



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



**FACT SHEET: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FISCAL YEAR 2020
 ANNUAL REPORT ON SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE MILITARY**

MAY 13, 2021

Background:

- Congress requires the DOD to submit an annual report on sexual assaults involving members of the Armed Forces.

Top Line Results:

- This year’s annual report provides Fiscal Year 2020 reporting data, case dispositions, and updates to initiatives the Department executed throughout the year.
 - This year’s report does not contain an updated sexual assault prevalence estimate.
 - The national pandemic forced the Department to postpone its biennial survey to Fiscal Year 2021.
- The Department receives sexual assault reports involving service members as victims and/or alleged perpetrators. This year the DOD received a total of 7,816 reports, 9 fewer than the 7,825 received in FY19.
 - While there was a decrease in the total number of reports received in FY20, there was an increase in Service member reporting of allegations of sexual assault experienced during military service, as illustrated in the following table:

Type of Report	FY19	FY20	+/- Δ
Service member reports for an incident <i>during</i> military service	6,236	6,290	+54
Service member report for an incident <i>before</i> military service	652	614	-38
Civilian and foreign national reports against Service members	922	888	-34
Relevant Data Not Available	15	24	+9
Total	7,825	7,816	-9

- While sexual assault is counter to the good order and discipline we demand from our people, DOD encourages greater reporting of the crime to connect victims with restorative care and to hold offenders appropriately accountable.
- The national pandemic did not deter the Department from providing support to Service members seeking help.
 - Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, Victim Advocates and other response team members quickly pivoted to virtual encounters and other such means to render assistance and connect victims with supportive care.
 - The Department’s Safe Helpline experienced a 35 percent increase in users seeking to connect with needed resources, information, and support.
- DOD continued initiatives to enhance the Department’s prevention capabilities by:

- Piloting and evaluating prevention interventions throughout the Services
- Launching efforts to scientifically evaluate new and existing prevention programs
- Publishing an integrated prevention policy that unifies and focuses efforts on activities with the greatest potential to reduce multiple forms of violence

Way Forward

- The Secretary of Defense recently announced immediate steps to counter sexual assault and other corrosive behaviors by assessing compliance with policy, conducting evaluations at high-risk installations, and fielding a prevention workforce.
- The Secretary also directed a 90-day Independent Review Commission to examine military sexual misconduct and recommend solutions to guide the Department's approach.
 - The Secretary is looking forward to receiving the Commission's thorough and independent assessment of DOD's policies and programs addressing sexual misconduct.
 - The Department is actively supporting the Commission's work and stands ready to execute the recommendations approved by the President and the Secretary of Defense.