Strategic Direction to the Joint Force on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

7 May 2012

"Now is the time for us to reflect, not just on the lessons of war, but on who we are and what we do. We are a Profession of Arms, guardians of the Constitution who reflect our Nation's ideals. We are military professionals—every officer, enlisted and civilian—not because we say so, but because of how we serve."

Chairman's Strategic Direction to the Joint Force, 6 Feb 2012

Strategic Direction to the Joint Force on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Commanders and Leaders of the Armed Forces,

Sexual assault crimes strike at the health, welfare and dignity of our Servicemembers and undermine the readiness of our Force. As military professionals we must fully understand the destructive nature of these acts, lead our focused efforts to prevent them, and promote positive command climates and environments that reinforce mutual respect, trust and confidence. Sexual assault among Servicemembers is a problem we face together, one that can only be solved together. In doing so, we will Keep Faith with Our Military Family—they should expect nothing less, and Renew Our Commitment to the Profession of Arms—we should demand nothing less.

This *Strategic Direction* is written for commanders and leaders to improve awareness of sexual assaults, operationalize our commitment, and facilitate dialogue and open communications across our formations. The Joint Chiefs and Commandant of the Coast Guard, together with our DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program (SAPR) professionals, penned this guidance to synchronize those efforts. Together, we will operationalize the concerted efforts of the DoD SAPR Office and our Service programs with renewed commitment to eliminate sexual assault crimes within our ranks.

Commanders and leaders at every level must integrate the intent, lines of effort and tenets of this Strategic Direction as a part of our daily command routines and activities. We must take conscious steps to understand, identify and reduce environmental risks, predatory and high-risk behaviors and personal vulnerabilities associated with sexual assaults or other abuse crimes.[1] It is up to you, as commanders and leaders, to safeguard our core values and Service cultures by promoting a climate and environment that incorporates SAPR principles as habitual and inherent characteristics of our commands.

Commanders and leaders must personally read, understand and implement this strategy. We are fully committed to supporting your efforts to put this Strategic Direction into action and operationalize SAPR within your commands across the Joint Force. We will set the conditions for you to take positive actions that reinvigorate our military culture and create command climates and environments based on mutual respect, trust and confidence.

You have our respect, trust and confidence.

[1] High-risk behavior includes a range of behaviors that endangers fellow Servicemembers (e.g., hazing, inappropriate social activities, alcohol/drug abuse) while personal vulnerability refers to command climate/environment factors that expose an individual to increased risk (untimely unit integration, lack of proper supervision, communication barriers).

JAMES A. WINNEFELD, JR.
Admiral, U.S. Navy
Vice Chairman

MARTIN E. DEMPSEY
General, U.S. Army
Chairman

RAYMOND T. ODIERNO
General, U.S. Army
Chief of Staff

JONATHAN W. GREENERT
Admiral, U.S. Navy
Chief of Naval Operations

NORTON A. SCHWARTZ
General, U.S. Air Force
Chief of Staff

JAMES F. AMOS
General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant

ROBERT J. PAPP, JR.
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commandant

CRAIG R. MCKINLEY
General, U.S. Air Force
Chief of the National Guard Bureau

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Strategic Direction to the Joint Force on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

1. Introduction / "Why this is important to you..."

Our success as a Joint Force is based first and foremost on our faith in each other, forged from shared sacrifice, common core values and Service cultural diversity. Our faith is the mutual trust that strengthens and jointly binds our separate formations and unique Service capabilities together in pursuit of our National interests. We must preserve this faith and protect the dignity and respect of the men and women entrusted to us against the threats and risks that can erode, injure, or destroy unit cohesion and readiness. We face many threats and risks but threats from within—particularly sexual assaults—have a deleterious effect on our formations. Sexual assaults wound our Servicemembers and Families and deeply scar our profession. We must respond decisively to preserve our time honored trust and faith in each other.[2]

Sexual Assaults endanger our own, violate our professional culture and core values, erode readiness and team cohesion and violate the sacred trust and faith of those who serve and whom we serve.

As we look across the Force, the Joint Chiefs, Commandant of the Coast Guard and I are dissatisfied—despite our years of concerted effort—with the progress we have made in reducing sexual assault across our formations. Evidence clearly indicates that gaps remain between the *precepts* of the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program and its full *implementation* at command and unit levels. Commanders must close these gaps by exercising the full measure of their authorities, options and resources to imbue a culture and cultivate a climate/ environment that is resilient to the risks and vulnerabilities associated with sexual assault.[3] This will require us to enhance unit sexual assault awareness, reinvigorate efforts to encourage open communication and timely reporting, appropriately hold offenders accountable and provide responsive victim services—all this, reinforced and insulated by a culture that will not tolerate sexual assault.

2. Mission and Intent / "What we will do..."

a. Mission.

Commanders reduce—with a goal to eliminate—incidents of sexual assault through improved prevention, accountability and victim advocacy/services at all levels of the Joint

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[2] Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, threats, intimidation, abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes rape, forcible sodomy and other unwanted sexual contact that is aggravated, abusive, or wrongful (to include unwanted and inappropriate sexual contact), or attempts to commit these acts.

[3] There is an important distinction here between culture and climate/environment: Culture represents inherent aspects of professionalism and core values that promote social responsibility, team cohesion and trust; climate/environment represent those actions by commanders to integrate unit members, build team cohesion, and provide seamless oversight to reduce high-risk behavior (e.g., responsible drinking and social activities that contribute to Servicemember risk and vulnerability).

Force in order to preserve a culture of trust and respect consistent with the Profession of Arms and our core values and to maintain the health, discipline and readiness of the Joint Force.

b. Purpose.

We will operationalize the SAPR Program throughout the Joint Force, across all Services and within all commands. This reaffirms our enduring obligation to protect our Servicemembers and their Families, strengthen the force and preserve the confidence of America's Profession of Arms.

c. Method and Objectives.

As a matter of standard procedure we will operationalize sexual assault prevention and response. This is not just about a program, it is about leadership. Sexual assault prevention and response must be inculcated into our every-day planning, training and mission execution. I am confident that more can and will be done to optimize all phases of our sexual assault prevention and response. Together, we will execute this plan to—

- Demonstrate our leadership commitment to sexual assault prevention and response as one of our most vital missions;
- Emphasize Joint Force, Service and command readiness; every sexual assault profoundly affects the readiness of both the victim and offender and erodes team cohesion;
- Enhance leader and Servicemember awareness and education regarding our obligation to prevent, identify and respond to the environmental risks, predatory and high-risk behaviors and personal vulnerabilities associated with the crime of sexual assault;[4] [5]
- Increase unity of effort across all Services through a joint perspective and consistent application of prevention, intervention and response; and
- Reaffirm confidence and trust in keeping faith with our Servicemembers and families.

d. End State.

Commanders, leaders and Servicemembers have fully operationalized the *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program* across the Joint Force—in our accession commands and Service academies, across our training bases and throughout our

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[4] High-risk behavior includes a range of behaviors that endangers fellow Servicemembers (e.g., hazing, inappropriate social activities, alcohol/drug abuse) while personal vulnerability refers to command climate/environment factors that expose an individual to increased risk (untimely unit integration, lack of proper supervision, communication barriers).

[5] As of 28 June 2012, Article 120 of the UCMJ will be amended to reflect four distinct offenses: Rape, Sexual Assault, Aggravated Sexual Contact and Abusive Sexual Contact. The term "crimes of sexual assault" as used in this document encompasses these offenses along with Forcible Sodomy (Article 125) and Attempts to commit these offenses (Article 80).

operational commands worldwide. We have reinforced our cultural imperatives of mutual respect and trust, professional values and team commitment that underscore a military culture and environment where sexual assault is not tolerated.

3. Background / "What we need to know..."

The crime of sexual assault has serious consequences for both the victim and the accused. The severity of these consequences underscores the importance of impartially administering justice in order to promote accountability and confidence that such allegations are taken seriously. Commanders exercise accountability through appropriate utilization of the full range of disciplinary options afforded by the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) as well as a variety of administrative measures.

DoD's policy and focus on "sexual assault" crimes more broadly incorporates numerous inappropriate and prohibited criminal misconduct other than the singular offense of forcible rape as commonly referenced in popular media. It also includes other unwanted sexual acts and contact that are aggravated or abusive in nature. DoD's definition [and statistics] regarding sexual assault incidents reflects this more encompassing scope and approach to the full spectrum of sexual assaults—reflecting our higher standard of accountability than most civilian jurisdictions.

In 2007, Congress amended the UCMJ to address a wide range of sexual assault offenses under a single article, Article 120, which has since been amended again and will take effect on *June 28, 2012*. These amendments reorganize, revise and simplify the Article into four distinct offenses: *Rape, Sexual Assault, Aggravated Sexual Contact* and *Abusive Sexual Contact*. These four distinct offenses, when coupled with *Forcible Sodomy* (Article 125, UCMJ) and *Attempts* to commit these offenses (Article 80, UCMJ), constitutes the category of sexual assault crimes within DoD's SAPR Program. The excerpt below is illustrative of inappropriate behavior that often leads to the criminal act of Sexual Assault:

UCMJ Article 120 Excerpt for Education and Training

IAW Article 120(b), UCMJ, *Sexual Assault*, any person subject to this chapter who—
(1) commits a sexual act upon another person by –
(a) threatening or placing that other person in fear;
(b) causing bodily harm to that other person;
(c) making a fraudulent representation that the sexual act serves a professional purpose; or
(d) inducing a belief by any artifice, pretense, or concealment that the person is another person;
(2) *commits a sexual act upon another person when the person knows or reasonably should know that the other person is asleep, unconscious, or otherwise unaware that the sexual act is occurring; or*
(3) *commits a sexual act upon another person when the other person is incapable of consenting to the sexual act due to—*
(a) *impairment by any drug, intoxicant, or other similar substance and that condition is known or reasonably should be known by the person; or*
(b) a mental disease or defect, or physical disability and that condition is known or reasonably should be known by the person;
...is guilty of sexual assault and shall be punished as a court-martial may direct.

Commanders should immediately coordinate with their Judge Advocates to ensure that they fully understand pending changes to Article 120 of the UCMJ. Similarly, they must ensure that all leaders and Servicemembers thoroughly understand DoD's more encompassing scope regarding sexual assault. While most Servicemembers inherently understand the more serious offense of Rape, many do not fully appreciate the criminal elements or misconduct associated with the lesser offenses of Sexual Assault, Aggravated Sexual Contact and Abusive Sexual Contact.

Most incidents of rape or sexual assault occur between people who know each other and on military installations, particularly in barracks and other high-density housing. Instead of an unknown attacker, the offender is frequently a young Servicemember who looks just like every other hard-working young person in the unit. Furthermore, instead of a victim with bruises and cuts, many victims will show no outward injuries. Also, alcohol is involved in the majority of sexual assault cases reported in the military, yet there are no clear guidelines on how much alcohol or what level of intoxication negates a person's capacity to consent.

These dynamics of sexual assault crimes highlight the importance of education and training on the consequences of high-risk behaviors that are often precursors to the offense. Commanders must train Servicemembers to ensure they understand, for example, the consumption of alcohol can impair the judgment of both parties and the consequences of an alcohol-related sex crime can have a significant and long-lasting impact on the victim, offender; unit cohesion; and, ultimately, the readiness of the Joint Force.

4. Implementing Instructions / "How we will do it..."

a. The Joint Force will meet the Chairman and Joint Chief's intent to imbue a professional culture and command climate/environment to reduce sexual assaults by operationalizing and synchronizing the SAPR Program across the Services, at all levels of command, both at home station and while deployed. Commanders will operationalize sexual assault prevention and response along five Lines of Effort (LOE) supported by five Overarching Tenets. The implementing LOEs of Prevention, Investigation, Accountability, Advocacy and Assessment are reinforced by the Overarching Tenets of Leadership, Communication, Culture/Environment, Integration and Resourcing.

(1) LOEs: Simply put, LOEs represent SAPR Program specific activities. Implementation of the LOEs is intended to enhance the execution of specific areas of sexual assault prevention and response, from establishment of a healthy command climate/ environment, through receipt of a sexual assault report, to final case disposition and victim recovery. Program LOEs also identify key actions and objectives and establish metrics to assess and modify ongoing efforts as part of an enduring improvement cycle. The LOEs translate the SAPR Program policies and processes as a natural part of command climate/environment—a climate/environment predicated on mutual respect, social responsibility and behavioral accountability.

(2) Overarching Tenets: Overarching Tenets, on the other hand, represent precepts essential to refining a professional culture and command climate/environment. They set conditions to optimize program implementation. All five Tenets must be realized in order to achieve optimal integration of the SAPR Program into the command environment—a weakness in one diminishes the whole. Overarching Tenets work hand in hand with LOEs to operationalize the program as a natural extension of a unit culture based on professionalism, core values, trust and, ultimately, reaffirm the military's enduring commitment to the health and readiness of its Servicemembers and their Families.

b. Lines of Effort: Each Line of Effort includes "Actions" to assist the Joint Force in reducing gaps/seams to enhance efforts to operationalize the SAPR Program in commands at all echelons. Each Action is labeled as (E) Emphasize—because it is prescribed within the SAPR Program, but requires additional emphasis; or (O) Operationalize—because it represents a new Action to better operationalize the SAPR Program.

(1) Prevention:

What? Prevention is the most critical LOE; it ultimately defines program success. Unlike the other LOEs, prevention has neither a beginning nor an end. It informs and is informed by the other LOEs. There are tangible aspects of prevention that promote a positive command *climate/environment* including program education and training. However, there are also intangible aspects that translate education and training to promote a professional *culture* that imbues knowledge, awareness, communication, personal responsibility and the empowerment to act.

Why? Effective prevention efforts reduce environmental risks, predatory and high-risk behaviors and personal vulnerabilities associated with the crime of sexual assault—in the barracks, during social activities, involving alcohol consumption, among our youngest Servicemembers and often during transitions. Sexual assault erodes our professional culture, command environment, team cohesion, Servicemember and Family trust and unit readiness.

(a) Actions (objectives included as sub-bullets):

- (O) Incorporate specific sexual assault prevention and response monitoring, measures and education into normal command training, readiness and safety forums (e.g., quarterly training guidance, unit status reports, safety briefings).
  - Increases command awareness, emphasis, mentoring and standardization at all levels of command.
  - Promotes and integrates sexual assault prevention and reporting as an inherent part of unit training, operations and readiness.
- (O/E) Provide SAPR training and education programs during Professional Military Education (PME) for all Servicemembers.
  - Stratifies sexual assault education/communication at increasing levels of PME.
  - Strengthens the Profession of Arms—professionalism, culture and core values.

- Establishes sexual assault prevention and response as a commander's priority and integrates it within the command climate/environment to improve health, discipline and readiness.

- (E) Ensure commanders receive training on sexual assault prevention and response during pre-command courses.
  - Educates commanders on the SAPR Program and command roles/responsibilities.
  - Promotes ownership and facilitates program integration as a matter of routine unit operations.
- (O) Establish transition policy that ensures Servicemember sponsorship, unit integration and immediate assignment into a chain of command.
  - Contributes to a positive command climate/environment, team cohesion, member safety/accountability and reduces transitional stressors.
- (O) Establish clear policy to reduce the impact of high-risk behaviors and personal vulnerabilities to sexual assaults and other crimes against persons (e.g., alcohol consumption, barracks visitation, transition policy).
  - Incorporates high-risk behavior and personal vulnerability analysis and mitigation into commander's assessment of environmental and operational risks.
  - Mitigates identified risk factors that often contribute to sexual assault crimes.
- (O) Conduct a command climate survey within the first 120 days of assuming command and annually as appropriate.
  - Increases communication and candid feedback from unit members regarding organizational culture, command climate/environment, health and discipline.
  - Informs commanders on focused areas of strength (sustain) and weakness (improve) to refocus efforts to promote a positive climate/environment.
- (E) Services partner with OSD *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office* to review and update the 2008 Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy.
  - Integrates Service lessons, best practices and unique cultural perspectives.
  - Improves DoD's SAPR Strategy via joint/inter-Service program synchronization and standardization.
- (O) Implement DoD's requirement to explain sexual assault policies to all Servicemembers within 14 days of their entrance on active duty.
  - Educates our newest Servicemembers to ensure they understand our military culture will not tolerate sexual assault and to inform them what to do in the event of an offense.

(b) Metrics:

- Monitor integration of sexual assault prevention and response into training and readiness forums at O3-O6 level commands.
- Incorporate sexual assault prevention and response into Service PME at all levels based on Service assessment and determination of training/contact time.
- Incorporate sexual assault prevention and response into Service pre-command courses and monitor/document commander attendance within Service guidelines.
- Track command climate surveys within 120 days of assuming command and annually as appropriate.

(2) Investigation:

What? An investigation begins with an unrestricted report of sexual assault and continues until all available facts/evidence are gathered, analyzed and the case is submitted to the commander for action. Investigations play a pivotal role across each LOE, informing both concurrent and subsequent LOE execution. All unrestricted reports will be immediately referred to a Military Criminal Investigative Organization (MCIO) for investigation in a manner that respects the dignity of the victim while safeguarding the due process rights of the alleged offender. Investigations are independent of the chain of command to guarantee they are free from the perception of undue command influence.

Why? Without an effective investigative process, commanders lack the information necessary to make an informed decision regarding the merits of the investigative findings. Investigators play a critical role in the SAPR process because they are often the first to make contact with both victims and alleged offenders and ensure timely collection and preservation of facts and evidence. Investigators work jointly with other Services and with external law enforcement agencies to ensure a thorough and timely investigation.

(a) Actions (objectives included as sub-bullets):

- (O) Develop joint doctrine for investigations to incorporate Service interoperability and command independence consistent with authorities of MCIOs in the operational/ institutional environment.
  - MCIOs remain autonomous from the chain of command and produce independent investigations, free from the perception of undue command influence.
  - Ensures MCIOs utilize common operating procedures to optimize joint investigative standardization and efficiency.
- (O) Establish a quarterly MCIO Council (HQs Quantico) to assess and validate joint investigative technology, best practices and resource efficiencies benched against external law enforcement agencies.
  - Promotes the development of joint interoperability of sexual assault investigations in both the operational and institutional environments.
  - Improves joint/inter-Service efficiencies including manpower, equipment/ technology, timeliness and resources.
- (E) Assess and coordinate with the United States Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory (USACIL) to improve unique Service investigative support with or without Service liaison to facilitate evidence processing.
  - Improves investigative rigor, resourcing and timeliness.
- (O/E) Refer all sexual assault crimes to a Service MCIO to establish investigative oversight and coordination.
  - Ensures senior investigative organizations provide requisite oversight of sexual assault criminal investigations.
  - Aligns sexual assault investigations with SAPR Program resourcing.
  - Leverages the Services' most experienced investigators in the conduct of sexual assault investigations.

- (O) Ensure prompt MCIO investigative notification to commanders concurrent with initiating an investigation of a sexual assault crime.
  - Ensures appropriate safeguards are implemented to increase the security and safety of the unit/community.
- Provides appropriate safeguards to mitigate potential risks and self-harm to the alleged offender that may be associated with investigative-induced stress.
- (E) Incorporate GAO recommendation for [early] coordination between investigators and judge advocates when initiating a sexual assault investigation.
  - Improves the military justice process to ensure more timely, thorough and efficient reporting, investigations and accountability.
  - Optimizes functional expertise and resource efficiency.

(b) Metrics:

- Publication of joint doctrine for Service investigative interoperability and independence.
- Quarterly MCIO Council assessments and findings are incorporated into Service-specific orders and regulatory guidance to promote joint application.
- Investigative laboratory support meets mutually agreed MCIO requirements for investigative timeliness, thoroughness and efficiency.
- Monitor/assess referral of sexual assault allegations to Service MCIOs.
- GAO recommendations have been fully implemented to ensure optimization of resources.

(3) Accountability:

What? Accountability is an enduring aspect of command. The Accountability LOE encompasses those actions specific to adjudicating an alleged sexual assault crime from the initial unrestricted report through its appropriate disposition. Commanders must take action to protect the health and safety of the victim while safeguarding the due process rights of the alleged offender; support the ongoing investigation; and take appropriate action based on the facts and evidence in consultation with legal counsel. Within the limits of commanders' authorities, they may dispose of an alleged offense by forwarding court-martial charges, preferring court-martial charges, imposing non-judicial punishment, applying administrative action, or taking no action when appropriate. The objective of military justice is to fairly dispose of all allegations in a timely manner at the most appropriate level.

Why? Preserving and promoting good order and discipline are inherent responsibilities of every commander. Their authority extends to all aspects of the unit's mission, morale and discipline. When presented with the results of a sexual assault investigation, commanders are charged with making the initial disposition decision. This is one of the most important decisions they will make, with broad ranging consequences to the victim, alleged offender and the unit. The latter cannot be overstated; commanders' decisions have a direct impact on command climate/environment and unit/team cohesion and readiness. Only commanders can fully balance the many factors that affect their

decisions. Commanders are responsible for making dispositions that are warranted, appropriate and fair.

(a) Actions (objectives included as sub-bullets):

- (O) Expand the availability, sequencing and scope of commanders' legal courses across the Services (e.g., range of command legal authorities and options).
  - Emphasizes an understanding of the military justice system in synchronization with the timing of command assignments.
  - Provides commanders the necessary information to execute their authorities and responsibilities, particularly for adjudicating complex disciplinary actions such as sexual assault crimes.
- (E) Ensure judge advocates, investigators and victim-witness assistance personnel receive specialized training for responding to allegations of sexual assault.
  - Emphasizes the serious, sensitive nature of sexual assault with respect to its effect on the victim, alleged offender and unit personnel.
  - Instills greater trust and confidence in military justice and accountability.
- (O) Implement new OSD policy to withhold initial disposition authority in certain sexual assault cases from all commanders who do not possess at least Special Court Martial Convening Authority (SPCMCA) and who are not in the grade of O6 (i.e., colonel or Navy captain) or higher, with respect to the following alleged offenses: Rape, Sexual Assault, Forcible Sodomy and Attempts to commit such offenses.
  - This will ensure that cases of sexual assault receive a high level of command attention, given the seriousness of those offenses.

(b) Metrics:

- Services monitor training requirements to ensure the optimal number of commanders, judge advocates and investigators receive appropriate specialized training.
- Services monitor and assess the number and type of sexual assault allegations, investigative findings and dispositions in accordance with the "Assessment" LOE.
- Services have fully implemented the new policy to withhold initial disposition authority in certain sexual assault cases.

(4) Advocacy:

What? The Advocacy LOE encompasses those actions involving response, protection and care for Servicemembers from initiation of a restricted/unrestricted report through offense disposition and victim recovery. For purposes of this document, the Advocacy LOE includes both victim and alleged offender protections and services. It includes appropriate care and legal support of the alleged offender and reporting, advocacy coordination, medical services, legal support and [behavioral health] counseling for the victim. To achieve this balance, commanders must establish a positive command climate/environment free of stigma, where all Servicemembers have faith in fair and

impartial due process and victims have enough confidence and trust in their chain of command to report sexual assault.

Why? Successful advocacy is achieved through effective relationships between commanders, service providers and Servicemembers. Commanders can strengthen this relationship by assigning the most qualified and trained professionals to serve in critical advocacy positions. This emphasis on advocacy will deepen individual trust, health and team/Servicemember readiness and productivity.

(a) Actions (objectives included as sub-bullets):

- (E) Commanders must appoint qualified, trained and certified professionals to serve as their Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) and Victim Advocate (VA).
  - Establish clear leader and program commitment and priority while standardizing advocacy services across the Joint Force.
  - Deepens trust with the victim and their Families while improving access to the victim services network and enhancing intervention timeliness and recovery.
  - Ensures commanders are aware, appropriately advised and implement effective sexual assault prevention and response programs/efforts.
- (E) Ensure alleged offenders are given all the due process rights and protections afforded by the Constitution and the UCMJ; provide legal and medical services/counseling to address stress associated with the investigation.
  - Reduces stress by ensuring access to medical, chaplain and administrative services to support personal and Family affairs.
- (O/E) Improve the portability of victim care services to provide expeditionary program capabilities to the Joint Force and accessibility/continuity of care within the Reserve Component (RC).
  - Ensures every victim of the Active/Reserve Components have access to the full spectrum of SAPR services and provides continuity of care during contingency deployments and while assigned to the RC in each state and territory.
  - Improves service standardization across the Joint Force to facilitate inter-Service support at remote locations.
- (O) Allow RC Servicemembers who are victims of sexual assault while on active duty to remain on active duty status to obtain the treatment and support afforded active duty members.
  - Ensures every victim has access to the full spectrum of SAPR services and provides continuity of care during contingency deployments and within the RC.
- (E) Strengthen service provider participation in an integrated victim services network of care.
  - Improves integration of SAPR support and services including legal, medical and counseling.
  - Expands network capability and capacity.

(b) Metrics:

- Program and service measures for qualifying, training and certifying SARC and VA service providers (e.g., education, experience, certification and continuity).
- Portability measures to ensure continuity/continuum of victim care services for both AC/RC Servicemembers across the Joint Force.

(5) Assessment:

What? The Assessment LOE closes the loop to create a continuous cycle of execution from Prevention through each subsequent LOE. It represents an enduring process of data collection, analysis and assessment that assists commanders, program managers, service providers, investigators and judge advocates in evaluating and improving program and service efficacy. The Assessment LOE cuts across each LOE to incorporate sexual assault prevention and response measures (including an assessment of the impact of stigma), sexual assault reporting (restricted/unrestricted), victim services, investigative referrals, investigations, investigative findings, command/judicial referrals and case dispositions.

Why? Assessments are essential to improving sexual assault prevention and response programs/services to enhance the seamless coverage across each LOE as part of an enduring improvement cycle. This will ensure that programs and services are adaptive, flexible and oriented toward achieving jointness, while preserving unique Service requirements. SAPR Program assessments have already paid huge dividends. For example, past program assessments helped provide a realignment of resources to deliver specialized sexual assault training to investigators and judge advocates. Also, assessments were a key driver in modifying the program to incorporate restricted reporting to reduce stigma to reporting and increase services to the full set of identified victims.

(a) Actions (objectives included as sub-bullets):

- (O/E) Identify a standard set of sexual assault reporting metrics to be tracked across the Services.
  - Achieves a comparison of qualitative data for use in determining program progress/success.
  - Establishes well-defined measures for each Service to assess program effectiveness (e.g., sexual assault reduction, sexual assault response).
  - Fosters jointness through a common expression that enables inter-Service sharing of best practices, interoperability and resource alignment.
- (O) Explore whether the DoD SAPR Program can "operationalize" reporting in support of commanders at all echelons rather than focusing solely on higher headquarters reporting.
  - Qualitative data enables the development of procedures for commanders to evaluate and improve their command climate/environment.
- (E) Enhance awareness and maximize utilization of the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID) across the Services.

- Provides a 'closed-loop' reporting system for case-level monitoring and information from initial allegation through command disposition, allowing commanders to assess program implementation.
- Creates transparency for sexual assault related data and provides a standardized process for data analysis and comparison to inform SAPR policy, processes and resourcing.

- (O) Review personnel policies to monitor administrative/legal actions to appropriately address retention of convicted sexual offenders across the Joint Force.
  - Ensures visibility and promotes consistency across each of the Services.

(b) Metrics:

- Develop a standardized set of metrics with common collection, analysis and assessment protocols that can provide a common operating picture across the Joint Force, while preserving unique Service requirements and capabilities.
- Metrics will also align alleged offenses with their disposition to clarify the number of offenses as a percentage of the disposition (e.g., Courts Martial, UCMJ, or Administrative Action). This metric breakout is as follows:
  - First stratify sexual assault allegations in accordance with the new Article 120 (June 28, 2012) as: (1) Rape, (2) Sexual Assault, (3) Aggravated Sexual Contact, or (4) Abusive Sexual Contact. Next,
  - Determine the number of allegations (by Article 120 stratification) that were substantiated by an MCIO investigation; of the number that were substantiated, how many were disposed of by courts martial, UCMJ and/or administrative separation.
  - For example, metrics for "sexual assault" dispositions might be reported as: XX sexual assault allegations; XX were referred to proper civilian authorities; XX were substantiated and disposed; of those disposed: XX% had court martial charges preferred; XX% went to non-judicial punishment; and XX% resulted in adverse administrative action (e.g., administratively separated from the military).
- DSAID is fully implemented across the Services and incorporated into future assessments.

c. Overarching Tenets:

The following Overarching Tenets set conditions to operationalize each of the LOEs throughout all Service commands. Overarching Tenets cut across all LOEs and are essential to synchronizing and standardizing SAPR Program execution across the Joint Force—from joint/Service basing to forward stationed and deployed units worldwide. Commanders must inculcate these Tenets to set conditions for SAPR Program capabilities; assist in transitioning those capabilities into our command climate/environment; and operationalize those capabilities as part of our enduring commitment to the health and readiness of our Servicemembers and their Families. Overarching Tenets include:

(1) Leadership:

- Preventing sexual assaults is commander business; SAPR is a commander's program and the responsibility of leaders at every level.
- Sexual assault prevention, intervention and response starts with every commander who—through personal example—mentors subordinate commanders, leaders and Servicemembers at all levels.
- Leaders at every level must remain vigilant to identify environmental risks, predatory and high-risk behaviors and personal vulnerabilities associated with the crime of sexual assault and take steps to mitigate them.

(2) Communication:

- Effective communication by commanders is imperative to achieving comprehensive sexual assault prevention, intervention and response.
- Commanders communicate prevention by establishing a climate/environment based on mutual respect, trust and professional values.
- Commanders must promote dialogue that encourages awareness, intervention and removes barriers to reporting sexual assault within the unit.

(3) Culture and Climate/Environment:

- A culture of mutual respect, trust and professional values is foundational to establishing command climates/environments free of sexual assaults.
- Command climates/environments enriched by appropriate leader oversight, team cohesion, social responsibility, regulated living conditions and responsible alcohol consumption will reduce the risks and vulnerabilities associated with sexual assaults.
- An effectively applied military justice system holds offenders accountable, promotes good order and discipline and discourages criminal behavior.

(4) Integration:

- Establishment of a well-defined joint climate/environment is imperative to promoting Service integration and assuring individual/unit security, health and readiness.
- Commanders must actively sponsor and integrate newly arriving Servicemembers into their commands with special emphasis on those transitioning from initial training to their first operational assignment.
- Integration of individual Servicemember augmentees is equally important as they transition forward to theaters of operation.

(5) Resourcing:

- Effective and efficient resourcing of SAPR Programs supports prevention, investigations, accountability, advocacy and assessments.
- Services and Combatant Commanders resource SAPR Programs to provide continuity for supported units from deployment through redeployment.
- Commanders provide sufficient oversight, engagement and personnel to achieve the actions/objectives outlined in this document.

5. Chairman, JCS and Commandant Strategic Actions / "What you can expect from us..."

The Joint Chiefs, Commandant and I pledge our personal commitment to shape and set conditions to assist commanders and leaders across the Joint Force in their efforts to reduce sexual assaults. Sexual assault within our ranks is a problem that we face together, one that can only be resolved together. We plan to execute the following unified strategy to provide a joint and inter-Service approach to:

- Engage commanders, leaders and joint/Service communities to promote the health and discipline of the Force by reducing environmental risks, predatory and high-risk behavior and personal vulnerabilities associated with the crime of sexual assault;
- Partner with Combatant Commands to identify additional requirements and tailor solutions to improve sexual assault prevention, accountability and services for forward stationed commands and deploying forces;
- Incorporate the tenets of SAPR into joint doctrine to improve the health and discipline, integration and capability of the Joint Force to facilitate similar improvements in Service doctrine and training;
- Work closely with DoD to shape Service policy, program and resourcing to fully operationalize the SAPR Program across the Joint Force;
- Engage Congress, in coordination with OSD, to assist in developing impactful DoD/ Service legislation, inform appropriate resourcing and program implementation and promote transparent discourse; and
- Lead a quarterly Executive Council of the JCS dedicated to a candid and enduring dialogue designed to assess the effectiveness of operationalizing SAPR into commands across the Joint Force.

The final strategic action, implementing a quarterly Executive Council, will focus on a recurring and comprehensive assessment of this strategy, including our progress in operationalizing SAPR; Service best practices; and ultimately, reinforcing a culture where sexual assault is not tolerated.

6. Way Ahead / "...and together, we will act now!"

The Service Chiefs and I are deeply committed to promoting a professional culture and command climate that is vigilant against the environmental risks, predatory and high-risk behaviors and personal vulnerabilities associated with the crime of sexual assault. We call on you as commanders and leaders (at every level) to personally read, understand and implement this strategy. Sexual assault prevention and response is more than a program and more than mandatory training – it must be an extension of each of us, intuitive in the way we think, plan and operate.

Sexual assault is a problem that we face together, one that can only be resolved together. Ours will be a Joint Force worthy of the faith of the American people, worthy of the confidence in our chain of command and worthy of the trust of those we serve and with whom we serve. Our Profession of Arms demands nothing less and we will accept nothing less.