



## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE OFFICE

### Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military

#### *Report Summary*

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military discusses improvements to sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) policy and programs, provides statistics and analysis of reported sexual assaults, and outlines future plans to enhance support to victims and prevent the crime of sexual assault. In FY09, the Department spent considerable time and effort to create a Department of Defense (DoD)-wide SAPR Strategic Plan and made significant progress executing against its goals, as laid out below.

#### **GOAL 1: INSTITUTIONALIZE PREVENTION STRATEGIES IN MILITARY COMMUNITY**

Through prevention efforts that influence the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of Service members, the Department's objective is to stop a sexual assault before it occurs.

- The *Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy*, briefed to the senior leadership of each Military Service and the National Guard Bureau, was the centerpiece of the Department's SAPR efforts in 2009.
- A key component of DoD's sexual assault strategy is to educate audiences on prevention. In FY09, DoD developed a social marketing campaign, themed "*My Strength Is for Defending: Preventing Sexual Assault Is Part of My Duty.*" Launched during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, this campaign is the largest outreach initiative in FY09.

#### **GOAL2: INCREASE CLIMATE OF VICTIM CONFIDENCE ASSOCIATED WITH REPORTING**

The Department worked to educate on reporting and reduce the stigma tied to reporting a sexual assault, with the goal of encouraging victims to come forward.

- The Department aggressively publicized the benefits of its two sexual assault reporting options, Unrestricted and Restricted.
- The Department issued two memoranda to accomplish the following:
  - Clarify that seeking and using mental health care are not reasons to deny or re-adjudicate a security clearance and
  - Remind both commanders and mental health providers that there are limits as to what should be communicated to the command when an active duty member uses mental health services.
- In FY09, there were a total of 3,230 reports of sexual assault involving military Service members as either victims or subjects, representing an 11% increase from FY08. Since the Department released the social marketing campaign this year, it is believed that the reporting message is resonating with Service members and is part of this increase.

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*FY 09 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military (con't)*

### **GOAL 3: IMPROVE SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE**

In FY09, the Department focused efforts to improve response through programs, policies, and activities that advance victim care and enhance the military criminal justice process.

- The Department created a SAPR Commander's Guide to offer ideas on how to demonstrate support of the program.
- In collaboration with Military Criminal Investigative Organizations, the Department created a DoD sexual assault investigators course and obtained funds to support military trial counsel training initiatives.
- The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) partnered with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape on an educational curriculum to improve civilian rape crisis center support of military victims.

### **GOAL 4: IMPROVE SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY**

To ensure the sexual assault prevention and response program works as planned, the Department focused its FY09 effort on strategic planning, improving data collection and reporting, and enhancing oversight procedures.

- To improve oversight of Service SAPR programs, the Department developed an oversight framework which is a standardized approach for monitoring, analyzing, and reporting on the SAPR program.
- In order to improve data collection, analysis, and case management, the Department initiated the development of the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database.
- The Department assisted in reviews of the SAPR program by the Government Accountability Office and the Defense Task Force on Sexual Assault in the Military Services.
- In FY09, Policy Advisory Team visits focused specifically on the review of Military Service accession and commander training. Overall, they observed the trainings met the requirements of DoD Instruction on sexual assault.

### **GOAL 5: IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF SAPR**

The Department continues to inform and educate stakeholders on the progress of SAPR in the Military Services.

- SAPRO tailored two web addresses for different stakeholders:
  - "sapr.mil" consolidated all SAPR programmatic material for Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and
  - "MyDuty.mil" is tailored to Service members and focuses on victim care and prevention.

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- In FY09, SAPRO received a complete review of sexual assault literature research from the RAND Corporation. The office anticipates that it will use this as a base for the development and dissemination of SAPR military research as well as to inform policy and program development.

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