had that needed training will attend. We continue to review the duty roster for Warriors transitioning and consider conducting a class in October. **If you know you will be departing theater in the coming months** or you are aware of Warriors in your command that desire training, **advise your Commander** and forward their names for attendance. Command can never have enough "eyes and ears" on the ground especially with the numerous FOBs and Camps in our Area of Operations.

Heads up-Please Assist!! The Task Force-wide Organizational Climate Survey will begin on 1 August and be available until 30 September 2008. Information on how Warriors complete the survey was provided via **Tasker 08-099**. We are asking all EOL's to ensure the word gets out throughout your command so we have maximum participation. The CJTF Phx Commanders goal is 60-70% input. This survey is not specific to Equal Opportunity but to command climate overall. Good command climate facilitates a good EO climate.

**WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY
AUGUST 26TH**

**19TH AMENDMENT
Women's Suffrage - Women's Right to Vote**



Photograph from the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

August 26th is Women's Equality Day. Per Presidential Proclamation, The Women's Right to Vote will be celebrated on August 26. This will mark the 88th year since the 19th Amendment was ratified and American Women attained full voting rights.

The right to vote was a long 72 year struggle with its beginning at a Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 ending with ratification by one vote on August 26, 1920.

We celebrate Women's Equality Day to commemorate the tremendous positive change brought on by the Women's Movement. Due to the countless millions of women who planned, organized, lectured, wrote, petitioned, lobbied, paraded, and broke new ground in every field imaginable, our world is irrevocably changed. Women and men of our generation, and the ones to follow us, are living the legacy of the women's rights won against staggering odds in a revolution achieved without violence.

Reminder: Continue to conduct and document all refresher training. We are receiving feedback that the training packets have been useful and many units have completed the training.

A revised **Chapter 18 to CJTF PHX SOP** has been posted on the intranet to reflect modifications and changes over the past 90 days. Recommend you review the revision at your convenience.

EO Complaints: We have been very fortunate to have a very small number of formal complaints since 1Apr08. As per AR 600-20, any Warrior can submit a complaint, to the Commander, and alternate agency (IG, JAG, Chap...) or an EOA. Complaints do not have to go to or through an EOA, they can go directly to the Commander. Should a Formal Complaint come to your ARSIC Commander, we have put a Complaint Packet together on the website that contains the forms and checklists that can be used to facilitate processing of the complaint. As always, our office is here to assist.

<https://tfphx.oneteam.centcom.mil/Pages/default.aspx> SOP's for EO and SAPR are on this website. If you are looking for forms, checklists, etc., they are here. It is a working site and new items are added all the time.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program

We anticipate having vinyl SA Awareness Posters and informational tri-folds out to each ARSIC within the coming weeks. Publication contracts have changed and materials should be completed shortly.

Please ensure you update the Sexual Assault Posters for your units and include the following information:

Sexual Assault Hot Line: 431-7454/7453 (Confidential hot line – manned by SARC's at Bagram)
Military OneSource: Overseas:00-800-3429-6477 OS Collect:1-484-530-5908 (Confidential Hotline)
Phoenix TMC, Bldg A-4 237-2412
Bagram ER 431-3207 (5436)

We anticipate more information on medical resources by our next Sexual Assault Review Board in July. We continue to work on the "Due out list" from the UVA course. Items in process: Table of contents for a continuity book; medical sop; and additional level III options. We have provided the phone contacts, business card templates and this newsletter. All course attendees had some "due ins" and we are still looking for regional contacts and periodic updates on any climate issues or trends.

Good News and Ideas from the Field

" I took your advise and got a small group together, who is helping me to monitor our safety here on KAF. I'm checking in with our MPs every other week to see if they received any complaints. My cell # is posted in a number of places and accessible to everyone on KAF. So far, it's been pretty quiet and we did not experience any incidents. I'll keep my fingers crossed that this won't change! I briefed my Commander yesterday, and he is very happy with the current situation." SFC Byrd, UVA ARSIC-S

"Things are well here at Dubs. We have made sure everyone knows how to get in touch with us. The vinyl posters would be a good reminder for us to post around the camp. Again...nothing to report and with luck it should stay that way." 1LT Smiley UVA

In the News:

Sexually assaulted female troops struggle to recover July 23, 2008 – Updated 0841 GMT (1641 HKT)

YORK, Pennsylvania (AP) -- It took Diane Pickel Plappert six months to tell a counselor that she had been raped while on duty in Iraq. While time passed, the former Navy nurse disconnected from her children, and her life slowly unraveled.

Carolyn Schapper says she was harassed by a fellow Army National Guard soldier in Iraq to the extent that she began changing clothes in the shower for fear he'd barge into her room unannounced, as he had on several occasions.

Even as women distinguish themselves in battle alongside men, they're fighting off sexual assault and harassment. It's not a new consequence of war.

But the large number of women serving today in Iraq and Afghanistan is forcing the military and Department of Veterans Affairs to more aggressively address it.

The data -- incomplete and not up-to-date -- offer no proof that women in the war zones are more vulnerable to sexual assault than other female service members or American women in general. But in an era when the military relies on women for invaluable and difficult front-line duties, the threat to their morale, performance and long-term well-being is starkly clear.

Of the female veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan who have walked into a VA facility, 15 percent have screened positive for military sexual trauma, The Associated Press has learned. That means they indicated that while on active duty, they were sexually assaulted, raped or sexually harassed, receiving repeated unsolicited verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature.

In January, the VA opened its 16th inpatient ward specializing in treating victims of military sexual trauma, this one in New Jersey. In response to complaints that it is too male-focused in its care, the VA is making changes such as adding keyless entry locks on hospital room doors so female patients feel safer.

Rape victim felt numb when returning home

Depression, anxiety, problem drinking, sexually transmitted diseases and domestic abuse are all problems that have been linked to sexual abuse, according to the Miles Foundation, a nonprofit group that provides support to victims of violence associated with the military. Since 2002, the foundation says, it has received more than 1,000 reports of assault and rape in the U.S. Central Command areas of operation, which include Iraq and Afghanistan.

In most reports to the foundation, fellow U.S. service members have been named as the perpetrator, but contractors and local nationals also have been accused.

Plappert, 47, said she was raped by Iraqi men in 2003 at a store in Hillah, when she got separated from her group.

By the time the Navy Reserves commander returned home, she felt "numb."

"I didn't feel anything," she said at her townhome in south-central Pennsylvania. When her kids, now 10 and 12, hugged her, "I felt like I was being suffocated."

Plappert's marriage fell apart. She credits treatment at the VA -- as well as her artwork depicting trauma and recovery -- with helping her reconnect with her children. She left the military and is studying at Drexel University to become a psychiatric nurse practitioner while continuing to work as a civilian nurse.

She said it's hard for people outside a war environment to understand how living in high-stress, primitive conditions can affect your ability to make decisions. She didn't report the attack immediately, she said, because she felt an obligation to continue the mission and not burden others. She also wondered how the report would be perceived.

"What I've got to try to think is that there's got to be some reason why this has happened," said Plappert, who first recounted the assault to a VA counselor and eventually told her story to Defense Department and VA task forces. "I try to find something positive in the event."

Moving the victim feels like punishment to them

Schapper, 35, of Washington, served with the Virginia Army National Guard on an outpost with few other women. She worked well as part of a military intelligence team with the men around her. It was in the down time that things got uncomfortable.

She shared a house with about 20 men, some of whom posted photos of scantily clothed women on the walls. She said her team leader, who lived in the house, frequently barged into her room and stared at her. The experience was unnerving, Schapper said, and she began changing clothes in the shower. But she never filed a formal complaint.

If she complained, Schapper figured, she'd be the one moved -- not the other soldier.

"In military intelligence, you work with Iraqis on a daily basis you get to know, and to move me would disrupt the team I was working with as well as disrupt the work I'd already done," Schapper said. "I didn't want to be moved, and basically I'd be punished, in a sense."

Schapper said other female troops she has spoken with described similar experiences. A picture of one was posted with "Slut of Bayji" written underneath. Another endured having a more senior enlisted soldier ask her favorite sexual position over a public radio, said Schapper, who has met with members of Congress on behalf of the nonpartisan advocacy group Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.

Since returning to the U.S. in 2006, Schapper has gotten help for post-traumatic stress disorder at the VA in Washington. Group therapy with other Iraq veterans has been helpful, she said, but she wishes there were a women-only group.

Connie Best, a clinical psychologist and professor at the Medical University of South Carolina who retired from the Navy Reserves, said that people typically think of sexual harassment as someone making a comment about someone's appearance but that it goes well beyond that. In a war environment, living and working with someone exhibiting harassing behavior can potentially have long-term effects on troops' health and performance.

"There's automatically this thing that 'sexual harassment is not a big deal, it's not as bad as rape,' and indeed it often is not as distressing as a completed sexual assault, but it still can be something that highly affects a person," Best said. Research also has found that working and living environments where unwanted sexual behaviors take place have been associated with increased odds of rape.

After high-profile attacks in Kuwait and Iraq, then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld convened a 2004 task force on the treatment and care of sexual assault victims. One change that followed was the creation of a confidential component in the military's reporting system, so a victim can come forward to get help without necessarily triggering an investigation.

In the fiscal year that ended October 1, 131 rapes and assaults were reported in Iraq and Afghanistan, said Kaye Whitley, director of the Defense Department's sexual assault prevention and response office. Comparing that to previous years isn't possible because of changes in the way data was collected, she said.

The actual number is probably higher than what's reported. Among members of the military surveyed in 2006 who indicated they had experienced unwanted sexual contact, about 20 percent said they had reported it to an authority or organization.

Female veteran warns daughter

This summer, the Pentagon is bringing experts together to come up with a more aggressive prevention strategy. It also is working with the nonprofit group Men Can Stop Rape to help teach troops how to identify warning signs of problems around them.

When victims do complain, too often the perpetrator is not moved out or punished, said Colleen Mussolino, national commander of the Women Veterans of America.

"You have to be able to trust fellow soldiers, and if you can't do that, you're basically on your own. So it's really rough, really rough for them," said Mussolino, of Bushkill, Pennsylvania.

A vast majority of women at war feel safe with their comrades in arms, "but for the ones who feel unsafe, it's hell," said Lory Manning, a retired Navy captain who directs the Women in Military Project at the Washington-based Women's Research and Education Institution.

At a recent women veteran's conference in Washington, Leanne Weldin, of Pittsburgh, who deployed in Iraq with the Arizona National Guard in 2003 as a 1st lieutenant, described arriving in the Kuwait staging area and seeing warning signs of rape. She said she endured some minor sexual harassment while deployed and was groped by an Iraqi teen while sitting in a Humvee.

When her own daughter wanted to join the Army, Weldin said later, she didn't discourage her. But she offered some sobering advice.

"Watch out for yourself. Don't party with the soldiers in the barracks. You've got to watch out for date rape. Watch out for yourself. It's still a male culture. Don't let yourself get taken advantage of. Don't let yourself get sucked in. Don't let your guard down," Weldin said.

"But at the same time, go in there and show them what you're made of."

The VA now provides free care to any veteran from any era who has experienced military sexual trauma. That's a change from the 1991 Persian Gulf War and earlier wars. Since 2002, about 20 percent of female veterans from all eras and 1 percent of male veterans have screened positive for military sexual trauma.

"We believe that identifying people early and providing care early is going to be important and really make a difference in people's lifetime trajectory, but that story remains to be followed and told," said Antonette Zeiss, a psychologist who is the deputy chief consultant in the VA's Office of Mental Health Services.

It's unknown whether incidents of rape and assault are higher in the military population than the civilian population. One study, however, of 1991 Persian Gulf War veterans found that incidents of assault, rape and harassment were higher at war than in peacetime military samples, according to the VA's PTSD center.

It's only in recent years that the military and VA have kept comprehensive statistics, and even the two agencies define military sexual trauma differently.

What is known is that the effects of a military sexual trauma can be long lasting, particularly for those who don't seek early help.

The VA still sees veterans who experienced sexual attacks in Vietnam -- and even World War II.

Truman's Military Desegregation Order Reflects American Values, Gates Says

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, July 23, 2008 – President Harry S. Truman's 1948 executive order that desegregated the U.S. military was a definitive statement of equality that declared all service members must be judged by individual merit instead of their racial background, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said here today.

"No aspect of black Americans' quest for justice and equality under the law has been nobler than what has been called, "the fight for the right to fight," Gates said at the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the integration of the armed forces held in the Capitol Rotunda.

"Our commemoration today of the racial integration of the armed forces makes us reflect on how far we have come toward living up to our founding ideals and yet how much remains to be done," Gates said.

The Defense Department began breaking down the barriers of race at the conclusion of World War II in 1945, Gates said. As in past wars, African-American troops had served in World War II with honor and distinction, he noted. However, African-American troops had to fight and live separately from all-white units.

America's sons and daughters fought in World War II to preserve freedom and human dignity for the world's people, Gates said. Yet, African-Americans who'd served with distinction in that war, he noted, "returned to face segregation and harassment at home," as so-called Jim Crow segregation laws in place across the South relegated African-Americans to second-class-citizen status.

Truman's Executive Order 9981, signed July 26, 1948, was an important statement and an important step, Gates said. However, he said, Truman's directive "had to overcome stiff institutional resistance, as deeply entrenched attitudes were hard to change."

For example, "segregated units remained the norm and integrated units the exception," Gates noted, for several years after the integration order was issued.

The start of the Korean War in June 1950 prompted the need to put hundreds of thousands of Americans into uniform after the U.S. military had demobilized following the end of World War II.

"With the sudden outbreak of war in Korea, the urgent demands of the battlefield trumped the old habit of Jim Crow," Gates said.

Before the start of the Korean War, he said, 50 percent of African-Americans in the Marine Corps -- about 750 men -- served as stewards. At the end of the Korean War in 1953, Gates said, there were 17,000 African-American Marines, and only 3 percent served as stewards.

"By 1954, the Korean War was over, the last of the segregated units were dissolved, and the momentum for equality and civil rights was carrying over into American society as a whole," Gates said.

In the ensuing decades after Truman's directive took effect, "black and white Americans trained, served, and fought together with honor and distinction," Gates said.

Today's integrated U.S. military continues to "put merit and integrity above all," Gates said, noting there's still more to achieve.

"My hope and expectation is that, in the years ahead, more African-Americans will staff the armed forces at the highest levels," Gates said. "We must make sure the American military continues to be a great engine of progress and equality -- all the better to defend our people and our values against adversaries around the globe."

Reference:

Living the Legacy: The Women's Right's Movement 1848-1998. (2001). [on-line].
Available: <http://www.legacy98.org>

Please feel free to provide input to this newsletter. We will publish this on a monthly basis on the 1st of each month. Please forward any input to LTC VanCort or MSG Misericordia NLT the 25th of each month. Thank you all for your role and in performance of this invaluable service you provide to Commanders and Warriors!