



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
**SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION  
AND RESPONSE OFFICE**

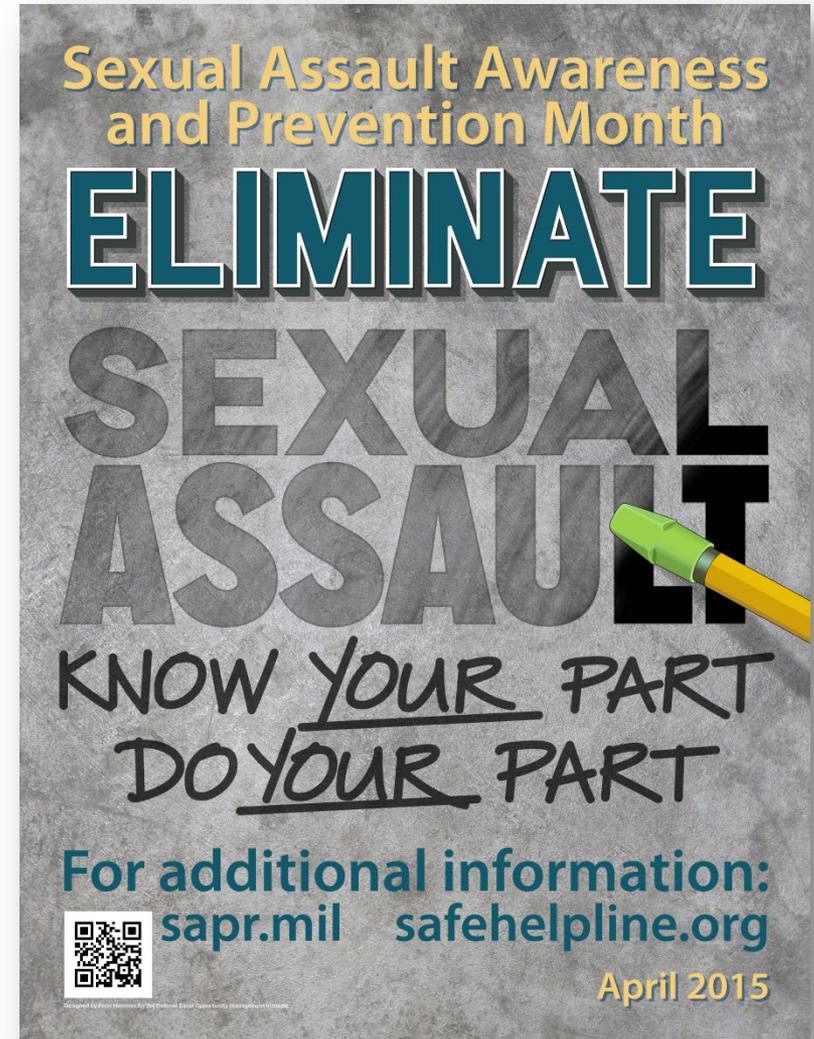
***Advancing National Efforts  
to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Assault  
through Department of Defense Programs***

EVAWI Conference on Sexual Assault,  
Domestic Violence, and Campus Response  
April 8, 2015

Colonel Litonya J. Wilson  
Deputy Director, DoD SAPRO

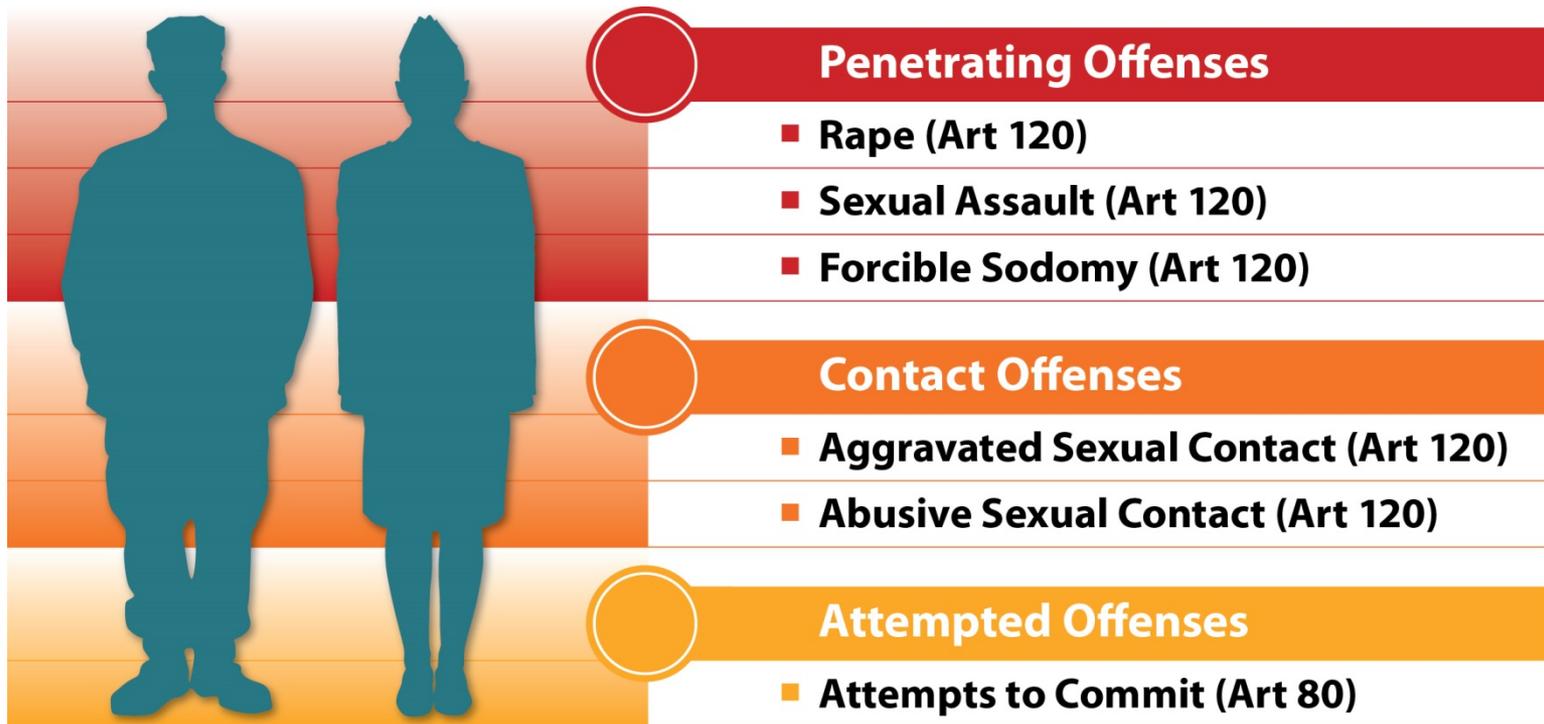
# Overview

- DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Overview
- DoD Report to the President on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response
- Considerations when Developing a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response System
- Online Resources and Concluding Thoughts



# What Constitutes Sexual Assault

- In the DoD, sexual assault encompasses a range of sexual contact offenses between adults, prohibited by the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) - divided into three categories



# Eliminating Sexual Assault from the Military

- DoD is committed to reducing - with goal of eliminating - sexual assault from the military
- The mission of DoD SAPRO is to understand the problem, institute meaningful solutions, and inform our Service members, Congress and the public



**Our approach is prevention-focused with an uncompromising commitment to victim assistance**

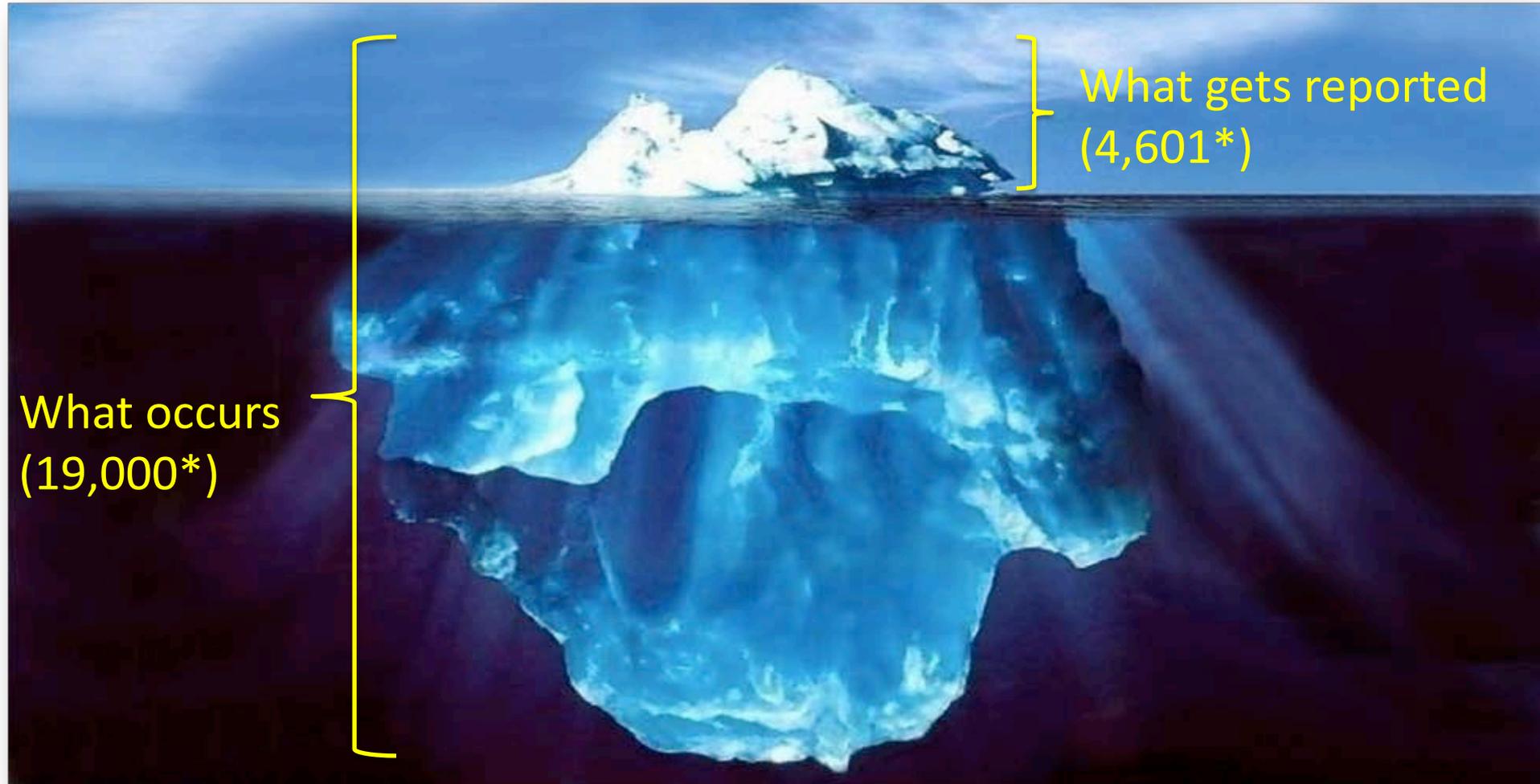


# Nature of the Problem

- Common Reported Incident Characteristics:
  - Victims 18-24 years old – alleged offenders slightly older
  - Both parties military – peer or near peers in rank
  - Non-strangers – parties have some knowledge of each other
  - On a government installation
  - Alcohol involved – one or both parties
- Victims perceive alienation or retaliation after reporting
  - Of the women\* surveyed in FY14 who indicated experiencing unwanted sexual contact and made an unrestricted report, 62% perceived some form of social, administrative, and/or professional retaliation

\* Results not reportable for men

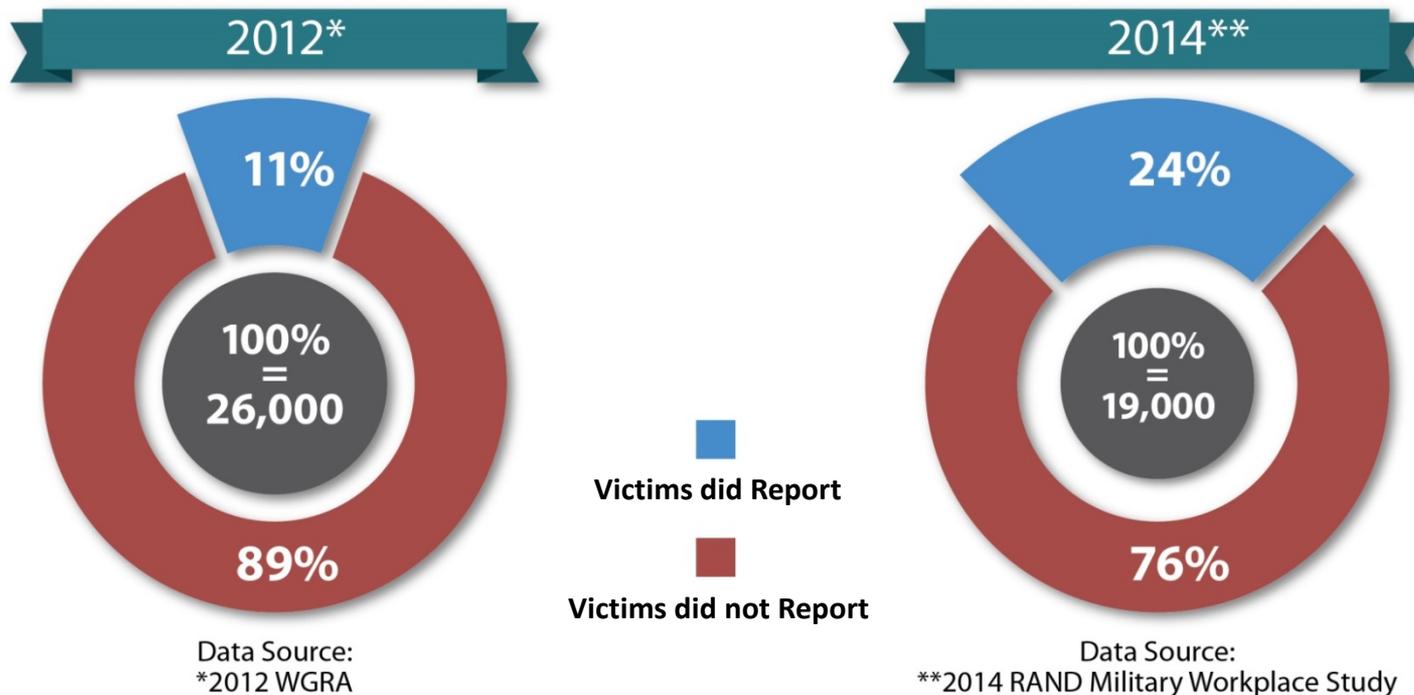
# Sexual Assault is an Underreported Crime



\*Prevalence and reporting statistics for 2014

# Encouraging Reporting of an Underreported Crime

- DoD encourages victims to report the incident so they can access healthcare, advocacy, and legal services – and allow opportunities to hold offenders appropriately accountable
- The percentage of victims reporting sexual assault reached record levels in 2013 and 2014, with reporting in both years over 50% higher than in 2012
- DoD estimates that it now receives a report from 1 in 4 victims compared to 1 in 10 in 2012



# Greater Victim Reporting Improves Readiness

*DoD provides more comprehensive access to dedicated medical, psychological, and legal assistance for victims of sexual assault than any other institution:*



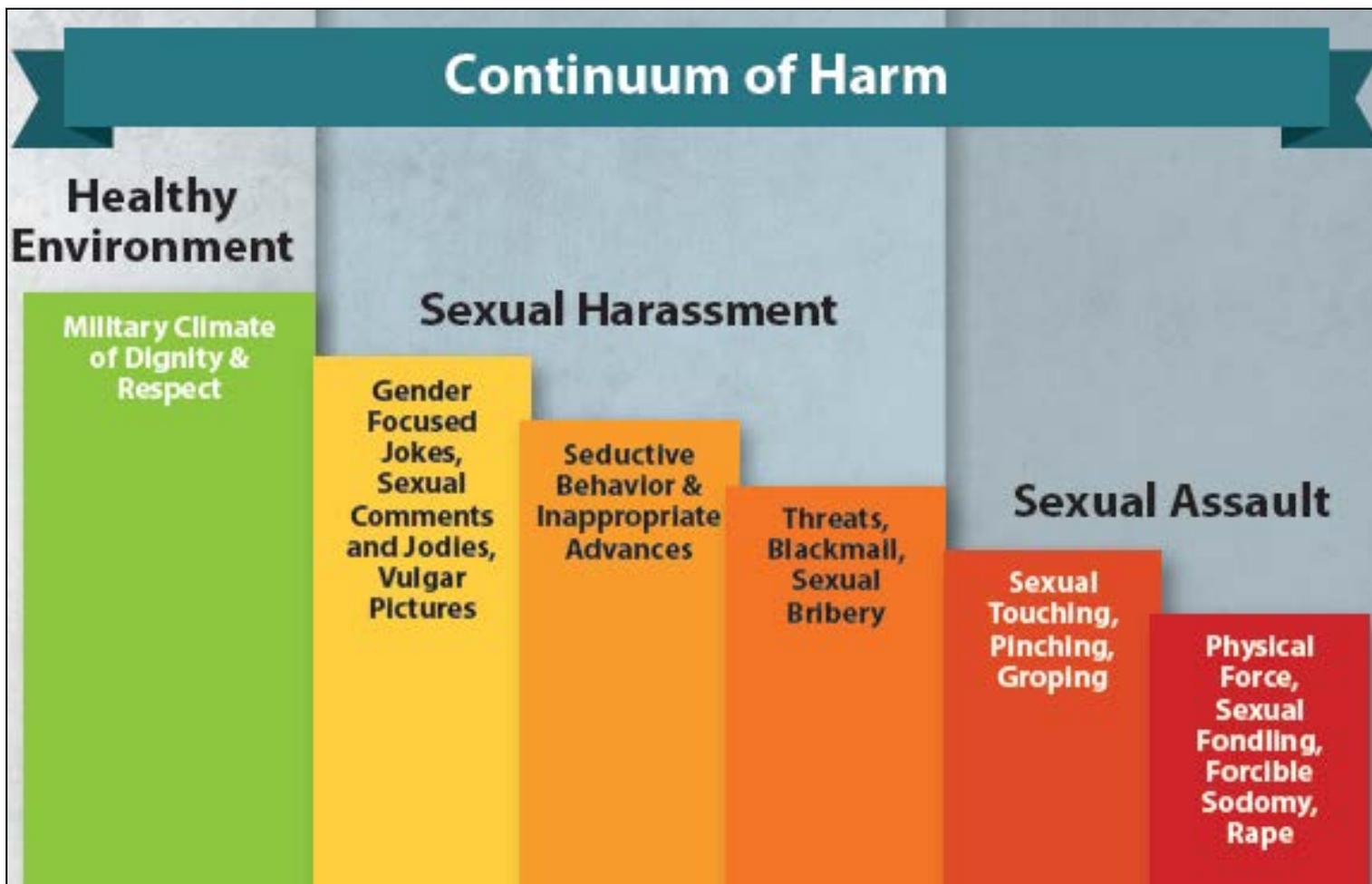
\*Applies to those eligible to receive legal assistance, plus certain members of the reserve components.

# A System-wide Prevention Approach

*DoD is intensifying prevention efforts throughout the force, while recognizing it takes much more than an hour of training, an awareness campaign, or an inspiring poster:*



# Sexual Harassment is Strongly Correlated with Sexual Assault



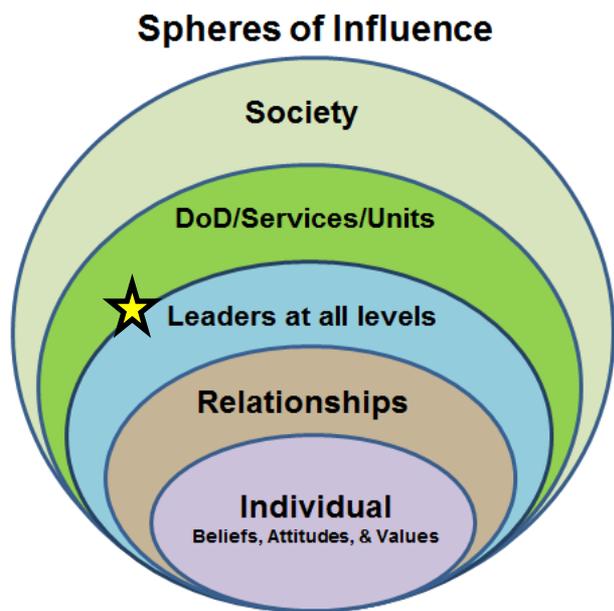
# 2014-2016 DoD Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy

**Objective:** To deliver consistent and effective prevention methods and programs.

**End State:** Cultural imperatives of mutual respect and trust, professional values, and team commitment are reinforced to create an environment where sexual assault is not tolerated, condoned, or ignored.



**Leaders are the “center of gravity” for prevention efforts**



**Social-Ecological Model**

<i>Key Means – Resources</i>	<i>Key Ways – Objectives</i>	<i>Supporting End states</i>
DoD Benchmark Prevention Programs and Research	Develop DoD national benchmark prevention program that sets the example for civil society to follow	Acceptance and endorsement of the values shared by DoD
Directives, strategies, and policies	Institutionalize sexual assault prevention practices and programs throughout Department	Institutionalized culture & values, supported by policies
Leader mentorship and unit climate	Influence personnel values, attitudes, and behaviors	Establishment and maintenance of a culture/climate which supports the prevention of sexual assault
Education, skills building, & training	Promote healthy and supportive relationships between peers, partners, family, and friends	An environment in which Service members' networks support a culture of sexual assault prevention
Education, skills building, & training	Promote healthy social-emotional relationship skills	Identify, act, and intervene to prevent inappropriate behaviors associated with sexual assault

# DoD Report to the President on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response December 2014

# Current Environment

## **Significant Attention:**

- There is continued, unprecedented focus on the issue of Sexual Assault from DoD senior leadership, media outlets, and Members of Congress
- High-profile incidents drive continued negative attention and support critical narratives

## **Comprehensive Response:**

- Secretary of Defense (SecDef), Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Congress actively promoting a victim-focused response to increase reporting, victim support, and offender accountability where appropriate while continuing to focus on prevention
- The past four National Defense Authorization Acts include 71 sections of law containing over 100 unique requirements
- During the same time period, Secretary Panetta and Secretary Hagel also directed 50 policy initiatives

## **Presidential Attention:**

- On Dec 4, 2014, DoD delivered a report to President Obama on the progress on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response in the Military
- The report covered 3 years of significant reform and provided feedback on agreed-upon metrics to determine the effectiveness of DoD's prevention and response system

# Report Summary

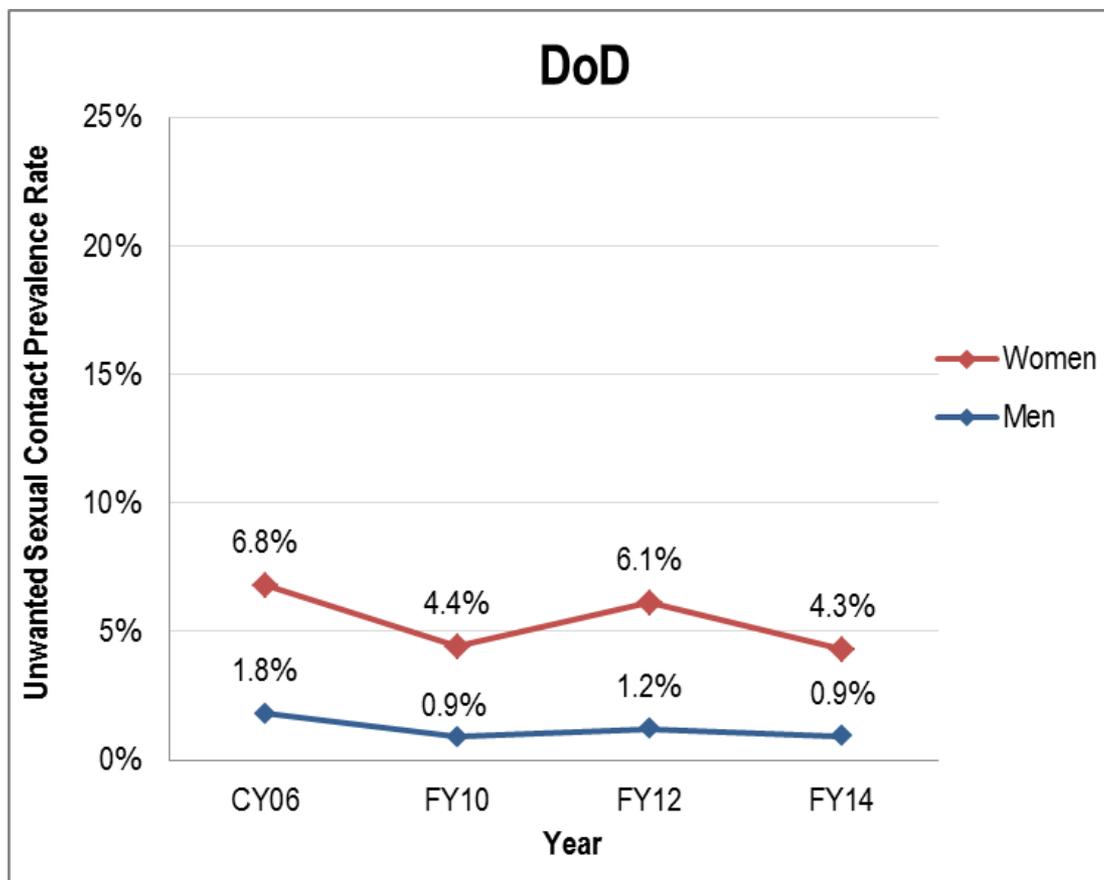
- **Unprecedented leadership engagement** ignited more SAPR program progress in the past three years than in all prior years of the program combined
  - Evidence of **progress in 10 of 12 White House approved metrics**
- The Department SAPR program is **prevention focused with an uncompromising commitment to victim assistance**
- DoD's response system demonstrates an **unparalleled commitment to helping victims** heal and have a voice in the justice process
- **Prevalence of sexual assault is down across the DoD**, but we have more work to do
- Reporting continues to rise: estimates indicate **we now receive a report from 1 in 4 victims** – up from 1 in 10 in 2012

# Report Highlights by Line of Effort

- **Prevention: Climate assessment process**
  - A process to drive organizational change, employing Service member feedback to hold commanders accountable for a climate of dignity and respect
- **Investigation: Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution Capability**
  - Fact finders with the knowledge and skills to conduct investigations that minimize the risk of re-traumatization and support victims' desire to stay engaged in the justice process
- **Accountability: Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel**
  - Groundbreaking legal resource provided to victims to help them navigate through the sexual assault response, to include advocating for the victims' rights in the military justice process when appropriate
- **Advocacy/Victim Assistance: Certification of Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates**
  - National certification for SARCs and VAs signals professional, helpful victim advocacy
- **Assessment: Multiple, robust sources of data on the SAPR Program**
  - Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database, Survivor Experience Survey, Defense Organizational Climate Survey, Focus Groups on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, SAPR Metrics and Non-metrics, RAND Military Workplace Study

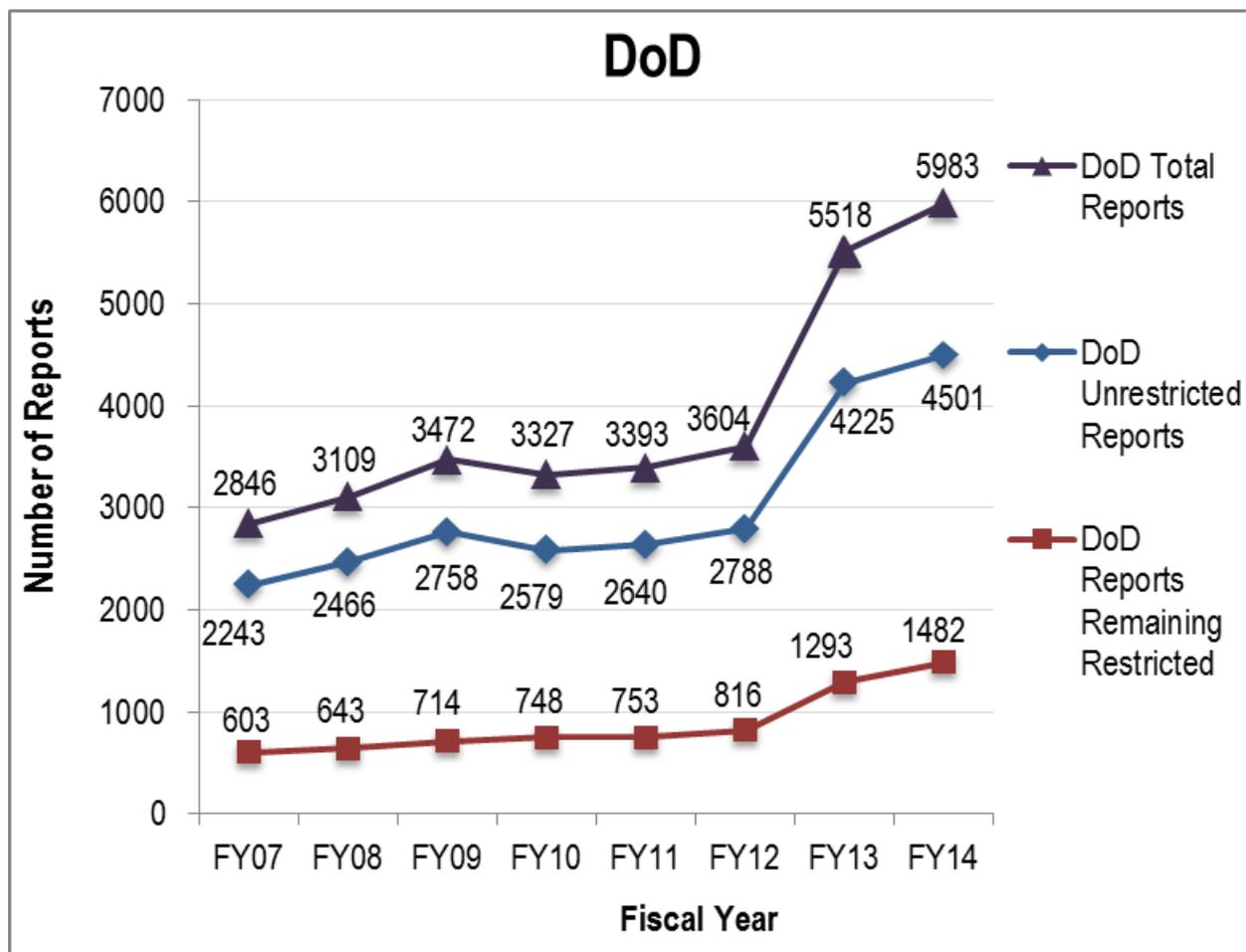
# Past Year Prevalence of Unwanted Sexual Contact (USC)

## *Workplace and Gender Relations (WGRA) Measure*



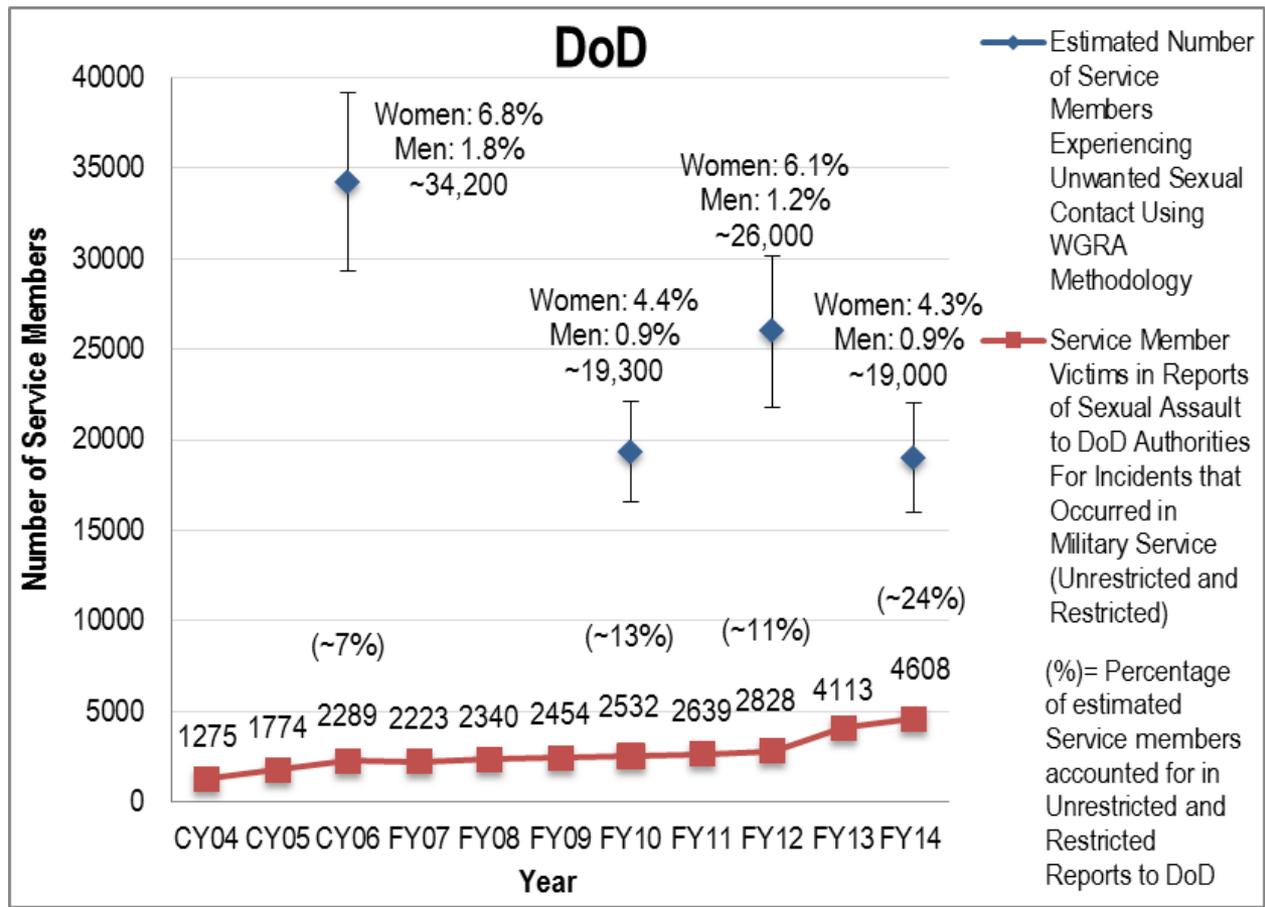
- Rates of Unwanted Sexual Contact decreased significantly for active duty women in FY14 (4.3%), compared to rates in FY12 (6.1%) and CY06 (6.8%)
- Rates of Unwanted Sexual Contact stayed statistically the same for men between FY12 (1.2%) and FY14 (0.9%), but the FY14 rate was significantly different from CY06 rate (1.8%)

# Reports of Sexual Assault: FY07-FY14



- Overall reporting increased **8%** from FY13
  - Unrestricted Reporting increased by **7%**
  - Reports remaining Restricted increased by **15%**
- **Nine percent** (513) of reports were for an incident occurring prior to military service

# Sexual Assault: Reporting versus Prevalence Estimates



In FY14, the Department received a report of sexual assault for 1 in 4 estimated victims. As shown above, 4,608 Service member victims in Unrestricted and Restricted Reports of sexual assault accounted for approximately 24% of the estimated number of Service members who may have experienced unwanted sexual contact.

# Additional Data Gathering Efforts

## *Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC)*

- **Survivor Experience Survey – New for 2014**
  - Anonymous, non-probability sample of victims making a restricted or unrestricted report of sexual assault; responses from June to September; n=151
  - Most respondents aware of and satisfied with SAPR responders and service providers
  - Respondents highly rated Commanders' support, treatment, and response
  - For respondents making unrestricted reports:
    - 59% perceived some social retaliation/ostracism and 40% perceived some professional retaliation
- **Focus Groups on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response – New for 2014**
  - 57 focus groups involving 650 participants at 10 installations, conducted July to August; qualitative analysis of themes heard in groups; not generalized to full force
  - Overwhelmingly trained on SAPR resources/policy, with most effective training featuring guest speakers, small groups, videos, skits
  - Most knew how to contact SARC, VA and would trust them to handle a report properly
  - Indicated positive shift in DoD's handling of sexual assault and harassment, as well as leadership encouraging environment of dignity and respect
  - Still potential for reporters to perceive social retaliation/ostracism and professional retaliation

# Military Justice Reform

- The military justice system has been substantially reformed since April 2012
  - Victims' rights have been expanded
  - Commanders' discretion over sexual assault cases has been limited, and decision making authority has been pushed to higher levels of command
- The Services have enhanced their capacity to investigate and try sexual assault cases
- Further reform initiatives are under way:
  - DoD reviewed and is in the process of implementing recommendations from the Response System to Adult Sexual Crimes Panel
  - The Judicial Proceedings Panel is studying, among other things, the reforms that have been implemented
  - At the Secretary of Defense's direction, the Military Justice Review Group is conducting a comprehensive review of the military justice system. Although this initiative is not specifically focused on sexual assault, it will result in proposed UCMJ amendments

# Directives Released

- Provide Feedback to the Force
- Engage Command to Prevent Retaliation
- Enhance First Line supervisor Skills and Knowledge
- Launch Installation Prevention Project

# Considerations When Developing a Sexual Assault and Response System

# Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

- Understand and own the problem
- Conduct prevalence research
- Provide professional advocacy
- Provide confidential reporting option
- Ensure victim focus and empower victims to choose the manner in which they heal
- Conduct mandatory and independent investigations
- Field special victim capabilities
- Hold offenders appropriately accountable
- Conduct system oversight
- Measure and report effectiveness

The Department of Defense aspires to be a national leader in combatting sexual assaults while continuing to prevent and respond to this terrible crime.

# White House Task Force

- The White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault is leading change on college campuses through their remarkable effort which aims to have a profound impact on our entire U.S. society
- In April 2014, the Task Force offered their first set of action steps and recommendations in the report, Not Alone



# DoD Program Influences in Task Force Recommendations

- DoD was an informal contributor on the Task Force
- Many of the recommendations made by the Task Force, including professional advocacy, a confidential reporting option, and surveying for prevalence, are consistent with DoD practices
- The following charts outline similarities in the Task Force's recommendations for colleges and the DoD's existing program for the military



Theme	White House Recommendation	Department of Defense Program
<b>1. Determine the Extent of the Problem</b>	Initiate on-campus climate surveys to survey for prevalence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevalence surveys since 2006</li> <li>• Force-wide climate assessments</li> </ul>
<b>2. Prevent Sexual Assaults</b>	Use evidence-based prevention recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDC prime collaborator in <i>2014-2016 DoD-wide Prevention Strategy</i> published in May 2014</li> </ul>

***Key Takeaway: Understand the problem, promote appropriate command climate, and use innovative prevention practices to shape the environments where Service members live and work.***

Theme	White House Recommendation	Department of Defense Program
3. Effective Response to Sexual Assault	Identify trained, confidential victim advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates at every military installation (since 2005)</li> </ul>
	Confidential reporting protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DoD Restricted Reporting option (since 2005)</li> </ul>
	Comprehensive Sexual Misconduct Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response policy (DoDI 6495.01 and DoDI 6495.02)</li> </ul>
	Training for school officials involved in investigating and adjudicating sexual assault cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution Capability (Investigators and Prosecutors)</li> <li>Pre-Command and Senior Enlisted Leader SAPR Training</li> </ul>

***Key Takeaway:*** *The availability of dedicated, trained advocacy and support professionals that can aid a victim's desire to report the crime via a variety of options is essential to increasing victim confidence in the response system.*

Theme	White House Recommendation	Department of Defense Program
<b>3. Effective Response to Sexual Assault (Cont'd)</b>	Trauma-informed training and modern investigative and adjudicative protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved training for military investigators and prosecutors</li> <li>• DoD’s Special Victims’ Counsel Program – an attorney to represent the victim’s interests</li> </ul>
	Coordinate efforts with local rape crisis centers, campus security, local law enforcement and victim service groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DoD contracts with:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network – DoD Safe Helpline – 24/7 hotline</li> <li>○ National Organization for Victim Assistance – SARC/SAPR VA Certification</li> </ul> </li> <li>• DoD-DoJ partnership to train for response organizations near military communities</li> </ul>
	Develop a research collaborative to find new solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DoD working with CDC on National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey</li> </ul>

***Key Takeaway:*** Expanding investigative and prosecutorial understanding of the impact of trauma on victims and collaborating with available experts and support personnel is essential to improving response and holding offenders appropriately accountable.

Theme	White House Recommendation	Department of Defense Program
<b>4. Increase Transparency and Improve Enforcement</b>	Become more transparent and improve enforcement of policies and law that contribute to student safety and respect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparent reporting of progress:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Annual Reports to Congress</li> <li>○ Government Accountability Office</li> <li>○ Publicizing survey and statistical data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Military Justice Reforms               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Elevation of initial disposition authority</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

***Key Takeaway: Openness and honesty are guiding principles. DoD annually reports sexual assault data to Congress and the Public.***

# Online Resources for Staff and Students

## *It's On Us*

U.S. Naval Academy PSA



## *It's On Us – Cadets Against Military Sexual Harassment and Assault (CASHA)*

U.S. Military Academy PSA



### Other Resources:

[www.notalone.gov](http://www.notalone.gov)

[www.itsonus.org](http://www.itsonus.org)

[www.sapr.mil](http://www.sapr.mil)

# Concluding Thoughts

***All allegations of sexual assault must be taken with the utmost seriousness***

***A culture of dignity and respect can only thrive when destructive behaviors and misconduct are not tolerated or condoned***

***Progress is only demonstrated when individuals exercise social courage and intervene in the face of inappropriate behavior***

***The Department of Defense aspires to be a national leader in combatting sexual assaults while continuing to prevent and respond to this terrible crime.***

**Contact SAPRO:**  
[sapro@wso.whs.mil](mailto:sapro@wso.whs.mil)

**Learn More:**  
[www.sapr.mil](http://www.sapr.mil)

**Get Help:**  
**877-995-5247**  
[www.safehelpline.org](http://www.safehelpline.org)

