



## Appendix F: Sexual Harassment Assessment



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Sexual harassment has no place in the Department of Defense (DoD). In policy and in practice, DoD strives to provide an atmosphere of dignity and respect for all Service members and an environment free from sexually harassing behaviors. DoD's goal is to provide the highest quality response and to hold offenders appropriately accountable. All Service members who experience sexual harassment should be able to report the behavior without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

This appendix reports on complaints of sexual harassment received by the Military Services in Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), from October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023.

### Definition of Sexual Harassment

During the period covered by this report, section 1561 of Title 10, United States Code defined "sexual harassment" as:

- Conduct that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and deliberate or repeated offensive comments or gestures of a sexual nature when:
  - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, or career;
  - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person; or
  - Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; and
  - Is so severe or pervasive that a reasonable person would perceive, and the victim does perceive, the environment as hostile or offensive.
- Any use or condonation, by any person in a supervisory or command position, of any form of sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, pay, or job of a member of the Armed Forces or a DoD civilian employee.
- Any deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comment or gesture of a sexual nature by any member of the Armed Forces or DoD civilian employee.

### Top Line Results of FY23 Substantiated Complaints

Following completion of a commander-directed investigation, commanders determined whether complaints of sexual harassment were substantiated or unsubstantiated based on the evidence obtained. Based on information provided by the Military Services, in FY23, there were 2,980 complaints of sexual harassment, of which, 1,372 were substantiated. Of the total substantiated complaints, 882 were reported as formal complaints, 420 were reported as informal complaints, 70 were reported anonymously, and 5 complaints were unknown.

### Oversight Responsibilities

The DoD Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI), under the authority, direction and control of the Executive Director for Force Resiliency, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), develops and promulgates policy and procedural guidance for DoD's Harassment Prevention and Response Program. The Harassment Prevention and Response Program oversees Department-wide harassment prevention and response policy, training and education, and data collection and analysis.

## Department Initiatives

Through ODEI's *Enduring Advantages: A Department of Defense People Strategy*, DoD is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive work environment where all personnel can thrive and successfully contribute to DoD's mission of deterring war and keeping the Nation secure. Fostering a dignified and healthy work environment by minimizing risks to the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of the workforce is a critical element of realizing DoD's vision to continuously serve as a model employer. To create a safe work environment and culture that does not tolerate harassment, DoD leaders must consistently demonstrate their commitment to preventing and addressing the continuum of harms the workforce may face. Furthermore, the Department must provide its global workforce with ready access to support in the form of tools, policies, and other resources to prevent and respond to all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. These efforts, with key policies, procedures, and practices outlined below, form the foundation for DoD to craft a comprehensive and synchronized framework to prevent and address all forms of workforce harassment, discrimination, or retaliation.

## Overview of Sexual Harassment Prevention Efforts

During the period covered by this report, the Department issued DoD Instruction (DoDI) 6400.11 "DoD Integrated Primary Prevention Policy for Prevention Workforce and Leaders," on December 20, 2022. It establishes a new Integrated Primary Prevention (IPP) Workforce with roles, responsibilities, and requirements for assessment, evaluation, and training for IPP personnel and leaders. To proactively prevent harmful behaviors in military communities, the policy provides that DoD will establish and maintain a robust, enterprise wide IPP capability by implementing the following: a trained and full time IPP Workforce; enhanced prevention data collection; effective use of findings from the Command Climate Assessment (CCA) to address climate concerns; and empowered Service members to maintain a safe environment.

The CCAs primarily serve as organizational development tools to help commanders and leaders build positive organizational climates. CCAs allow commanders and leaders to identify areas for improvement and take appropriate actions to address challenges within their organization that include, but are not limited to sexual assault, harassment, retaliation, suicide, domestic abuse, and child abuse.

The Primary Plan of Action (PPoA) 2.0 for 2022 to 2024, published in May 2022, established a framework to guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of integrated primary prevention. This approach aligns competing priorities, increases program effectiveness, ensures efficient use of resources, and helps leaders cultivate safe and healthy climates across the military community. The PPoA 2.0 involves taking action to decrease harmful behaviors and reduce their impact on readiness and retention in a way that:

- Incorporates values of inclusivity, connectedness, dignity, and respect (access, equity, rights, and participation)—including the elevation of Service members' and their families' voices—to inform plans, processes, and trainings;
- Recognizes and adjusts plans, processes, and trainings to be responsive to changing climate issues and populations that have been disproportionately impacted by harmful acts;

- Intentionally seeks to align and find common operating principles across prevention efforts and offices (e.g., equal opportunity, drug reduction response, suicide prevention, sexual assault prevention); and
- Incorporates multiple lines of effort across individual, interpersonal, and community/organizational levels.

## Overview of Sexual Harassment Response Efforts

The Department continues to review and develop substantive updates to incorporate statutory requirements and improve the response measures detailed in DoDI 1020.03, “Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces,” and DoDI 1020.04, “Harassment Prevention and Response for DoD Civilian Employees.” Concurrently, the Department is engaged in resourcing and staffing efforts to better support response efforts, including the use of independent trained investigators. Furthermore, DoD leaders continue to take appropriate administrative or disciplinary corrective action when an allegation of harassment is substantiated. This includes documenting an offender’s substantiated harassment in the appropriate personnel records system.

These efforts are informed by the June 2021 recommendations from the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military (IRC), as approved by the Secretary of Defense, and recent statutory changes.

Since 2021, the Department conducts On-Site Installation Evaluation (OSIE) assessments at select military sites. The OSIE provides insight on risk and protective factors enabling the Department to more effectively address prevention and response efforts for sexual assault, harassment, and suicide.

Finally, the Department continues to expand its data collection and analysis tools to better inform its response efforts. The Department started the process to develop an automated case management system to improve data collection. Using surveys, DoD can assess whether available reporting measures are known, accessible, trusted, and effective.

## DoD Harassment Prevention and Response Assessment

The Department has multiple policies that speak to DoD’s measures to address sexual harassment of Service members:

- DoDI 1020.03, “Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces,” February 8, 2018, incorporating Change 2, December 20, 2022.<sup>1</sup> This DoDI:
  - Establishes a comprehensive, DoD-wide harassment prevention and response program;
  - Affirms the Department’s position that it does not tolerate or condone harassment;
  - Provides requirements for Military Department harassment prevention and response policies and programs for Service members;
  - Provides training and education requirements and standards; and
  - Requires that substantiated incidents of harassment be annotated on Service member fitness reports or Service-level reporting and tracking system(s), which are

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/102003p.PDF>

reviewed prior to Service member selection for promotion and other favorable personnel actions.

- Recognizing the need for greater leadership commitment and accountability to promote, support and enforce sexual harassment prevention and response policy and programs, the Department is updating its policy DoDI 1020.03, “Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces,” to include the approved IRC Recommendation 1.2, “Independent, trained investigators for sexual harassment and mandatory initiation of involuntary separation for all substantiated complaints.” These changes will:
  - Provide procedures for independent investigation of formal complaints of sexual harassment, to include referrals to military criminal investigative organizations (MCIOs) or other service law enforcement agency as appropriate;
  - Issue policy to fund, staff, and provide special training to ensure the independent investigators have the professional capabilities to investigate all formal sexual harassment complaints with timely and thorough investigations; and
  - Require initiation of involuntary separation of persons against whom a complaint of sexual harassment is substantiated.
- DoDI 1350.02, “DoD Military Equal Opportunity Program,” September 4, 2020, incorporating Change 1, December 20, 2022.<sup>2</sup> This DoDI:
  - Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the DoD Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Program; and
  - Establishes the functions of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) and the DEOMI Board of Advisors.
- The DoD Retaliation Prevention and Response Strategy Implementation Plan, January 2017,<sup>3</sup> provides the Department’s response efforts for sexual harassment complaints that involve retaliation.
- DoDI 6400.11, “DoD Integrated Primary Prevention Policy for Prevention Workforce and Leaders,” December 20, 2022.<sup>4</sup> This DoDI:
  - Establishes and implements policy, assigns responsibilities, prescribes procedures, and identifies requirements for addressing the primary prevention of harmful behaviors, as defined in the glossary, in military communities.
  - Establishes roles, requirements, and training and education standards for full-time and part-time Integrated Primary Prevention personnel;
  - Establishes learning objectives for leaders to oversee and support prevention activities; and
  - Provides assessment and evaluation requirements for IPP oversight.

## Overall FY23 Complaint Totals

For Service members, sexual harassment may be reported to a variety of persons using formal, informal, or anonymous procedures. A formal complaint is a complaint that is submitted in writing to the staff designated to receive such complaints in Military Department operating instructions and regulations or a complaint that the commanding officer or other person in charge of the organization determines warrants an investigation. Data concerning formal

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/135002p.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://sapr.mil/sites/default/files/DoD\\_RPRS\\_Implementation\\_Plan.pdf](https://sapr.mil/sites/default/files/DoD_RPRS_Implementation_Plan.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/640011p.PDF?ver=\\_-WRNG-g78mHPx4gQwkeaQ%3D%3D](https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/640011p.PDF?ver=_-WRNG-g78mHPx4gQwkeaQ%3D%3D)

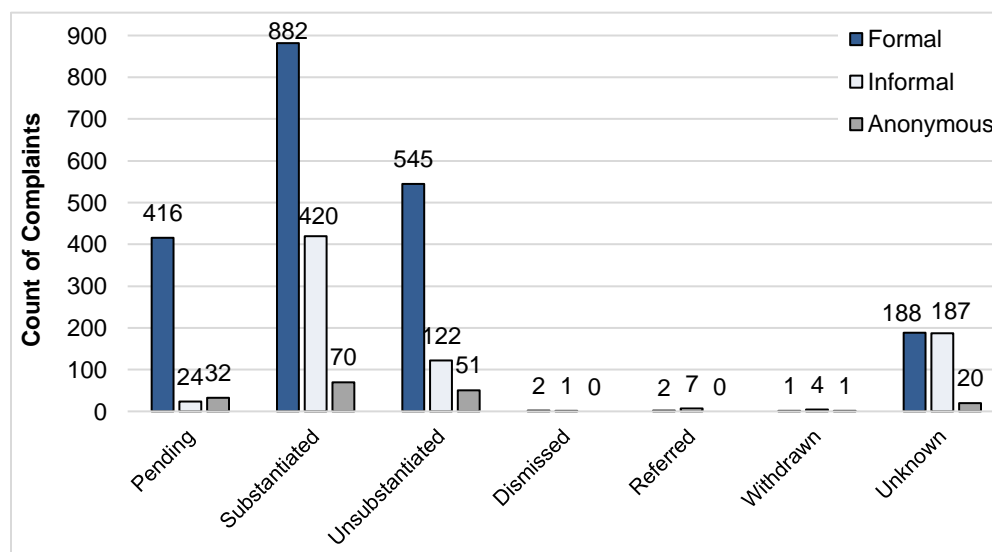
complaints was obtained from Service and National Guard Bureau (NGB) MEO offices, with the exception of Army whose data was obtained from its Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention Program.

An informal complaint is an allegation, made either orally or in writing, that is not submitted as a formal complaint through the office designated to receive harassment complaints. The allegation may be submitted to a person in a position of authority within or outside of the Service member's organization. Such complaints may be resolved at the lowest level through intervention by the first-line supervisor and/or using alternative dispute resolution techniques, such as mediation.

An anonymous complaint is an allegation of sexual harassment received by a commanding officer or supervisor, regardless of the means of transmission, from an unknown or unidentified source. The complainant is not required to divulge any personally identifiable information. If an anonymous complaint contains sufficient information to permit the initiation of an investigation, the commanding officer or supervisor will initiate the investigation in accordance with DoDI 1020.03, and any Service-specific guidance. If an anonymous complaint does not contain sufficient information to permit the initiation of an investigation, the information would be documented in a Memorandum for the Record and maintained on file in accordance with disposition instructions and the central point of contact responsible for processing harassment complaints.

Sexual harassment incidents that involve nonconsensual distribution of private sexual images (NDPSI) are included within the total sexual harassment allegation numbers, and some are provided in a category of its own. Based on the way the data is collected from the Services, some of the allegations of NDPSI are counted as their own problematic behavior type.<sup>5</sup> **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.** displays the case statuses of the FY23 formal, informal, and anonymous complaints. The numbers are broken down by complaint type: substantiated, unsubstantiated, pending, unknown, dismissed, referred, or withdrawn.

**Figure 1. Sexual Harassment Case Status by Complaint Type**



<sup>5</sup> The Marine Corps interprets NDPSI as an offense completely separate from sexual harassment.

## Formal Complaints

During FY23, the Military Services and the National Guard Bureau (NGB) received, processed, and investigated a total of 2,036 formal sexual harassment complaints. The data indicate an 8-percent increase in FY23 from the 1,872 formal complaints that were received, processed, and investigated in FY22.

Of the 2,036 total formal sexual harassment complaints, 1,432 were resolved,<sup>6</sup> 416 remained pending at the close of FY23, and 188 were of unknown status.<sup>7</sup>

Of the 1,432 resolved complaints, 882 were substantiated, 545 were unsubstantiated, 2 were dismissed, 2 were referred to other agencies, and 1 was withdrawn.

## Informal Complaints

During FY23, the Military Services and NGB received, processed, and addressed without a formal investigation, a total of 765 informal sexual harassment complaints. Of the 765 informal complaints, 554 were resolved, 24 remained pending at the close of FY23, and 187 were of unknown status. Of the resolved complaints, 420 were substantiated, 122 were unsubstantiated, 1 was dismissed, 7 were referred to other agencies, and 4 were withdrawn.

## Anonymous Complaints

During FY23, 174 sexual harassment complaints were filed anonymously. Of those, 122 of the complaints were resolved, 32 complaints remained open pending resolution, and the status of 20 complaints were unknown. Of the resolved anonymous complaints, 70 were substantiated, 51 were unsubstantiated, and 1 was withdrawn.

## Nonconsensual Distribution of Private Sexual Images (NDPSI)

Section 537 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY18 requires collection of information about sexual harassment incidents that involve NDPSI. Allegations of NDPSI are counted within the total sexual harassment allegation numbers and as standalone incidents.

### Formal Complaints – NDPSI

In FY23, the Military Services and NGB received, processed, and investigated 34 total formal complaints of sexual harassment involving an allegation of NDPSI.

### Informal Complaints – NDPSI

In FY23, there were no informal complaints of sexual harassment involving an allegation of NDPSI.

### Anonymous Complaints – NDPSI

In FY23, there was one anonymous complaint of sexual harassment involving an allegation of NDPSI.

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<sup>6</sup> A complaint is resolved when it is substantiated, unsubstantiated, dismissed, referred, or withdrawn.

<sup>7</sup> "Unknown" includes standalone cases of NDPSI, or the status was not reported by the Military Services.

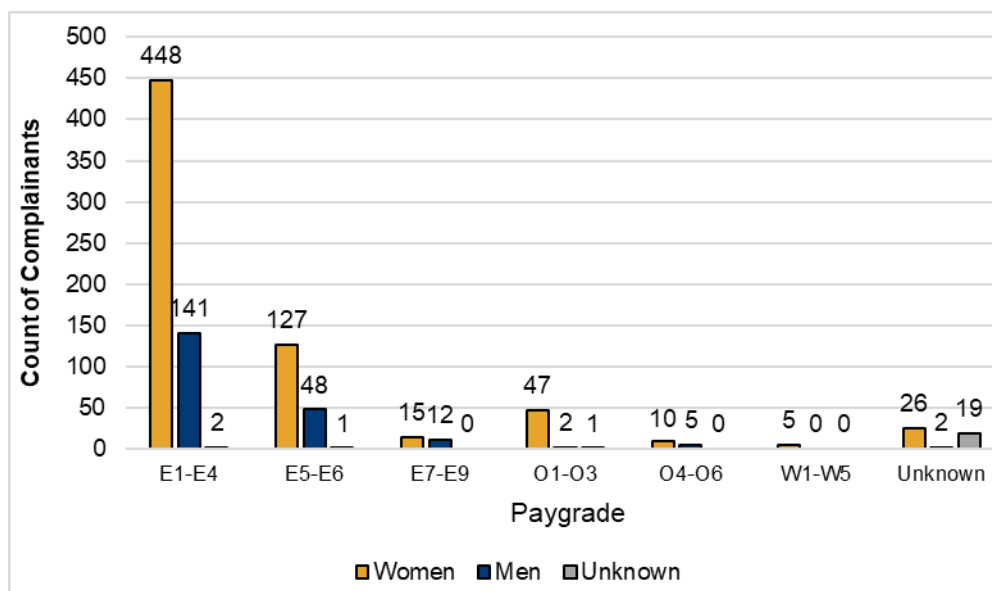
## Complainant Characteristics

Examining complainant characteristics for formal, informal, and anonymous substantiated sexual harassment complaints helps to identify populations most at risk for sexual harassment.

### Formal Complaints – Complainant Characteristics

There were 911 complainants associated with 882 incidents of sexual harassment substantiated following a formal complaint and investigation. Sexual harassment incidents may involve more than one complainant. Figure 2 displays complainant characteristics by gender and grade for formal complaints received in FY23. Of the 911 complainants, 678 were women, 210 were men, and the gender of 23 complainants were unknown. The majority of complainants were in grades E1-E4 (448 women and 141 men).

**Figure 2. Formal Complaints by Complainant Gender and Grade**

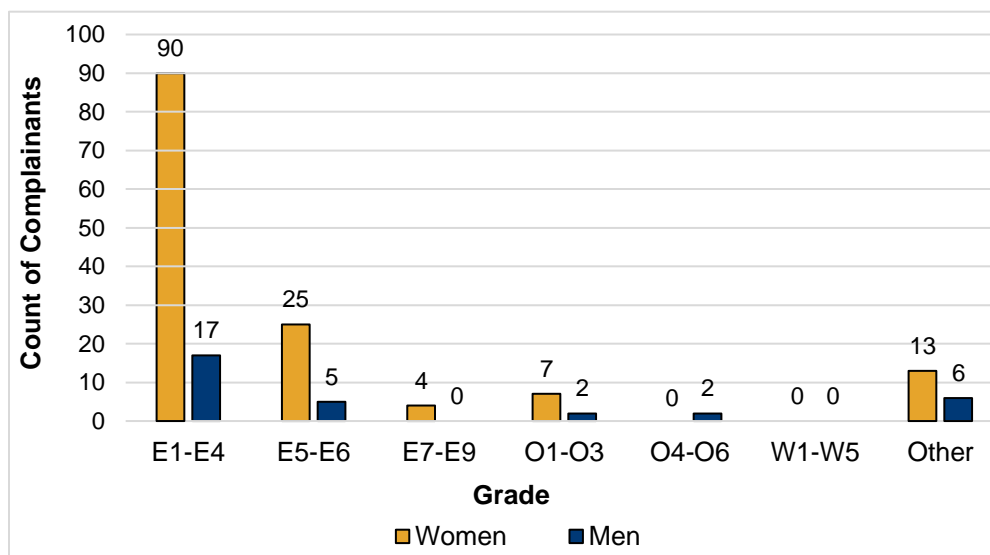


### Informal Complaints – Complainant Characteristics

There were 171 complainants associated with 420 incidents of sexual harassment substantiated following an informal complaint. Figure 3 displays complainant characteristics by gender and grade for informal complaints received in FY23. Of the 171 complainants, 139 were women and 32 were men. The majority of the complainants were in grades E1-E4 (90 women and 17 men).



**Figure 3. Informal Complaints by Complainant Gender and Grade**



### Anonymous Complaints – Complainant Characteristics

Anonymous complainants are not required to divulge any demographic or personally identifiable information. Therefore, the information about their characteristics is sparse. The Military Services reported a total of 70 complainants associated with 70 substantiated anonymous complaints. The anonymous complaint data did not provide enough information to display in a graphic format.

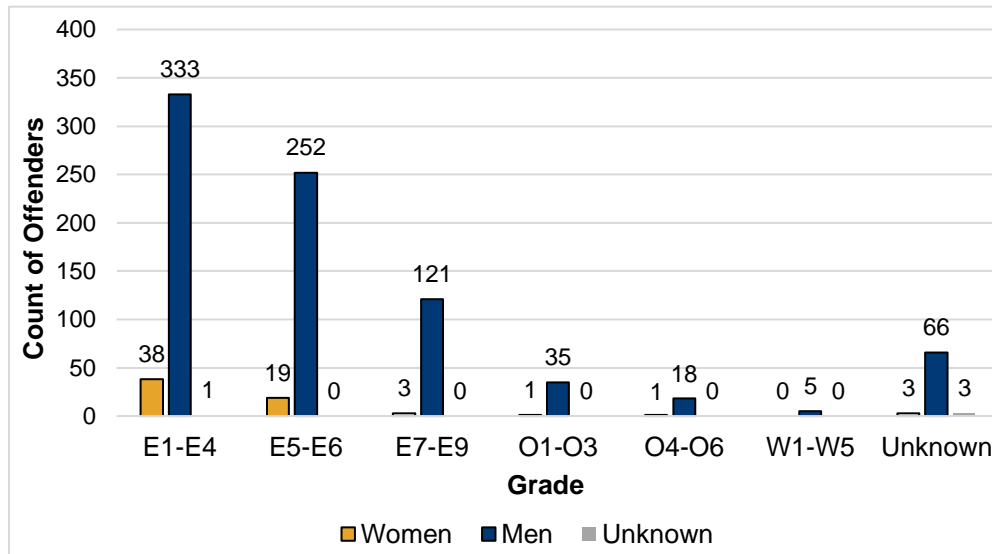
### Offender Characteristics

This section presents offender characteristics for formal and informal substantiated sexual harassment complaints. The demographics of first-time offenders and repeat offenders are also presented in this section.

### Formal Complaints – Offender Characteristics

During FY23, there were 899 offenders associated with 882 incidents of sexual harassment substantiated following a formal complaint and investigation. Figure 4 displays characteristics by gender and grade for formal complaints received in FY23.

**Figure 4. Offenders Associated with Formal Complaints, by Grade**



### Repeat Offenders (Formal Complaints)

Notably, a single offender<sup>8</sup> can be associated with more than one complaint. There were 899 total offenders reported for substantiated complaints. In FY23:

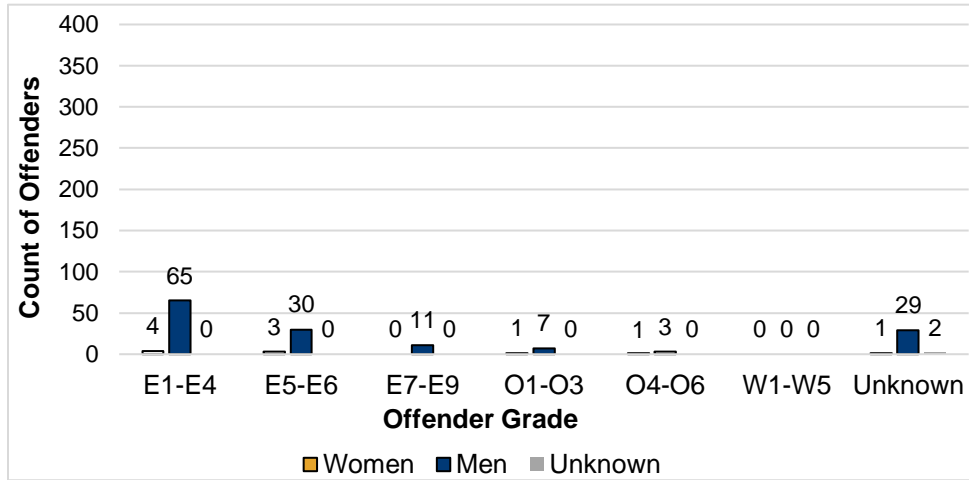
- 18 were repeat offenders;
- Repeat offenders were all men;
- 16 repeat offenders were in grades E1 – E6; and
- 2 repeat offenders were in grades O1 – O3.

### Informal Complaints – Offender Characteristics

During FY23, there were a total of 157 offenders associated with 420 substantiated informal complaints. Figure 5 displays characteristics by gender and grade for informal complaints received in FY23.

<sup>8</sup> The number of first-time offenders plus the number of repeat offenders may not add up because this status can be unknown.

**Figure 5. Offenders Associated with Informal Complaints by Grade**



### Repeat Offender (Informal Complaints)

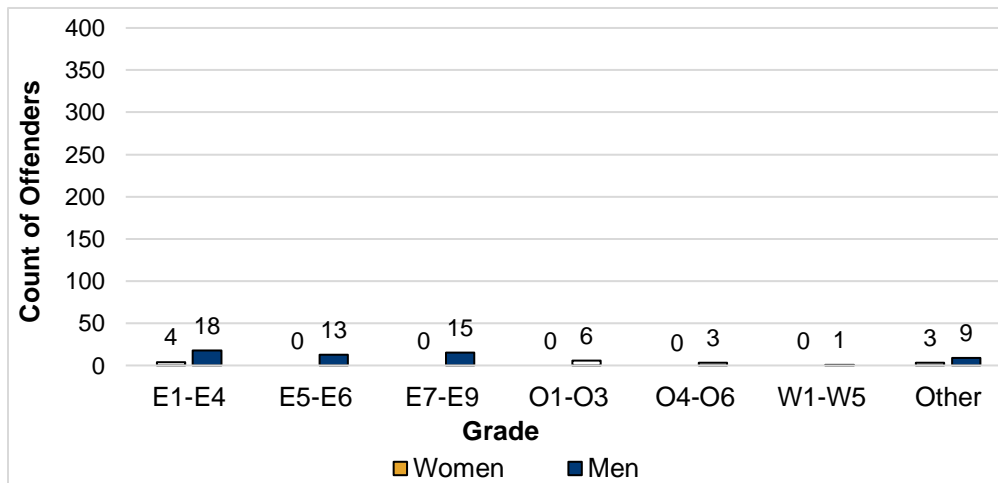
Of the 157 offenders associated with a substantiated complaint, 33 were repeat offenders. In FY23:

- 31 repeat offenders were men;
- 1 repeat offender was a woman;
- The gender of one repeat offender was unknown;
- 17 repeat offenders were in grades E1 – E4;
- 10 repeat offenders were in grades E5 – E9;
- 3 repeat offenders were in grades O1 – O3; and
- Grades of 3 repeat offenders were unknown.

### Anonymous Complaints – Offender Characteristics

During FY23, there were a total of 72 offenders associated with 70 substantiated anonymous complaints. Figure 6 displays characteristics by gender and grade for anonymous complaints received in FY23.

**Figure 6. Offenders Associated with Anonymous Complaints, by Grade**



## Repeat Offender (Anonymous Complaints)

In FY23, there were four repeat offenders for anonymous complaints.

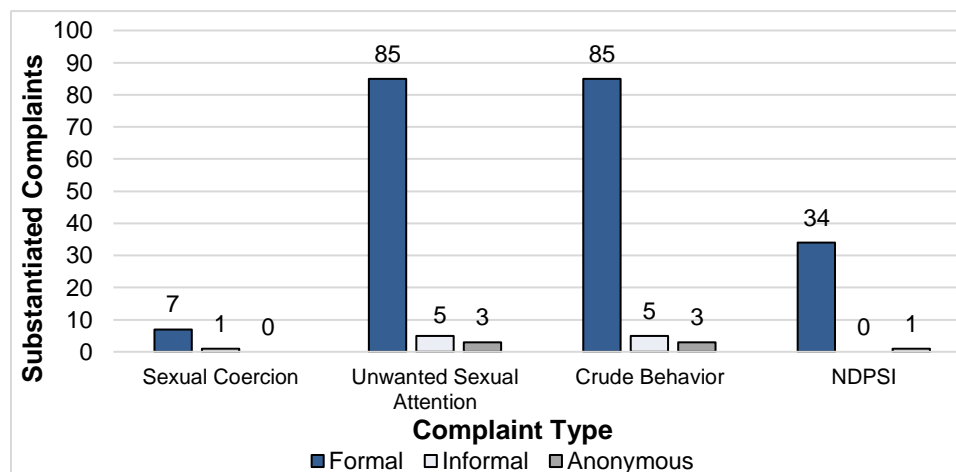
## Nature of Substantiated Incidents

Sexual harassment is characterized as a hostile work environment and/or quid pro quo. Hostile work environment is when a person is subjected to offensive, crude, unwanted, and unsolicited comments and behavior of a sexual nature that interferes with that person's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Quid pro quo refers to conditions placed on a person's career or terms of employment in return for sexual favors.

Sexual harassment complaints are generally of four different types, depending on the nature of the sexual harassment behaviors. For every substantiated sexual harassment complaint, there can be a combination of sexual harassment behaviors. For example, one substantiated formal sexual harassment complaint can involve both crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention. Therefore, the total of the allegations in each category type exceeds the overall total of complaints.

In FY23, the nature of 865 complaints was not reported. The Department recognizes this gap in reporting and is exploring solutions to close this in future reports. In Figure 7, the allegations of the FY23 formal, informal, and anonymous complaints are listed by complaint type: crude/offensive behavior, unwanted sexual attention, sexual coercion, and NDPSI.

**Figure 7. Substantiated Sexual Harassment Allegations by Behavior Type**



## Timeliness of Reporting

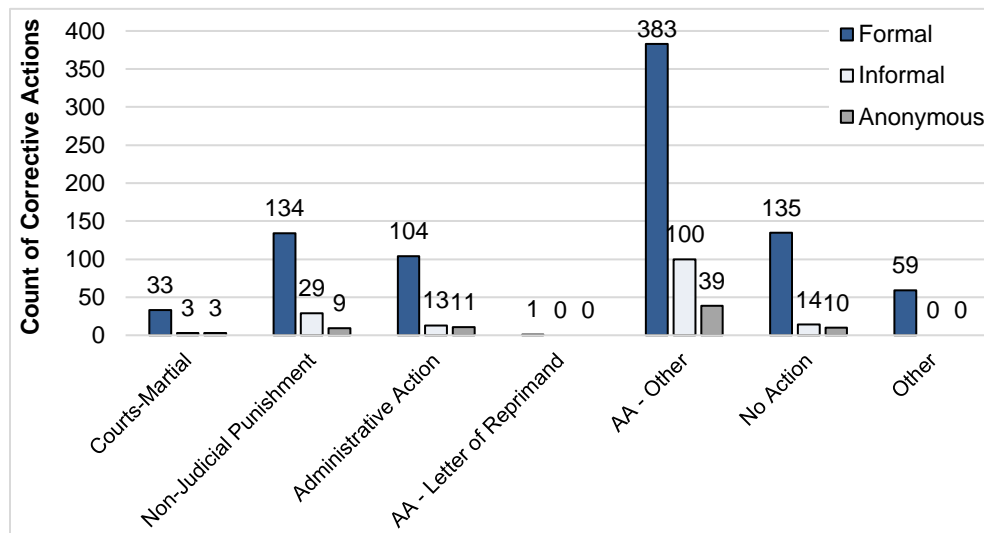
DoD policy requires that, to the extent practicable, commanders will forward sexual harassment complaint information or allegations to a general court-martial convening authority (GCMCA) within 72 hours of receipt. In FY23, 1,867 complaints of sexual harassment were forwarded to a GCMCA within 72 hours and 308 were forwarded to GCMCA after more than 72 hours. The timeliness of 619 complaints was unknown.

## Disposition

Offenders identified through substantiated complaints, whether the complaint was formal or informal, may receive more than one type of disposition. For example, an offender may receive

a letter of reprimand, administrative actions, and non-judicial punishment. Figure 8 displays the different types of disposition by complaint type (i.e., formal, informal, anonymous).

**Figure 8. Corrective Actions Administered to Offenders in Substantiated Complaints**



### Disposition of Formal Complaints

In FY23, 714 offenders received administrative and/or disciplinary actions based on substantiated formal complaints.

### Disposition of Informal Complaints

In FY23, 145 offenders received 657 administrative and/or disciplinary actions based on substantiated informal complaints.

### Disposition of Anonymous Complaints

In FY23, 62 offenders received 72 administrative and/or disciplinary actions based on substantiated anonymous complaints.

### Retaliation Complaints

If a Service member (who has filed a sexual harassment complaint) and/or a uniformed witness, bystander, or first responder perceives subsequent retaliation related to the complaint of sexual harassment, they may seek guidance from an Equal Opportunity Advisor (EOA). Individuals are encouraged to report retaliation issues to the Inspector General (IG)<sup>9</sup>, MCIO, to command for investigation, or other appropriate command action per Service guidance.

In FY23, there were no retaliation referrals reported for sexual harassment formal complaints or informal complaints.

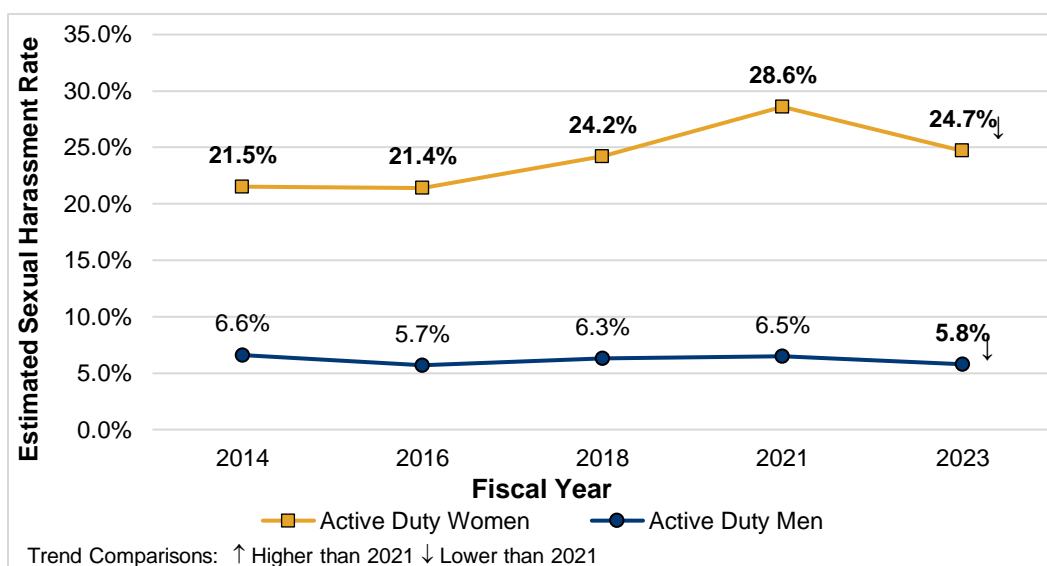
<sup>9</sup> Currently, no mechanism is in place to share dispositions of retaliation investigated by the IG with EOAs.

## Topline Sexual Harassment Findings from the 2023 *Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Military Members (WGR)*

While complaint data provide some insight into the problem, sexual harassment remains underreported. To address this gap in reporting, the Department conducts biennial surveys to estimate the prevalence of sexual harassment, along with other correlated behaviors.

In FY23, about one in four (24.7 percent) women and 5.8 percent of men experienced sexual harassment<sup>10</sup> in the year prior to taking the survey (Figure 9). Among both active duty women and men, the rate of sexual harassment was significantly lower than rates observed in 2021. This decrease in sexual harassment prevalence for women was driven by statistically significant decreases among enlisted women and women under 25, whereas the decrease among men was driven by statistically significant decreases among junior enlisted men under 21.

**Figure 9. Estimated Rate of Sexual Harassment in the Active Duty, by Gender**



Compared to 2021, women were significantly less likely to experience behaviors consistent with a hostile work environment (decreasing from 28.5 percent in 2021 to 24.7 percent in 2023) and behaviors consistent with sexual quid pro quo (declining from 3.0 percent in 2021 to 1.9 percent in 2023). Men were also significantly less likely to experience hostile work environments in 2023 (5.8 percent, compared to 6.5 percent in 2021). In 2023, 0.3 percent of men experience behaviors consistent with sexual quid pro quo, which was unchanged from the 0.3 percent observed in 2021. Finally, the survey findings revealed that women were more likely to experience both types of sexual harassment compared to men, consistent with findings from previous years.

<sup>10</sup> Changes to both the sexual harassment and gender discrimination metrics in 2019 involved adding questions to the sexual quid pro quo and gender discrimination metrics to identify the alleged offender(s) more clearly as a person in a position of leadership or authority. The metric change was implemented in 2019 for the *WGR* survey of the Reserve component. Accordingly, no adjustments were required in 2021 for the Reserve component survey comparisons to 2019. The change to the sexual harassment metric for the Active component in 2021 did not produce different estimates. For additional discussion regarding the metric changes, see chapter 1 of the 2021 *WGR* Overview Report, [https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/public/docs/reports/FY21\\_Annex\\_1.pdf](https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/public/docs/reports/FY21_Annex_1.pdf).

## One Situation of Sexual Harassment with the Biggest Effect

Most women (84 percent) and three-quarters (74 percent) of men experienced more than one sexual harassment situation in the past year. Therefore, Service members were asked to reflect upon and describe the characteristics and consequences of the sexual harassment experience—the “one situation”—that was the worst, or most serious, to them. Over two-thirds (68 percent) of women and about half (49 percent) of men characterized the upsetting situation as sexual harassment (Figure 10). In addition, 39 percent of women and 16 percent of men considered the upsetting situation to be harassment based on their gender identity and about a quarter of men and women considered the one situation to be racial/ethnic harassment or harassment based on their sexual orientation.

**Figure 10. Circumstances Surrounding the One Situation**

Would you consider the upsetting situation to have been:	Women		Men	
	2021	2023	2021	2023
Sexual harassment	69%	<b>68%†</b>	51%	<b>49%‡</b>
Racial/Ethnic harassment	23%	<b>22%</b>	26%	<b>24%</b>
Religious harassment	6%	<b>5%‡</b>	10%	<b>12%†</b>
Harassment based on your sexual orientation	26%	<b>23%</b>	24%	<b>24%</b>
Harassment based on your gender identity	40%	<b>39%†</b>	17%	<b>16%‡</b>

Within Year Comparisons by Gender: † More likely ‡ Less likely

## Demographics of Alleged Offender(s)

For most women and men, the one worst situation of sexual harassment in the prior year involved an alleged offender who was often of the same rank or some other higher ranking military member in their unit. Women and men were also most often harassed by a male military member; however, about a third (32 percent) of men were harassed by a mix of men and women.

## Where it Occurred

Of those who experienced sexual harassment, the vast majority of one situation occurred on a military installation or ship (80 percent for women and 78 percent for men). Additionally, 41 percent of women and 39 percent of men indicated the one situation occurred while they were attending a military function (either on or off base).<sup>11</sup>

## Way Forward

### DoD-wide Case Management System

The Department recognizes the need for a DoD-wide case management system that utilizes current technologies to ensure more accurate and timely data. ODEI is developing an acquisition strategy to leverage commercial off-the-shelf technology for a Department-wide MEO data collection and reporting solution. This provides access to timely, accurate, and complete Department-wide MEO prohibited discrimination, harassment (to include hazing and bullying), sexual harassment, and related problematic behaviors data and is the solution

<sup>11</sup> These items were not included on the 2021 WGR and therefore cannot be trended.

required to accurately measure and statistically assess the progress and effectiveness of Department-wide policies and programs and fulfill DoD's reporting requirements.

## Confidential Reporting of Sexual Harassment

Confidential reporting is currently not one of the three reporting options in DoDI 1020.03 "Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces." DoD is establishing a process for Service members to confidentially allege a complaint of sexual harassment in accordance with Title 10 United States Code 1561b(b)(2). The Department is updating its policies to include confidential reporting as an additional reporting option for Service members. At a minimum, the confidential reporting option will ensure the individual designated to receive Confidential Reports must be:

- Outside the immediate chain of command; and
- Able to maintain confidentiality.

## IRC Cross-Cutting Recommendation 1

In response to the approved IRC Cross-Cutting Recommendation 1, USD(P&R) issued updated guidance on September 14, 2022, giving the Military Departments discretion over how they will temporarily provide sexual harassment victims with response services previously only available to sexual assault victims. Additionally, the Department commissioned a study to identify what services sexual harassment victims, and victims of other forms of harassment, should have access to and which workforce should provide them.

## OSIEs

The OSIE visits have provided early detection of risk factors so leaders can take corrective actions and enhance prevention. The site visits provide insights on shared risk and protective factors on the ground, what works, what does not, how the Department can improve efforts more comprehensively, and support and inform future policy development.

## Technology's Effect

DoD is committed to holding Service members appropriately accountable who engage in cyber harassment behaviors. Providing support and remedies to victims when such behavior occurs is also a top priority. DoD will accomplish these efforts through policy and programmatic actions as the Department recognizes cyber harassment has become more pervasive in society.

DoD is collaborating with the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress and the Office of People Analytics to evaluate how, and to what extent, the cyber environment and "information cocooning" impact the attitudes and behaviors of Service members. This collaboration will also provide recommendations for prevention activities derived from peer-reviewed academic literature and organizational best practices on how to mitigate the corresponding harmful behaviors. These recommendations will inform ways to promote a common understanding of cyber-facilitated sexual harassment and sexual assault to inform reporting and investigation procedures. For example, these actions may take place either before or after in-person sexual harassment or sexual assault incidents. Sometimes, they are risk indicators, and in other cases, they are retaliatory and threatening to discourage the reporting of an incident and/or to continue abusive behavior.

DoD continues to leverage every tool at its disposal to ensure the Military Departments and other DoD components have the requisite data and tools to hold leaders, both civilian and



military, appropriately accountable for promoting good order and discipline. DoD is diligently working toward a culture change within every unit and organization to reduce the rates of sexually harassing behaviors; ensure those who experience sexual harassment are comfortable coming forward and harassers are held appropriately accountable; and make certain that unit climates do not permit these behaviors to exist.