



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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25 APR 2006

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0552

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am forwarding to you the Department's response to sexual assault policy requirements included in *Section 596, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006* (PL 109-163).

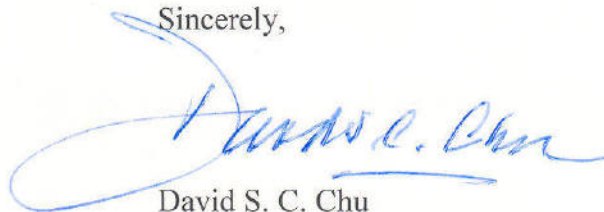
The Department of Defense (DoD) will soon implement a data management system that will track cases in which the unavailability of supply or laboratory resources hinder healthcare or prosecutions. The system will also facilitate the management of sexual assault programs at the installation and Service levels.

Current DoD policy addresses the availability and accessibility of supplies, trained personnel, and transportation resources for responding to sexual assaults in deployed units. This policy has worked successfully in the Central Command Area of Operations and applies to all military organizations worldwide.

These efforts reflect our commitment to a robust sexual assault prevention and response program. In 2005, implementation of confidential reporting enabled many more victims to receive healthcare. The Military Services trained more than 1,000,000 personnel and have functioning sexual assault prevention and response programs at their installations. These and other initiatives will enable DoD to make steady progress in eliminating sexual assault in the ranks of the military.

I am sending a similar letter and the Department's report to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services.

Sincerely,



David S. C. Chu

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Ike Skelton
Ranking Member



Executive Summary

Purpose:

Section 596(a) and (b) of The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 includes new reporting requirements for the Secretary of Defense aimed at improving the Department's capability to respond to sexual assaults affecting members of the Armed Forces. In accordance with the subsections referenced above, this executive summary describes the Department's plans for: a system to track cases in which care, investigation or prosecution is hindered by the lack of available sexual assault evidence collection kits or lack of timely access to laboratory testing resources; and, for ensuring accessibility and availability of supplies, trained personnel and response resources for responding to sexual assaults occurring in deployed units.

Plan for System to Track Cases in Which Care or Prosecution is Hindered by Lack of Availability:

The Department of Defense will use the *Defense Case Record Management System (DCRMS)* to track cases in which care or prosecution of sexual assaults is hindered by the lack of supplies or laboratory support. DCRMS will become operational in July 2006 and is designed to be an effective tool for Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) to manage the Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program at the operational level. It tracks: unrestricted and restricted reports of sexual assault; the medical and advocacy services provided to victims; and, the case management actions of first response groups (SARCs, Victim Advocates (VAs), Healthcare Providers, Law Enforcement and Investigators, Judge Advocates, Chaplains) from initial report to final disposition. It allows the Military Services to assess trends, improve service delivery, and obtain consistent data to support requests to refine policies as needed.

DCRMS will enable the Military Services to comply with Section 596(a) by tracking cases in which care of victims or investigation or prosecution of offenders is hindered by the lack of sexual assault evidence collection kits or the lack of timely access to laboratory testing. This is accomplished through the use of specific data fields that capture information such as: kit availability at the time of exam; the date evidence is submitted; and the date evidence processing is completed.

Accessibility Plan for Deployed Units:

Training of Personnel

Department of Defense Directive 6495.01 *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program, October 6, 2005* and its associated Directive-type Memorandums: "*Essential Training Tasks for a Sexual Assault Response Capability (JTF-SAPR-013)*," April 26, 2005 and "*Sexual Assault Evidence Collection and Preservation Under Restricted Reporting (JTF-SAPR-014)*," June 30, 2005 mandate that criminal

investigators, healthcare providers and the other first response groups receive specialized training in sexual assault prevention and response. Specific to healthcare providers, essential training tasks include but, are not limited to: sexual assault examination process; sexual assault evidence collection kit; and chain of custody. In addition, criminal investigator training includes: crime scene management; identification and collection of fragile evidence; preliminary interviews; understanding sex offenders; and suspect and victim interview techniques.

SAPR Program training guidelines apply to both deployed units and units assigned to home stations. Recognizing that the process for providing services to victims is situational dependent, *Directive-type Memorandum: "Training Standards for Pre-Deployment Information on Sexual Assault and Response Training (JTF-SAPR-012)," December 13, 2004* stipulates that deploying units receive special instruction on the support systems that will be available during deployment and the procedures for reporting a sexual assault.

Training is required to be conducted throughout every service member's career at both the unit level and at all professional military education programs. The Military Services have implemented ambitious training programs to meet mandated requirements and to provide trained SARC's and VAs for all deploying units. For example, the Army has trained 1,850 deployable uniformed victim advocates. The Navy has successfully integrated SAPR baseline training into all Navy Military Training resulting in 365,900 trained sailors. In addition to its SARC training, the Marine Corps has trained over 700 unit victim advocates and has targeted leadership instruction at both the junior and advanced level. As part of its training program, the Air Force produced a highly acclaimed video that all 356,000 airmen have seen and discussed.

Supply Availability

The process for ordering sexual assault evidence collection kits follows the procedures outlined for ordering other medical supplies. Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) that perform Sexual Assault Forensic Exams (SAFEs) maintain inventory levels based on local historical data and use normal logistical procedures to monitor on-hand quantity. When the on-hand quantity falls below the re-order number, due to utilization or expiration, the logistic branch requisitions additional kits from a Prime Vendor. Medical supplies for testing and treating sexually transmitted diseases (including human immunodeficiency virus), and testing for pregnancy follow the same process. It is important to note that MTFs do not process sexual assault evidence collection kits and therefore do not own related equipment. The four Military Services use the United States Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory (USACIL) for processing.