

Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies

Academic Program Year 2020 – 2021





PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

FEB 15 2022

The Honorable Jack Reed
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Department's response to section 532 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for the Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109-364) is enclosed. Section 532 requires an annual report for each Academic Program Year on the effectiveness of the policies, training, and procedures of the Military Service Academies regarding sexual harassment and sexual violence involving personnel at the United States Military Academy, United States Naval Academy, and United States Air Force Academy.

This report for Academic Program Year 2020-2021 includes analysis of data collected during virtual and on-site feedback sessions with Academy leaders and their Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) and Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) personnel; an examination of Academies' self-assessments; an analysis of sexual assault and sexual harassment incident reporting data; review of compliance assessments conducted by the Military Departments; and the preliminary results for the 2021 Academy Climate and Networking Study, which fulfills this year's cadet and midshipman focus group requirement.

The Department encourages greater reporting of misconduct as it provides the opportunity to ensure victims have access to support and restorative care and an opportunity to hold alleged offenders appropriately accountable. Accordingly, this year's report finds an overall increase in sexual harassment complaints and sexual assault reports. A cadet and midshipmen focus group study was required this academic program year and a sexual assault prevalence survey was not completed. Thus, the Department cannot further qualify the rationale for the reporting increases observed. The next Service Academy Gender Relations survey is currently scheduled to be fielded this forthcoming April. Each Academy reports compliance with Department of Defense (DoD) and Service SAPR and MEO policies. The Department's own assessment activity found evidence to confirm that key program elements are in place, staffed, and with required documentation present.

The Academies continue to make strides in their efforts to reduce and prevent sexual assault, increase sexual assault and sexual harassment reporting, and strengthen victim assistance. Still, there is more to do to ensure our future leaders develop and mature in an environment free of sexual harassment and sexual assault. DoD has an unwavering resolve to end sexual harassment and sexual assault at the Academies. To this end, I have directed a number of program enhancements to promote further progress. The Department and Military

Services will work closely with the Academies to ensure measurable improvements continue. In addition, the Academies will be implementing applicable recommendations made by the Secretary of Defense's Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military, as approved by the Secretary of Defense, and will continue to align their efforts with immediate actions directed by the Secretary in February 2021.

Thank you for your continued strong support for our Service members. I am sending a similar letter to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

FEB 15 2022

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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cc:
The Honorable Mike D. Rogers
Ranking Member



Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the
Military Service Academies, Academic Program Year 2020-2021

The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$485,000 in Academic Program Year 2020-2021. This includes \$232,000 in expenses and \$253,000 in DoD labor.

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Reporting Requirement

- Congress requires the Department to assess the Academies to determine the effectiveness of sexual harassment and sexual assault policies, training, and procedures.
- This year, the Department accomplished this by conducting on-site assessments, examining the Academies' self-assessments, analyzing sexual assault and sexual harassment reporting data, and reviewing preliminary results from mixed-methods surveys and focus groups with academy cadets and midshipmen.

What We Learned

- Academy life for cadets and midshipmen continued to be impacted by measures to limit the spread of the coronavirus. However, quarantine periods, voluntary vaccinations, use of masks, and social distancing measures allowed students to be present for virtual and/or in-person campus classes and activities for the Academic Program Year.
- Sexual assault reporting increased at all three Academies compared to the previous Academic Program Year, with most of the increase in reporting coming from the United States Military Academy.

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the Military Service Academies' efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment during Academic Program Year 2020-2021. The report includes data on sexual assault and sexual harassment reporting; a new research effort to identify cadet and midshipman peer influencers and social networks; an assessment of ongoing prevention and response initiatives; and the Academies' self-reported compliance with Department of Defense and Military Department policy.

This year, Department representatives conducted virtual and on-site assessments, as well as provided technical assistance at the Academies (the United States Military Academy, the United States Naval Academy, and the United States Air Force Academy). Observations and action items from these engagements are included in this report across three focus areas:

- Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Sexual Assault
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Reporting
- Victim Assistance Initiatives

This report details the Military Service Academies' strengths and challenges across these three focus areas.

Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Sexual Assault and Other Harmful Behaviors

What We Learned

The Department's approach to sexual assault prevention and implementation of the Independent Review Commission's¹ prevention recommendations address sexual assault in the context of a comprehensive violence prevention strategy. In line with this direction, the Department's guidance for the Military Service Academies focuses on sexual assault prevention as well as other related harmful behaviors such as sexual harassment and dating abuse. Initial assessments of prevention capability in 2019 found the Academies were in the "early" to "intermediate" phases of prevention capability. Using feedback from the

¹ The Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military was directed by the Secretary of Defense in 2021 to review the Department's approach to accountability, prevention, command climate, and victim assistance. More about the Commission's recommendations can be found here: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/2681145/independent-review-commission-recommendations-on-counteracting-sexual-assault-in-t/>

**What We Learned
(continued)**

- The exact reason for increased reporting is unclear, as the Department did not administer a scientific prevalence survey this year. However, since 2005, the Department has enacted significant policy changes to encourage greater reporting by Service members.
- Prevention activities have matured, but require additional investment. Academies must identify or hire senior personnel to integrate and coordinate prevention activities with other high value programs run by senior academy officers and staff. Policies and operating instructions need revising to lock in past progress. Evaluation of prevention activities must become much more common and drive resource decisions.
- An analysis of student norms indicates that cadets and midshipmen set positive examples for each other. However, unhealthy drinking behavior and holding others accountable to rules are most likely to go unchecked. This combination focus group and survey initiative is a new effort designed to identify and leverage peer leaders to correct unhelpful student norms and directly inform sexual assault prevention efforts.
- Academy self-assessments indicated that victim assistance met requirements in Department and Service policy. The Department verified compliance of key victim assistance activities.

Department and other sources of expertise, the Academies have continued to expand their prevention capabilities. The Department observed growth in the Academies' ongoing efforts to implement comprehensive approaches to sexual assault prevention, provide onboarding training to staff and peer leaders, and use integrating functions to better coordinate institutional prevention efforts.

To help inform prevention efforts, the Department also revised the standard approach for Service Academy Gender Relations focus groups used in previous years. Existing research finds that correcting inaccurate beliefs or misperceptions of individuals within a peer group has the potential to produce helpful behavior change. Research also shows that influencers can help accelerate efforts to change unhelpful norms and behaviors. With this in mind, the Department conducted the *2021 Academy Climate and Networking Study* to (1) identify characteristics of influential students; (2) examine cadet and midshipman social norms to identify those in need of change; and, (3) obtain cadet and midshipman feedback on messaging and program delivery methods.

Results from the study found that peers nominated 17 percent of cadets and midshipmen at the Military Service Academies as "central influencers."² Influential students tended to be first and second class (senior and junior) men who are empathetic, authentic, and demonstrate great interpersonal skills. Despite most cadets and midshipmen being male, women were nominated as influencers at higher rates (37 percent) than the overall population of women at the Military Service Academies (27 percent). Cadets and midshipmen understood expectations related to a variety of behaviors that contribute to a healthy climate at the Academies. However, most participants acknowledged that neither they nor their peers lived up to those expectations. This incongruity is an opportunity within prevention programming. In addition, cadets and midshipmen indicated that training and educational activities that featured smaller groups, discussion, and personal experiences of speakers resonated with them more than activities using large groups, online slide shows, and minimization or dismissal of difficult student experiences.

All three Academies reported using their command climate process to some extent to give cadets and midshipmen a

² Central influencers are people nominated as influential multiple times and who are well connected to other influential people; they are most likely to have the broadest reach through the network.

Academy Action Items

The Department directs the Academies to:

- Continue to integrate comprehensive prevention plans into academy policy and evaluate the plan and each of its components.
- Staff and empower a senior Violence Prevention Program Integrator to integrate activities and make programming recommendations.
- Align command climate survey reporting to allow for assessment of risk by class year and cadet/midshipman organizational structure.
- Collect "Safe to Report" reporting data.
- Provide dedicated location and computer access for CATCH a Serial Offender Program submissions.
- Develop localized Case Management Group operating instructions.
- Provide Military Department leadership and Case Management training curriculum to the Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Training and Education Center of Excellence.
- Deconflict class schedules to the extent practicable, of victims and alleged perpetrators, to prevent Military Protective Order violations.
- Train response personnel on general military justice process topics.

The complete report is available online at <https://www.sapr.mil>

chance to develop solutions and hold others accountable. Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic interfered with the full execution of this initiative.

Action Items

While Academies have demonstrated observable increases in prevention capacity and capability, they must take additional steps to sustain and make this progress permanent. To that end, the Department directs the Academies to work with their Military Department leadership to staff and empower a senior prevention decision-maker with appropriate skills, experience, and longevity to (1) coordinate common prevention messaging within and across program areas, (2) work to identify and achieve shared goals across prevention programs, and (3) decide or recommend to the Superintendent that prevention activities be continued, revised, or eliminated based on evaluation results. Efforts should also focus on revising academy policy to ensure that prevention system progress becomes permanent. Finally, Academies must evaluate their comprehensive prevention plan and the individual prevention activities that comprise it. These action items are described in greater detail in the body of this report.

In accordance with the immediate actions directed by the Secretary of Defense, they will align their command climate assessment process to align with their Military Departments. In addition, the Academies will identify each class year of cadets and midshipmen with a unit identification code that will allow for assessment and tracking within the Department's revised climate assessment process.

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Reporting

What We Learned

The Department encourages greater reporting of sexual assault to connect victims with restorative care and to hold offenders appropriately accountable.³ The number of sexual assault reports received at all three Academies increased this year. However, the Department cannot fully interpret this increase because no prevalence survey was conducted. The next *Service Academy Gender Relations Survey* is currently planned for April of 2022. The results will be reported early calendar year 2023.

³ Use of the terms "victim(s)," "subject(s)," or "perpetrator(s)," as used throughout this report do not convey any legal conclusion that an allegation, incident or event has been substantiated and does not convey any presumption of the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender(s)/perpetrator(s).

The Department received a total of 161 reports of sexual assault that involved cadets/midshipmen/prep school students as victims and/or alleged perpetrators, an increase of 32 reports from the previous Academic Program Year (see Exhibit 1). Of these:

- 131 sexual assault reports were from cadets or midshipmen for incidents that occurred during military service.
- 14 reports by cadets or midshipmen were for incidents that occurred prior to military service.
- 16 reports were made by active-duty Service members, civilians, or prep school students.

In Academic Program Year 2020-2021, cadets and midshipmen made 43 entries into the CATCH a Serial Offender Program, which is on par with the 45 entries made in Academic Program Year 2019-2020. At the United States Air Force Academy, 22 cadets cited the Academy’s “Safe to Report” policy as an influence on their decision to report. While the United States Military Academy and United States Naval Academy currently have policies that allow leaders flexibility in addressing the alleged collateral misconduct of victims of sexual assault, neither Academy collected data on the number of times students cited such policy as a reason for reporting sexual assault. In addition, cadets and midshipmen made 30 complaints (9 formal complaints and 21 informal complaints) of sexual harassment, an increase of 18 complaints from the previous Academic Program Year.

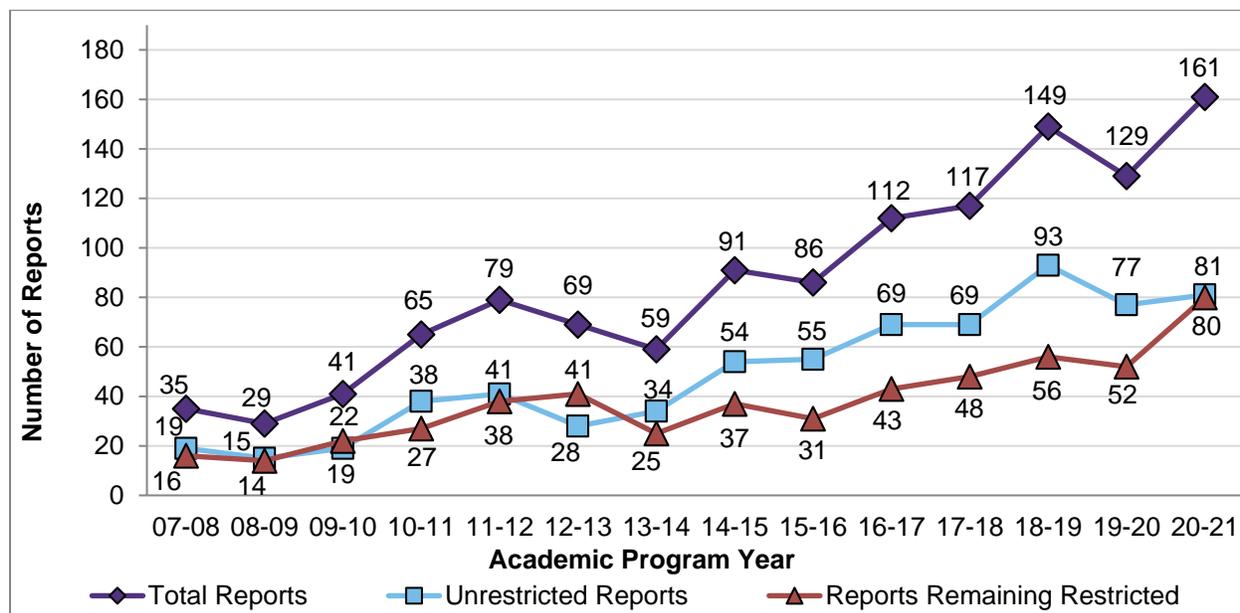


Exhibit 1: Sexual Assault Reports Involving Cadets/Midshipmen as Victims and/or Alleged Offenders

In addition, the Department of Defense Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion reviewed the Military Service Academies’ sexual harassment programs and found that all were in compliance with Department and Service-level sexual harassment policy. The Department assessed compliance by interviewing academy personnel on sexual harassment reporting and response, training, and prevention, and reviewing policy documents, informational posters, and organizational charts.

Action Items

To continue encouraging greater sexual assault reporting, the Academies should refine their efforts to encourage greater participation with the CATCH A Serial Offender Program. During On-site Engagements with academy personnel, the Department learned that the United States Naval Academy established a dedicated private space with a standalone computer for midshipmen to use immediately after voicing a desire to participate in the CATCH program. The Department considers this action a best practice and directs the United States Military Academy and United States Air Force Academy to establish similar means for cadets to voluntarily enter submissions into the CATCH program.

Additionally, the Department requires the Academies, in accordance with their respective forthcoming Military Department policies, to collect Safe to Report data. This requirement is responsive to the guidance issued by the Department in October 2021, directing implementation of a force-wide Safe to Report policy, per the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. The Military Departments, including the Academies, will be required to track the number of reports they receive each year wherein victims cite the Safe to Report policy as having influenced their decision to report and other associated metrics.

Victim Assistance Initiatives

What We Learned

When cadets and midshipmen report a sexual assault, the Academies provide trauma-informed, gender-responsive recovery services and reporting options in accordance with law and Department of Defense policy. The Department's review found that all three Academies' response efforts remained in full operation during the past school year and throughout the coronavirus pandemic. For example, they abided by protocols to resume in-person care when cadets and midshipmen returned to the Academies for the fall semester. They also improved their student-led peer helping groups to connect other cadets and midshipmen with assistance for sexual assault or other stressful situations.

In accordance with Section 555 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, the Academies successfully conducted three transfers of cadets and midshipmen who reported sexual assault to a different Academy. Feedback from transferees indicated the process went well, and even allowed one individual to transfer at the outset of their fourth year and graduate on time. Lastly, the Academies took action to improve their response systems. For example, the United States Military Academy initiated an after action review of sexual assault cases that had proceeded to court-martial. This review process is intended to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement for all professionals involved in military justice.

Academy Sexual Assault Prevention and Response offices work with victims with Military Protective Orders to ensure that their class schedules and activities align with the requirements of the order. For example, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response personnel work with the appropriate academy staff to ensure that victims and alleged offenders do not have the same classes. Feedback from victims at the academies indicated that they would find it helpful if such an arrangement could be requested to deconflict schedules whenever possible, even after the expiration of the protective order and/or the conclusion of the military justice process.

Additional feedback from sexual assault survivors indicated that it would be helpful if Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates could answer general, simple questions about the military justice process. Most victims understand that it is the role of the Special Victims Counsel or Victims Legal Counsel to answer detailed questions about the victim's case and rights in the military justice process. However, Department policy allows Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates to answer general questions and help victims understand available reporting options.

During this Academic Program Year, Secretary of Defense Austin directed that the Secretaries of the Military Departments assess compliance with sexual assault and sexual harassment policies and integrated violence prevention efforts. This direction required the Academies to conduct self-assessments of compliance. Overall, the Academies reported to their Service leadership and to the Department of Defense that they were fully in compliance with such policies and efforts. As a result, the Department focused its assessment on specific interest items. For example, all three Academies maintained victim reporting documentation appropriately in the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database and in compliance with their Service requirements. In addition, each Academy's Case Management Group process and training for members met requirements set in Department policy.

Action Items

Variations exist in Case Management Group processes across the Academies. For the most part, these variations are permitted by Department policy. However, certain practices at the Academies may encroach on victim privacy and the regulatory requirement to keep case information consolidated to those parties who have a demonstrable "need-to-know." To standardize variations in Academy processes, the Department directs the Military Service Academies to develop localized Case Management Group operating instructions, submitted in draft to the Department of Defense's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, no later than 31 May 2022. In addition, to assess Service Case Management Group training best practices, the Department directs the Military Departments to provide a copy of their leadership and Case Management participant training curriculum to the Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Training and Education Center of Excellence no later than 31 March 2022.

Academy Sexual Assault Prevention and Response personnel should also work with appropriate staff to de-conflict class schedules of cadets and midshipmen who have made a report of sexual assault and have asked for such assistance, to prevent violations of Military Protective Orders in effect. In addition, although Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates should not provide individuals who report a sexual assault with legal advice or specific case information, the Academies should ensure they are equipped to educate victims on general investigative and military justice process topics, so as to best assist individuals who report a sexual assault. These are general military justice process topics that response personnel have traditionally discussed with victims, and no legal advice or specific case information will be provided.

Impact of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military

On February 26, 2021, the Secretary of Defense directed an Independent Review Commission to conduct an impartial assessment of the Department's effort to address sexual assault. The Commission provided 82 recommendations on July 2, 2021 to improve the

Department's approach to accountability, prevention, climate and culture, and victim care and support. The Department is executing action plans for the approved recommendations. As the Military Departments make associated changes to policy, programs, and personnel, the Academies' programs will also change significantly. However, the Academies are well positioned to implement many of the approved recommendations because of prior investments in sexual assault prevention and response. In fact, all three Academies have the response workforce and prevention workforce recommended by the Commission, as well as many of the logistical and programmatic components that the Commission recommended for the military force at large. However, the Academies will have to adapt their military justice process to align with legislative changes enacted in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022. The Academies will also have to update their programs to align with associated Department guidance to improve their prevention programs, command climate, and victim assistance efforts.

Way Forward

Academy leadership continues to develop and execute programs focused on preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Sexual assault and sexual harassment have no place in the military. These problems must continually be assessed and addressed if the Department and the Academies are to recruit and retain leaders of character.



Introduction

Congressional Reporting Requirement

The Department of Defense (DoD) annually assesses the Military Service Academies' (MSA) programs that address sexual harassment (SH) and sexual assault (SA) per Section 532 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 (Public Law 109-364). This report fulfills the congressional requirement by reviewing the effectiveness of policies, training, and procedures regarding SA and SH for cadets, midshipmen, and academy personnel at the United States Military Academy (USMA), the United States Naval Academy (USNA), and the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA).

Report Contents

This report assesses the MSAs' activities and progress in Academic Program Year 2020-2021 (APY 20-21). However, the MSAs remain involved in multi-year efforts stemming from prior assessments. For example, in the APY 18-19 report, the Department provided a list of directives to be accomplished in APY 19-20. The Academies concurred with the directives and have been working to implement them and other assessment action items over the past two years. The Academies' progress on those directives is assessed in this report.

Programmatic and compliance assessment reports by each Military Department are enclosed in Appendices A, B, and C. Detailed statistical data and analysis from APY 20-21 can be found in Appendices D and E. A list of acronyms used in this report is in Appendix F.

DoD assessments for APYs beginning in even-numbered years include focus groups conducted by the Office of People Analytics (OPA) with cadets and midshipmen.⁴ This year, the mixed-methods survey and focus group study called the *2021 Academy Climate and Networking Study Service (ACNS)* covers topics related to cadets and midshipmen's peer networks at the Academies. Preliminary findings from the *2021 ACNS* are enclosed in Appendix G of this report.

Report Focus Areas

The APY 20-21 report provides the Department's assessment of the Academies' current prevention and response efforts from June 1, 2020, to May 31, 2021. This report focuses primarily on the Academies' strengths and challenges in the following areas:

- Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Sexual Assault
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Reporting
- Victim Assistance Initiatives

⁴ For APYs beginning in odd-number years, the Department report includes a scientific, anonymous survey of cadets and midshipmen. This biennial survey, known as the *Sexual Assault Gender Relations (SAGR) Survey*, covers past-year estimated prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment, and characteristics of unwanted sexual and gender-related behaviors. OPA will conduct the next survey in Spring 2022.

Coronavirus Pandemic Measures Continued to Impact Academy Operations

In the past school year, the coronavirus pandemic continued to impact normal operations at the MSAs. Each of the Academies used a quarantine period for new and returning cadets and midshipmen to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Cadets and midshipmen were not allowed off the Academies or to interact with other companies and squadrons. Social distancing measures also limited the number of cadets and midshipmen in classrooms, leading instructors to spread in-person learning over multiple rooms and also conduct virtual classes. Once the coronavirus vaccinations received initial approval, the Academies added vaccination policies to indoor mask-wearing to further reduce spread of the virus. USNA continuously monitored coronavirus rates and took corresponding precautions, including restricting the movement of midshipmen as required, throughout the academic year. Similarly, USAFA cadets experienced restrictive phases related to the coronavirus pandemic. During this time, USAFA expanded hours of the Peak Performance Center (PPC) and other helping agencies to ensure the continuity of care for cadets. Unlike USNA and USAFA, USMA reported that its response efforts were unaffected during this APY as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Academy response personnel have remained available to support survivors of SA throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Each Academy continued to have a physical presence on-site and used training opportunities to educate cadets and midshipmen on how to access support resources during times of restricted movement. In addition, the use of virtual platforms made SA prevention and response services more accessible to students. For instance, USAFA leveraged virtual resources to ensure multiple avenues for cadets to report issues and receive immediate care. USNA reported that its Response Office staff were able to provide in-person victim care and support when necessary, depending on the coronavirus posture at the time. Lastly, at USMA, Sexual Harassment/Assault Response/Prevention (SHARP) program staff used a resource list created in the prior APY, which aligned cadet zip-codes to localized resources, to ensure that cadets received the continuity of care needed over the summer prior to returning to the Academy for the school year in July 2020.

Military Department Compliance Self Inspections

On February 26, 2021, Secretary of Defense Austin directed that the Secretaries of the Military Departments assess compliance with SA and SH policies and integrated violence prevention efforts. Overall, the Military Departments reported they were in compliance with SA and SH policies at the installation-level, and their average compliance rates are detailed below. Additionally, the Academies were also required to conduct self-assessments of compliance with SA and SH policies.⁵ The Academies reported to their respective Military Departments they were in compliance with such policies and efforts. Academy-specific self-assessment reports are enclosed in Appendices A, B, and C of this report. While compliance with policy and

⁵ Secretary of Defense. (February 26, 2021). Immediate Actions to Counter Sexual Assault and Harassment and the Establishment of a 90-Day Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military. <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Feb/26/2002590163/-1/-1/0/APPROVAL-OF-MEMO-DIRECTING-IMMEDIATE-ACTIONS-TO-COUNTER-SEXUAL-ASSAULT-AND-HARASSMENT.PDF>

program requirements is not an indicator of how well such policies and programs function, compliance does indicate an organization's readiness to take on more complex programs and initiatives.

USMA Compliance Assessments

Overall, USMA indicated that it was 100 percent compliant with DoD and Army policy and program requirements. The average rate of compliance at the installation-level within the Department of the Army is 87 percent. USMA identified three strengths within its Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) compliance assessment, including:

- Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) maintain excellent relationships with commanders, DoD law enforcement and the Military Criminal Investigation Organization (MCIO), as well as civilian authorities in order to facilitate protocols and procedures.
- SARCs hold monthly Information Briefings to assist commanders in managing trends and characteristics of SA crimes at the Military Service-level and mitigating risk factors that may be present in the associated environment.
- Leaders are the primary facilitators of SAPR trainings in accordance with Army Regulation 600-20, with facilitation support from SHARP Professionals.

USMA identified one strength in its SH program compliance assessment, stating that it submits final reports of investigation, including any action taken, to the next superior officer within 20 days after the date the SH investigation commenced. If the investigation could not be completed in the timeline stated, USMA submits a report on the progress made to the superior officer and every 14 days until the investigation is completed. The USMA General Court-Martial Convening Authority (GCMCA) is briefed on results and recommended disposition. Due to USMA's unique command structure and withholding of final action on a majority of cadet actions, the complete investigative report is not forwarded to the GCMCA to preserve the ability to take final action on the adjudication. GCMCA is the appellate authority for formal SH complaints, making the 20-day timeline not feasible when accounting for appeals.

USMA identified one improvement for its SAPR program compliance. While USMA supervisors receive annual trainings on how to handle retaliation, ostracism, and maltreatment allegations, improved and specialized training is needed to equip supervisors with the skillset required to handle such allegations.

USNA Compliance Assessments

Overall, USNA indicated that it was 100 percent compliant with DoD and Department of Navy policy and program requirements. The average rate of compliance at the installation-level within the Department of the Navy is 99 percent. USNA identified two strengths related to its SAPR program, including:

- Provided all required training and tailored on-demand training during the coronavirus pandemic. Examples include training tailored to the unique roles of Company Officers and Senior Enlisted Leaders, as well as to international exchange midshipmen.
- Continued robust response capability led by two SARCs and two SAPR Victim Advocates (VAs), augmented by volunteer collateral duty VAs who represent a cross-section of active-duty sailors assigned to USNA.

USNA identified investigating options for soliciting feedback on the effectiveness of response services while maintaining the required confidentiality requirements as an area of improvement to its SAPR program. USNA identified two strengths in its SH compliance assessment, including:

- Designed, implemented, and publicized an anonymous Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) complaint reporting option.
- Expanded Guidance, Understanding, Information, Direction, and Education (GUIDE) responsibilities to include providing training and resources on SH issues, in addition to SAPR, providing a peer-helper capability across the spectrum of sexual misconduct (new initiative that was executed during the reporting period).

USNA identified one improvement area related to its SH compliance assessment, stating that the USNA SAPR-CMEO team continues to work on increasing reporting of SH complaints.

USAFA Compliance Assessments

Overall, USAFA indicated that it was 100 percent compliant with DoD and Department of the Air Force policy and program requirements. The average rate of compliance at the installation-level within the Department of the Air Force is 97 percent.

USAFA identified one strength in its SAPR compliance assessment, stating that this APY, the Academy saw notably low data entry errors in the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID). An identified area of improvement for the SAPR and Violence Prevention programs is the ability to assess education and prevention initiatives being launched at USAFA. To address this, the USAFA Prevention Team is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Violence Prevention Technical Assistance Center (CDC VPTAC) to identify and build assessments for measuring risk and protective factors into USAFA's existing violence prevention framework. USAFA identified three strengths related to its SH program compliance assessment:

- During pandemic disruptions, cadets stayed connected to the Equal Opportunity (EO) team to seek guidance and assistance. The EO office provided a 24-7 contact number, video consultations, and in-person counseling for vaccinated cadets.
- Air Officers Commanding (AOC) and Academy Military Trainers (AMT) developed a proactive approach to help-seeking, contacting the EO office when there were concerns.
- The EO team partnered with Cadet Climate and Culture, the Center for Character and Leadership, and the Diversity and Inclusion Office to develop and provide a construct to engage motivated cadets in cultivating the overall cadet climate.

USAFA identified two areas to improve in its SH compliance assessment, including:

- Military personnel gaps due to deployments and Permanent Change of Station orders impacted the day-to-day operations of the USAFA EO team, leading the team to work more closely with academy leaders to deliver EO services on time.
- Use training opportunities related to SH to address USAFA's climate survey responses, which suggest perceptions of sexually harassing behaviors or inappropriate jokes and comments are a concern within the cadet community.

Given the Military Departments' focus on overall compliance, the Department chose to conduct its oversight on key and critical elements of SA and SH prevention and response policy.

The Department’s observations and action items for those critical elements are integrated into the three focus area sections that follow.

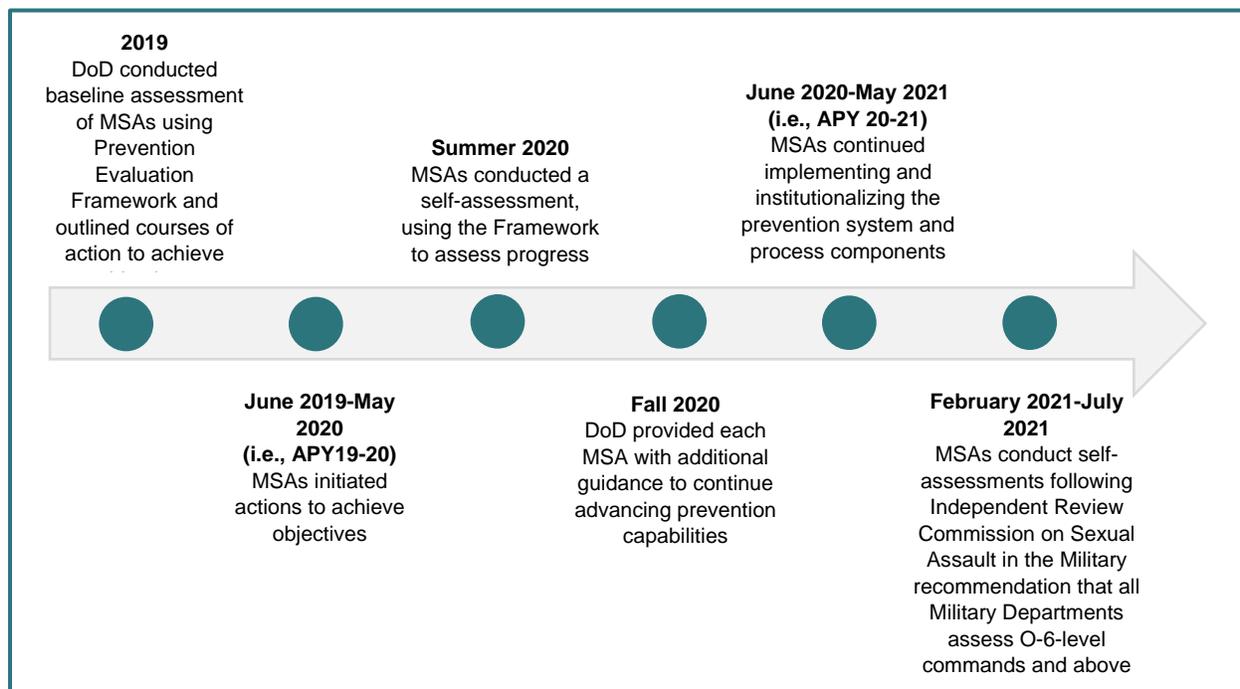
Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Sexual Assault

Topline Observations

Prevention Framework

DoD’s Prevention Plan of Action (PPoA), published in April 2019, continues to guide Department efforts to reduce and stop SA, both in the Active Duty force and at the Academies. In addition, the Department developed the Prevention Evaluation Framework, which examines the degree of alignment between current academy efforts and research-based best practices. The Framework was used to self-assess prevention capability at each of the Academies. Prevention assessments were developed according to the timeline in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Timeline of Prevention Assessment Actions at the Academies



The Academies’ Prevention Self-Assessment Outcomes

The assessment of prevention capability conducted by the Department at each of the Academies in 2019 provided a baseline of each MSA’s prevention capabilities. In 2020, the MSAs conducted self-assessments using similar processes and criteria to track progress advancing their prevention capabilities. In APY 20-21, the Academies provided self-assessment findings again using the Prevention Evaluation Framework; two of the Academies (USMA and

USAF⁶) also submitted this data for the Secretary of Defense's Immediate Action 1.⁷ However, USNA completed the self-assessment upon request as part of the current data call. A summary of the self-assessment findings is below. Additional details can be found in the MSAs' assessments in Appendices A, B, and C. The Department's appraisal of the self-assessments follows the academy summaries.

USMA Prevention Self-Assessment Summary

USMA continued to develop its prevention capability in APY 20-21. Over the last year, USMA hired a second full-time prevention specialist. SHARP staff also developed and received approval from the Superintendent on a 48-month Comprehensive SHARP Prevention Plan, which will begin implementation in APY 21-22. The prevention plan identifies risk and protective factors for SA and SH, and includes a logic model that outlines activities, interventions, and intended outcomes across cadets' 48-month experience at USMA. The prevention plan also includes an evaluation plan for prevention activities. Despite progress, gaps remain in the evaluation efforts of the comprehensive plan. Effective evaluation is needed to determine the effectiveness of prevention efforts to better determine future activities. The USMA SHARP team has received evaluation support and technical assistance from CDC VPTAC via an agreement funded by DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO). CDC VPTAC has been working with USMA to identify ways to improve assessment of specific prevention activities. Continued evaluation support has been requested from CDC VPTAC.

USMA also highlighted appropriate leadership accountability as one of its strengths. The Superintendent holds himself and his subordinates appropriately accountable for reducing and eliminating SA and SH. To demonstrate this, USMA revised their initial SHARP briefing to incoming fourth class cadets during their first two weeks of academy training and education. USMA allotted additional time during this briefing to discuss report findings from the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee and leadership accountability, including a lesson on personal courage. Another strength noted was with the prevention workforce. USMA SHARP prevention staff has a sense of common purpose related to their SA prevention efforts, and leaders and stakeholders have complete confidence in their work. As noted earlier, a second prevention specialist was hired to support SA prevention efforts at USMA. USMA is currently the only Army installation afforded two prevention specialists.

Integration and coordination with stakeholders across USMA was also noted as a significant strength. The Character Integration Advisory Group fosters partnerships throughout USMA and oversees the development and implementation of USMA's character development strategy, which supports key prevention initiatives. Two of the SHARP staff attended DoD's prevention workforce development 60-hour training, "DoD SPARX Knowledge," which allowed

⁶ USNA was not tasked by the Department of the Navy (DoN) to provide information for this action.

⁷ Secretary of Defense. (February 26, 2021). Immediate Actions to Counter Sexual Assault and Harassment and the Establishment of a 90-Day Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military. <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Feb/26/2002590163/-1/-1/0/APPROVAL-OF-MEMO-DIRECTING-IMMEDIATE-ACTIONS-TO-COUNTER-SEXUAL-ASSAULT-AND-HARASSMENT.PDF>

for collaboration and networking with other prevention professionals across the Department.⁸ The SHARP team has also continued their collaborative relationship with CDC VPTAC.

USMA is also working with the CDC VPTAC to ensure surveys used in After Action Reports (AAR) for prevention-related activities produce actionable data to support future implementation and evaluation efforts. USMA is also participating as an evaluation site in the rigorous evaluation of the Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention Education (SHAPE) program at USNA. USMA staff intend to use outcomes from the SHAPE evaluation to further develop their own SA prevention activities.

USNA Prevention Self-Assessment Summary

USNA has continued to strengthen its prevention capabilities over the APY 20-21 despite challenges, including those imposed by the coronavirus pandemic. Prevention continues to be an identified priority at USNA across all levels of leadership, as noted by the progress in nearly all prevention-related self-assessment criteria. One of USNA's strengths is their work with the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) this past program year to evaluate the effectiveness of the SHAPE program. The first phase of this multi-year partnership, contracted through DoD, focused on planning and designing the overall evaluation. The next step, which began late in APY 20-21, was baseline data collection for the Class of 2023 and the Class of 2025.

USNA's Midshipman Affairs Team (MAT), which serves as the prevention integration forum, has continued to leverage training and technical assistance made available via Department contracts. The RAND Getting to Outcomes (GTO) team and the CDC VPTAC supported USNA's efforts to further select, implement, and evaluate its prevention activities (outside of the SHAPE evaluation). For example, the SA prevention team has been working with the CDC VPTAC to develop an onboarding training for new prevention personnel. The GTO at USNA has four lines of effort:

1. Improve identification of SH;
2. Reduce alcohol misuse;
3. Improve understanding of company climate; and,
4. Improve future reporting of SH.

A comprehensive plan for prevention across USNA exists; however, its utility has been limited. The plan has support from all key leaders, and efforts to implement and evaluate are in development, but all of the prevention disciplines across USNA tend to use their own logic models, with limited linking and integration with the comprehensive plan. The MAT is the integrating body at USNA led by an O-6, and expanded in APY 20-21 to include midshipmen and suicide prevention. While USNA does not have a designated prevention decision-maker, the MAT is working collaboratively, and with support from CDC VPTAC, on an updated,

⁸ The DoD SPARX Knowledge training aims to build the capacity of the military's prevention workforce to engage in primary prevention of SA by focusing on prevention of self-directed harm (i.e., suicide) and prohibited abusive and harmful acts (i.e., SA, SH, child abuse and neglect, domestic abuse, substance abuse). These behaviors negatively impact military life, including mission readiness, command climate, physical health, and the well-being of individuals and their families.

executable comprehensive prevention plan with integration across disciplines, and expects to deliver in April 2022.

USAFA Prevention Self-Assessment Summary

Like the other Service Academies, USAFA continues to develop its prevention capabilities. Different offices working in prevention across USAFA improved communication and collaboration with each other in order to support a more integrated prevention system. The coordination of cross-organization efforts has allowed for discussions on new programming (e.g., Check Up and Choices) before implementation – a desired feature of system integration. USAFA continues to increase the number of staff supporting prevention across the organization by adding a new position focused on prevention and resilience. Evidence-based and/or evidence-informed prevention activities (e.g., Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act; Sexual Communication and Consent, Cadet Healthy Personal Skills) are being implemented, and many are being evaluated for impacts; however, a plethora of programs continue to be offered and introduced into the USAFA environment with little or no organizational integration, management process, or outcome evaluation planned to show impacts.

The USAFA team has developed and implemented its comprehensive plan, which they refer to as their Integrated Prevention Framework. The framework is creating an environment in which all prevention, resilience, and culture/climate agencies represent arms branching from one, unified central body, which is the Community Action Board (CAB). CAB hosts meetings to discuss initiatives both at the installation-level and with academy cadets. Many lines of effort, however, still function in “stove pipes,” independent of other efforts. A lack of strategic-level planning, as it pertains to prevention, resilience-building, and cultivating a culture of civility, remains an identified challenge.

USAFA reported that very few lines of effort undergo formal process analyses to help inform development of a standardized implementation protocol, and that the number of programs offered outweighs the manpower to effectively manage them all. USAFA continues to develop a holistic measurement strategy to annually evaluate how all lines of effort across the installation contribute to desired outcomes, both individually and in combination. The first iteration of this measurement strategy is scheduled for APY 21-22.

USAFA found that although improving, there is still limited use of empirical data in prevention and resilience-building functions. The SAPR team continued its development of a holistic measurement plan to examine how multiple lines of effort across the Academy contribute to desired outcomes. The measurement strategy is being designed to enhance USAFA’s ability to evaluate program effectiveness and continuous quality improvement.

Regarding their prevention workforce, USAFA found that the workforce in SAPR, Violence Prevention, Community Support, and EO programs is fully staffed – there are no gaps at the Program Manager or Wing level. Manpower for individual lines of effort, however, remains precarious in some circumstances. In addition, the Community Support Coordinator does not have integration at the USAFA Headquarters Program Manager Level. Regular turnover in senior leadership may also temporarily slow progress while new personnel acclimate to USAFA and to the use of an integrated prevention framework. Lastly, this year’s training and continuing education plans were provided virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic, impacting professional development and morale.

Efforts to Assess Risk and Protective Factors for Sexual Assault at the Academies

In February 2021, the Secretary of Defense directed immediate actions to counter SA and SH. As part of these actions, the Secretary directed that a force-wide *Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey (DEOCS)* be conducted to assess risk and protective factors throughout the military. In this effort, the Academies worked together with OPA to draft cadet and midshipman-specific survey questions for the revised *DEOCS 5.0*. The *DEOCS 5.0* is novel in that it links nine risk and protective factors to risk for SA and links ten to risk for SH. These risk and protective factors can impact a unit or organization's climate and ability to achieve its mission.

All MSAs surveyed their cadets and midshipmen using the *DEOCS 5.0* at the outset of the APY. While feedback from the Academies was helpful and actionable, results from the cadets and midshipmen at USMA and USNA could not be cleanly differentiated from faculty and staff responses using established unit reporting structure. USAFA cadet results could be segregated due to the fact that the Academy had established a reporting structure for each cadet class year. Since fielding the *DEOCS 5.0*, the Department has updated the registration system to clarify the reporting structure, which will make it easier to keep faculty, cadet, and midshipman results separate in future surveys.

New Department Research Effort to Inform Academy Prevention Efforts

Despite years of concerted efforts, the prevalence of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment remain high at the Academies. In order to directly inform prevention efforts, DoD revised the standard *SAGR* focus group approach. In accordance with Title 10 of the United States Code, amended by Section 532 of the NDAA for FY 2007, the Department has conducted *SAGR* surveys and focus groups at the MSAs, during alternating years, since 2005. Throughout this time, survey and focus group results consistently identified peer leaders as critical but unequipped prevention influencers.

Social norms research is based on the premise that misperceptions of peers' behaviors and attitudes may motivate greater engagement in counterproductive behaviors. For example, if an individual believes peers drink more than they actually do, then the individual is more likely to consume greater amounts of alcohol. Likewise, individuals are more likely to engage in disrespectful behavior if they perceive that peers generally approve of such misconduct. This kind of research has been employed for many years as an intervention strategy for health-related behaviors and attitudes. Interventions based on this approach increase healthy behaviors and reduce unhelpful behavior by countering misperceptions of social norms. In addition, research also shows that peer influencers can accelerate efforts to change norms and behaviors.

With this in mind, the Department revised its traditional focus group methodology in 2021 to a mixed-methods approach, including the administration of both survey and focus groups with cadets and midshipmen. This effort, the *2021 ACNS*, sought to accomplish three actions:

1. Identify characteristics of influential students so that those students can be leveraged as messengers to accelerate change in problematic norms relevant for prevention;
2. Examine cadet and midshipman social norms to identify potential points of intervention; and,

3. Obtain cadet and midshipman feedback on messaging and program delivery methods.

Finding 1: Identifying the Characteristics of Influential Cadets and Midshipmen

An analysis of study findings indicates that 17 percent of cadets and midshipmen at the MSAs were considered central influencers as nominated by their peers. Data show that key cadet and midshipman influencers are highly integrated with one another and well-connected to the Academy. These students tend to be first or second class (seniors and juniors) male cadets and midshipmen, and often are those who regularly take interest in their peers' wellbeing, serve as mentors and tutors, and are empathic to the needs of their fellow cadets and midshipmen. While men were most often nominated, it is interesting to note that women were nominated as influencers at higher rates (37 percent) than the overall population of women at the Academies (27 percent).

Finding 2: Examining Social Norms

An important step in employing a social norms approach is to determine which norms in a population may be contributing to misconduct or unhelpful behavior. For example, "descriptive" social norms are those behaviors perceived to be practiced by others. The fact that "everyone else is doing it" is often a rationale for such norms. "Injunctive norms" reflect people's perceptions of what behaviors may be acceptable or unacceptable. Both descriptive and injunctive social norms influence behavior, but which may be the most influential often depends on the circumstances. Understanding the difference between these norms allows for the selection of the most relevant and persuasive messaging that could be considered to correct inaccurate perceptions, promote healthier behavior, and/or reduce risk. To this end, the 2021 ACNS asked participants to rate their expectations for other students' behavior on a variety of social norms, rate their peers' behavior, and then rate their own behavior. "Self" ratings were then aggregated into a peer group rate to understand what, if any, differences were present in perceptions between self and peers.

In sum, findings from the 2021 ACNS show that cadets and midshipmen understand the high expectations of the Academies for some norms related to prevention such as confronting sexist comments, discouraging hostile language on social media, and discouraging insults. Cadets and midshipmen generally indicate that such expectations have some effect on their own behavior and what they perceive others are doing as well. While there is an observable difference between behavioral expectations and cadet and midshipman perceptions of actual behavior, students' behavior generally supports desired standards on these norms (confronting sexist comments, discouraging hostile language on social media, and discouraging insults).

For other norms, the survey findings are not as helpful. In contrast, fewer cadets and midshipmen at the Academies align their expectations with preventive attitudes related to encouraging healthy drinking behavior (e.g., drinking in moderation and discouraging both drinking games and underage drinking), holding others appropriately accountable to academy rules (regardless of their opinion of the rules), and discouraging gossiping or talking about others. This essentially means that fewer students have adopted these expectations as essential to their experience as cadets and midshipmen. In addition, cadets and midshipmen indicated that neither they nor their peers are likely to encourage healthy drinking behavior, hold others accountable to academy rules, or discourage gossiping or talking about others. Finally, individuals would not likely benefit from a greater understanding of peer behavior because there

is little discrepancy between individuals and the behavior of their peers on these topics. As a result, traditional social norms interventions would not likely be helpful. Instead, the Academies need to improve cadet and midshipman understanding and skills required to encourage healthier drinking choices, improve accountability, and discourage gossip.

Finding 3: Obtaining Feedback from Cadets and Midshipmen on Messaging and Program Delivery Methods

The 2021 ACNS findings also obtained feedback on academy messaging that resonates and does not resonate with cadets and midshipmen. Program qualities that tend to resonate with cadets and midshipmen include small group, student-driven sessions that allow for discussion and incorporate personal stories. Cadets and midshipmen indicated that programs that do not resonate with them are long, large-scale briefings and slide show or online trainings. This information can be of greatest use for designing interventions and programs with maximum impact. For example, based on the social norms feedback, the Academies would likely have the greatest effect on students by employing small group and discussion-based approaches in efforts to improve skills and attitudes about a key problematic norm, such as expectations about healthier alcohol choices. Given the time and resources required for such approaches, other less critical topics could be communicated via less resonate means (e.g., online or large scale briefings).

Actions to Address

Continue Progress with Comprehensive Prevention Plan

In APY 18-19, the Department found that the Academies were in an early phase of prevention capability. Significant progress was noted in APY 19-20, and this progress has continued into the current APY. DoD's criteria assessment scores this year ranged from moderate, good, to full alignment across most of the Prevention Evaluation Framework at all Academies. Additional refinement is needed within each Academy's prevention system and prevention process to further mature prevention capability. Academies must now focus on the following three action items. It is imperative that the following improvements be ready to address any persistent and emerging risk factors identified in the next SAGR Survey, scheduled for April 2022.

Identify and Empower Prevention Decision-Makers

The MSAs will identify and/or hire a senior, full-time Violence Prevention Program Integrator with sufficient grade and authority to direct coordination and recommend resource decisions to the Superintendent across programs addressing SA, SH, self-harm, and other readiness-impacting behaviors. Currently, all Academies place officers in the grade of O-6 or higher to lead departments, cost-centers, functions, and other activities. However, a leader in an equivalent grade is not currently empowered to coordinate, direct, and negotiate prevention initiatives across academy stovepipes. The new leadership position at each Academy will be responsible for assessing prevention activities to determine redundancies, gaps, efficiencies, and consistent prevention messaging across disciplines. This position will require:

- Grade and longevity to see prevention activities through at least one cycle of implementation (a GS-15 or Highly Qualified Expert remaining in place a minimum of

- three to five years is optimal, an O-6 cycling in and out on assignment or retirement after two to three years is not suitable);
- Advanced, specialized prevention education (e.g., master's degree or higher in a prevention-related field or social science); and,
 - Experience in military settings.

The Military Departments will program this position at each Academy and identify and/or hire personnel into the position before September 30, 2023. In the interim, each Academy will appoint an individual with sufficient future time on station and provide him or her with the authority to perform such duties as described until the new hire is in place. Appointment letters are to be provided to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) via Manpower and Reserve Affairs Military Department leadership by March 31, 2022.

Revise Academy Policy to Codify Prevention Elements

With new leadership and changes in prevention personnel over time, there is increased likelihood that some prevention system advancements over the last two academic years will be lost. The Academies will now institutionalize prevention system advancements through revisions and additions to academy policy and local operating instructions. For example, if integrating bodies or functions are identified but are not meeting prevention needs, the Academies will establish and/or re-task groups to support prevention across functional areas, under the direction of the Violence Prevention Program Integrator described previously. Similarly, the Department requires the Academies to specify and require onboarding training for new prevention staff and document that prevention decision-makers and leaders have the training and tools needed to support prevention efforts. It should be noted that the latter training requirements have been directed by the Secretary of Defense as a part of the guidance to implement the Independent Review Commission (IRC) Recommendations 2.4, 3.2, and 4.4 c.

Using Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6400.09 as a framework, the Academies will draft the policies and operating instructions as described above and submit the drafts for review by their Service and USD(P&R) by May 31, 2022. All policies and instructions will be approved for implementation by the Superintendent by September 30, 2022.

Evaluate Individual Prevention Activities within the Overall Comprehensive Prevention Approach

The Department requires the Academies to evaluate the individual and collective outcomes of individual prevention activities within the overall comprehensive approach. The Academies will develop an evaluation plan⁹ that includes the following: (1) evaluation narrative, which describes plans for evaluating the outcomes of a select prevention activity; and (2) evaluation logic model. By September 30, 2022, Academies will submit evaluation plans for identified prevention activities.

⁹ The Academies may use the following CDC Evaluation Plan as a template:
<https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/evaluation/assets/pdf/Evaluation-Plan-Template.pdf>

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Reporting

Top Line Observations

APY 20-21 Overall Reporting Data on Sexual Assault at the Service Academies

In APY 20-21, the Department received a total of 161 SA reports that involved cadets/midshipmen/prep students as victims and/or alleged perpetrators – an increase of 32 reports from the previous APY (see Exhibit 2). Of these reports, 56 were from USMA, 41 were from USNA, and 64 were from USAFA.

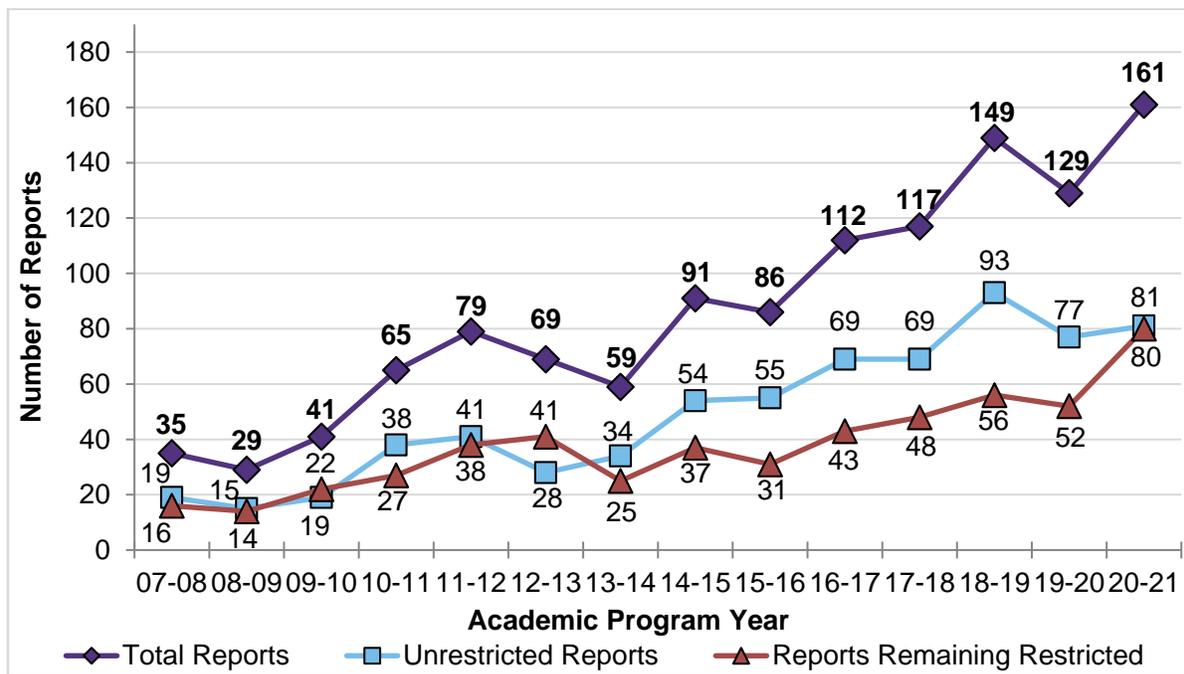


Exhibit 2: Reports of Sexual Assault by Academy, APY 07-08 to 20-21

Department policy allows cadets and midshipmen to report SA and receive assistance, even when the reported incident occurred prior to entry into military service. In addition, DoD accounts for reports from non-cadets/midshipmen that allege a SA against an academy student.

At the MSAs’ request, the Department categorizes the reports received to better understand and focus on those cases that reflect the MSAs’ current conditions. Of the 161 total reports received by the Department, 139 reports were made by/or against “actively enrolled cadets and midshipmen” for incidents that occurred during military service (see Exhibit 3). The “actively enrolled cadets or midshipmen” category includes reports from:

- Currently enrolled cadets or midshipmen reporting an incident that occurred during their military service;

- Active-duty Service members reporting an incident that occurred within four years of the date the incident was reported, either at the MSA or while they were a cadet or midshipman; and
- Civilians reporting an incident against an enrolled cadet or midshipman.

The remaining 22 reports come from:

- Currently enrolled cadets or midshipmen reporting an incident that occurred prior to military service;
- Active-duty Service members or current civilians who did not report an academy-based SA until they were no longer enrolled at the MSA, making a report for an incident that occurred more than four years from the date of the report; and
- Prep school students.

Table 1 provides the breakdown of the 161 total reports into these two overarching categories.

Table 1: Sexual Assault Reports by Victim Category and Military Status, APY 20-21

	Unrestricted Reports	Restricted Reports	Total Reports
All Academy-related Reports	81	80	161
• Reports involving actively enrolled cadets/midshipmen at the time of incident and/or report	71	68	139
– Cadets/midshipmen victims reporting an incident that occurred during military service	64	67	131
– Active-duty Service member victims reporting an incident that occurred within the last four years	3	1	4
– Civilian victims	4	0	4
• All other reports	10	12	22
– Cadets/midshipmen reporting an incident that occurred prior to military service	6	8	14
– Active-duty Service members reporting an incident that occurred more than four years ago	1	3	4
– Prep school students	3	1	4

Please see Appendix B: Statistical Data on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment for more information on reporting data.

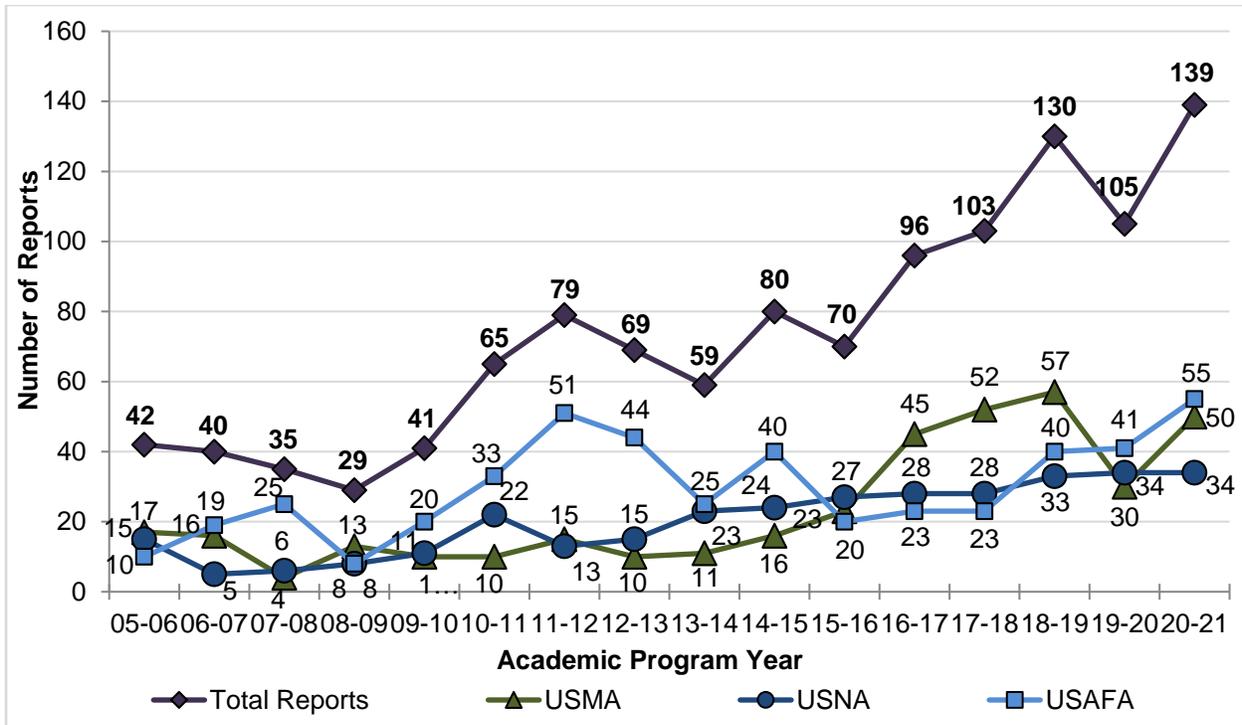


Exhibit 3: Reports by and/or against Academy Students Actively Enrolled at the Time of Report and Incident by Report Type, APY 05-06 to 20-21

Exhibit 3 breaks down by MSA the number of SA reports by and/or against academy students actively enrolled at the time of the report and incident. Compared to APY 19-20, the total number of SA reports involving actively enrolled cadets or midshipmen made in APY 20-21 increased by 34 reports, driven by the increase in reporting at USMA and USAFA.

At USMA, 50 reports of SA were made by and/or against actively enrolled cadets for an alleged incident that occurred during military service, representing an increase of 20 reports since the previous APY. Of these total reports, 31 were Unrestricted, and 19 remained Restricted at the close of APY 20-21.

At USNA, 34 reports of SA were made by and/or against actively enrolled midshipmen for an alleged incident occurring during military service. No increase or decrease occurred in reports from the previous APY. Of these total reports, 12 were Unrestricted, and 22 remained Restricted at the close of APY 20-21.

At USAFA, 55 reports of SA were made by and/or against actively enrolled cadets for an alleged incident occurring during military service, an increase of 14 reports since previously measured. Of these total reports, 28 were Unrestricted, and 27 remained Restricted. Detailed statistical data from APY 20-21, and analysis of these data, can be found in Appendices D and E.

The reason for increased reporting is unclear, as the Department did not administer a scientific prevalence survey this year.

APY 20-21 Sexual Assault Reports Made to the Family Advocacy Program

SA that occurs within the context of an intimate partner relationship is domestic abuse, which falls under the purview of the Family Advocacy Program (FAP). The Department of the Air Force (DAF) has expanded its definition of “intimate partner” abuse to also include dating violence. While cadets and midshipmen cannot be married while enrolled at the MSAs, they can be involved in dating relationships. USAFA cadets have the option to seek assistance from FAP when they believe they have been subjected to SA as part of a dating relationship.

The Department has established procedures to ensure that all SA reports at USAFA comply with congressional reporting requirements. In APY 20-21, one report of SA at USAFA was initially made to FAP. The one report at USAFA that was initially made to FAP is included in the above counts of the total number of reports made this APY.

APY 20-21 Sexual Harassment Complaints at the Service Academies

In APY 20-21, cadets and midshipmen made 9 formal complaints and 21 informal complaints of SH. As depicted in Exhibit 4, SH complaints at the Academies vary widely from year to year but remain low compared to prior survey prevalence estimates of SH from the 2018 SAGR.

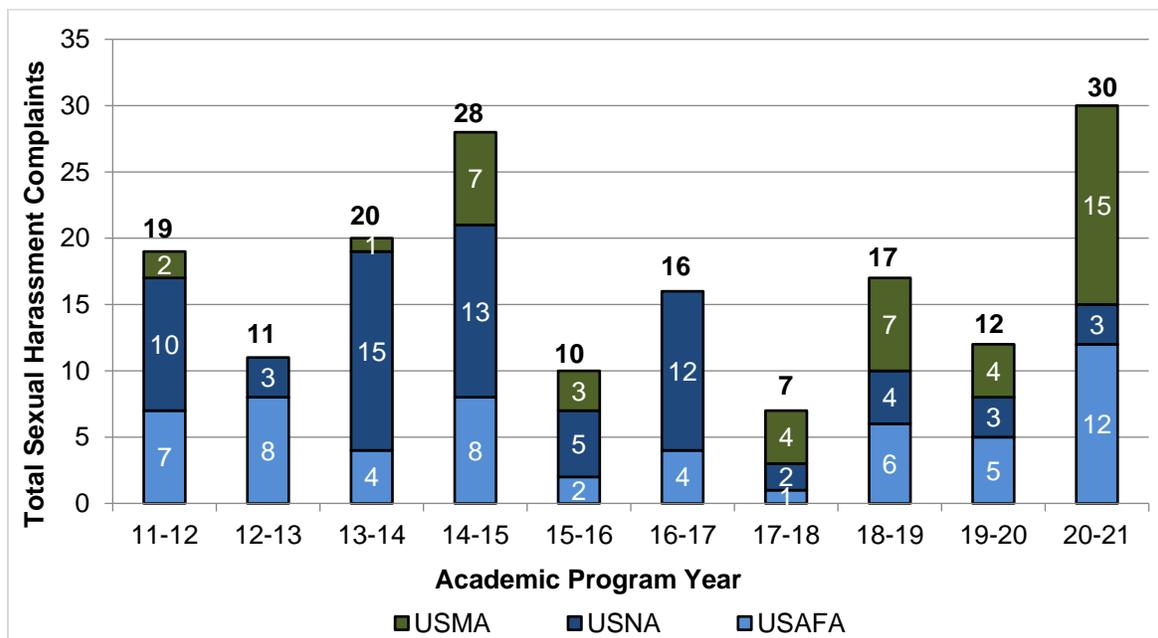


Exhibit 4: Total Sexual Harassment Complaints by Academy, APY 11-12 to 20-21

CATCH a Serial Offender Program Insights

The Department implemented the CATCH a Serial Offender Program (CATCH) in August 2019 to provide another reporting resource for individuals who have experienced SA. CATCH allows individuals making Restricted Reports the opportunity to provide information about their alleged offender or incident confidentially to military criminal investigators. Should the information provided align with another CATCH entry or other documented criminal allegation against the same alleged offender, CATCH participants can consider converting to an

Unrestricted Report and participate in the military justice system. Anyone having made a Restricted Report currently or in the past is eligible to provide a CATCH entry. This APY, 43 CATCH entries originated from the Academies, similar to the 45 entries made to the program in APY 19-20.

This year, the Department directed the Academies to provide an AAR of activities taken to publicize CATCH according to the Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) each MSA submitted to the Department in December 2019. All Academies submitted an AAR to the Department. In addition, in the past APY, the MSAs took the following action:

- **USMA:** provided a Catch Program Victim Info Sheet to all cadets who came to speak with a SARC or SAPR VA. CATCH was also promoted during the SHARP briefing provided to cadets on Ft. Hood and throughout annual trainings and discussions.
- **USNA:** made concerted efforts to publicize CATCH, which is featured prominently in SAPR training briefs and discussions and is shared as an option for victims by their SARC or SAPR VA.
- **USAFA:** completed all training goals outlined in their POAM and continues to publicize the CATCH program, which is offered to every cadet making a Restricted Report of SA. The program's success is monitored as victims continue to opt-in voluntarily.

Actions to Address

In the next APY, the Department encourages the Academies to complete the following two action items.

Facilitate Greater Use of CATCH by Providing On-site Resources

In the past two years, the Academies have publicized the new CATCH program to cadets and midshipmen. However, firsthand accounts with SA response personnel show that while a survivor might express interest in the program when speaking to the SARC in their office, the action tends to end there. Department data shows that only one-third of Service members who request a password made an entry into the CATCH system.¹⁰

During On-site Engagements with academy personnel, the Department learned that in an effort to encourage midshipmen to use the program, USNA established a dedicated private space and a standalone computer for midshipmen to access the CATCH program immediately after receiving their program credential from a SARC. This initiative also facilitated easier access for the SARC, who can provide technical assistance and answer password-related issues for the survivor. The Department considers this action a best practice and directs USMA and USAFA to establish private computer space for cadets to enter CATCH submissions. Additionally, the Academies will also encourage greater access to the CATCH program by expanding eligibility to the program as outlined in the 10 November 2021 Deputy Secretary of

¹⁰ DoD SAPRO. (September 2021). "CATCH a Serial Offender (CATCH) Program Data for the Month of September 2021."

Defense Memorandum.¹¹ The Academies will report compliance with this action in the self-assessment planned for APY 21-22.

Track Sexual Assault Cases Citing the Safe to Report Policy

The USAFA Safe to Report policy allows the Superintendent to not prosecute minor misconduct by victims associated with their report of SA (e.g., underage drinking, being outside of cadet-area limits). USAFA fully implemented and publicized a Safe to Report policy. This year, victims in 22 reports cited the policy as a reason for coming forward. While USMA and USNA leadership testified having similar policies addressing collateral misconduct of sexual assault victims in force at their Academies, they were not tracking the numbers of victims citing their policies as influencing their decision to report. DoD issued guidance to the Secretaries of the Military Departments in October 2021 directing implementation of a force-wide Safe to Report policy, as directed by the NDAA for FY 2021. Upon implementation of the policy, the Military Departments, including the Academies, will be required to track the number of reports they receive each year wherein victims cite the Safe to Report policy as having influenced their decision to report.

Victim Assistance Initiatives

Top Line Observations

Academy Case Management Group Assessment

This year, DoD SAPRO assessed the Academies' Case Management Group (CMG) compliance. While called different names throughout the Military Services (i.e., Army Sexual Assault Review Board (SARB), Navy Sexual Assault Case Management Group (SACMG), and Air Force CMG), this group is responsible for the monthly review of all open, Unrestricted SA cases at a given location. The CMG is chaired by the installation commander or senior mission commander and co-chaired by the lead SARC. It aims to provide senior commanders with oversight of SA cases, address safety and retaliation allegations, track case movement through the military justice process, and promote collaboration and cooperation of all first responders.

To inform their review, DoD SAPRO employed guidance from DoDI 6495.02, *SAPR Program Procedures*, relevant DoD policy memoranda, and interviews with the group Chair, Co-Chair, and observation of an academy-level CMG session. While each CMG follows DoDI 6495.02 guidance, implementation was distinctive to each Academy. For example, cadet and midshipman victims are represented by different levels of academy leadership. USNA identifies the O-5 or O-6 post-command Battalion Officer as the midshipman victim representative. However, O-3 level company commanders, Tactical Officers (TACs), Air Officer Commanding (AOCs), and O-4 level officers and above represent cadet victims at USMA and USAFA CMGs.

¹¹ DoD Instruction 6495.02, Volume 1, Paragraph 4, "Sexual Assault Prevention and Response: Program Procedures." (November 10, 2021).
https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/649502_vol1.PDF?ver=cgGWF8znmrSsFAimctzJFQ%3d%3d

At USAFA, in the absence of the immediate AOC, the Group AOC (O-5 or O-6 level) attends the CMGs. In addition, the USAFA Vice Commandant is in attendance for all cadet CMG meetings.

Identified Opportunities for Improvement

Recognizing the unique environments and needs of each Service, DoD SAPRO found that variations exist in CMG processes across the Academies. For the most part, these variations are permitted by DoD policy. However, certain practices at the Academies encroach on victim privacy and the regulatory requirement to keep case information consolidated to those parties who have a demonstrable “need-to-know.”

For instance, at USMA, a large distribution email is sent to CMG attendees and other academy personnel to share meeting dates for the monthly CMG and to review response system data for the Academy. While it is helpful to include a wider range of personnel to review response system data, USMA should keep such topics relegated to the quarterly response system meetings required by Department policy. CMG attendance and topics should focus mainly on victim safety, services provided, and progression of cases through the military justice process. Only first responders and SAPR personnel with a “need-to-know” should receive information on the date and time of the monthly CMG. Additional persons may be invited to CMG meetings at the discretion of the CMG Chair if those persons have an official “need-to-know” in adherence to DoDI 6495.02, with the understanding that maintaining victim privacy is essential. To be clear, these events should be scheduled as two separate meetings, with distinct agendas, to help protect victim privacy and confidentiality, and lessen likelihood of inadvertent disclosure of victim information. Additionally, leadership and CMG participant training could be strengthened to allow for greater understanding of roles and participation in meeting discussions.

To standardize variations in academy CMG processes, the Department directs the MSAs to develop localized CMG operating instructions, submitted in draft to DoD SAPRO, no later than 31 May 2022. To assess Service CMG training best practices, the Department directs the Military Departments to provide a copy of their leadership and CMG participant training curriculum to the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Training and Education Center of Excellence within DoD SAPRO no later than 31 March 2022.

Efforts to Improve Victim Assistance and Support Continued at the Academies

Identifying and Preparing Influencers to Assist

This year, the Department directed the Academies to identify and prepare key influencers to counter incorrectly perceived norms around help-seeking and bystander intervention. Both USMA and USAFA reported that they met the requirement while USNA stated that efforts remain in progress. This past APY, the Academies took the following action:

- **USMA (COMPLETED):** trained cadets on alcohol abuse and SA prevention education through EverFi. One cadet class focused on countering incorrect norms around help-seeking and bystander intervention to ensure well-trained cadet peer leaders. The SHARP Deep Dive on Fort Hood spoke to the personal courage required to seek help and intervene. In addition, USMA provided updates on the below key influencers:

- USMA highlighted the four types of “Character” cadets, including the Respect, Trust, Honor, and Wellness Cadets. These students specialize in cadet programs on equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion, SHARP, suicide prevention, spiritual wellness, mental health wellness, and honor. Additional details on these roles can be found in Appendix A.
- The USMA Trust Cadets held a Relational Wellness Lesson in which SHARP Subject Matter Experts (SME) presented information on healthy relationships, followed by in-person, squad-level discussions conducted by Trust Cadets to counter incorrect perceptions about healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- USMA worked with athletic leaders on the West Point football team to demonstrate healthy masculinity and bystander intervention.
- **USNA (IN PROGRESS):** expanded the MAT to include midshipmen representation to work alongside the prevention workforce (e.g., SAPR, Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO), Alcohol and Drug Education, suicide prevention, mental health services, and chaplains), as well as representatives from major departments and divisions from across the institution (e.g., athletics, academics, and medical)
 - Three First Class midshipmen were selected due to their status as key influencers within the Brigade, and they were active participants at each MAT meeting during the APY.
 - These midshipmen provided the team with the pulse of the Brigade, which afforded the MAT the ability to tailor messaging and programming of counter-destructive behavior prevention activities. These insights proved particularly useful and relevant during Restriction of Movement periods which occurred during Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 due to spikes in coronavirus numbers and found midshipmen confined to Bancroft Hall. Additional details on these activities can be found in Appendix B.
 - Efforts to identify and prepare influencers to assist in countering incorrectly perceived norms around help-seeking and bystander intervention remains in progress. The MAT continues to seek out the correct midshipmen influencers. Between the end of the APY 20-21 reporting period and the current year, USNA identified key influencers (i.e., midshipmen, faculty, staff, and coaches) and incorporated them in bystander intervention trainings during initial SHAPE sessions for new fourth class midshipmen.
- **USAFA (COMPLETED):** met the goal of improving victim assistance and support by recruiting and preparing influencers to assist cadets with questions, concerns, and expediting access to support resources.
 - USAFA peer influencer programs (i.e., Teal Ropes, PEERs, and Diversity and Inclusion Ropes) have taken a hands-on approach to address misperceptions surrounding SA and available resources to assist survivors.
 - Cadets apply to be involved in these programs and are interviewed by permanent party members. Their records are reviewed to ensure good academic and honor code standing, and AOCs are solicited for recommendations on each applicant. Once selected, cadets receive in-depth training on the content area including training on available resources and how to access helping agency support.

- Key influencers in cadet peer assistance groups conduct trainings within their assigned squadrons on topics such as retaliation and reprisal, Safe Helpline, Military One Source, trauma and how it affects the brain, bystander intervention, and healthy relationship to address potential barriers, dispel myths, facilitate open discussions, and normalize help-seeking behavior. Additional details on these activities can be found in Appendix C.

Driving Help-Seeking Through Peer Groups

This year, the Department directed the Academies to drive greater help-seeking through peer groups. All Academies met this requirement by taking the following action:

- **USMA (COMPLETED):** updated resources and resource guides to include more details about the various support agencies and planned events to connect cadets to resources through the USMA Trust Cadets program.
 - The Trust Cadets developed three Lines of Effort that speak to a desire for cadets to own the problem and support others in seeking help. They promoted Trust and SHARP resources in a week in October, at two events on connecting cadets to resources during Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM), and at USMA's Honorable Living Day.
- **USNA (COMPLETED):** expanded the role of USNA SAPR GUIDEs (a team of 70 midshipmen) to provide Guidance, Understanding, Information, Direction and Education for individuals seeking support for incidents of discrimination, SH, and/or SA.
 - GUIDEs served as peer resources for both the SAPR and CMEO areas and were able to encourage help-seeking and counter existing narratives that represent barriers to reporting both SA and SH. The Team also built a curriculum for in-company training, thereby improving their visibility as a resource for their peers.
 - In response to commonly asked questions, the GUIDEs created a "How to Help a Friend" brief, which provides guidance about how to support victims. This brief is also posted prominently on the USNA SAPR webpage.
 - The Midshipmen Development Center continued their Peer Advisor Program, which includes intensive training to prepare participants with communication skills and knowledge of mental health and how to access them.
- **USAFA (COMPLETED):** provided cadet peer assistance to victims of SA through the USAFA SAPR Teal Rope program, which currently has 108 trained cadets at the Academy (two per Squadron) and nine at the preparatory school. Teal Rope cadets have a visible and accessible presence among the cadet population, which may help to decrease the stigma of asking questions related to help-seeking and support.
 - In addition, USAFA's PEER program includes cadets trained in conflict resolution, active listening, SH, SA reporting, and suicide risk assessment and prevention. Two cadet PEERs are assigned to every Squadron and are the points of contact to whom other cadets to reach out when in need of additional support or services.

Victim Care Throughout Coronavirus Pandemic

All three Academies adjusted response efforts to ensure victim care and assistance remained a priority throughout the coronavirus pandemic. No discrepancies noted.

- **USMA** indicated that the pandemic did not largely affect its response efforts, as cadets were on campus for the majority of APY 20-21.
- **USNA** indicated that it worked across APY 20-21 to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on its SAPR program.
- **USAFA** indicated that its SAPR office continued to have a physical presence on campus and used training opportunities to educate cadets on the availability of resources during times of restricted movement.

Review of DD Form 2910, Victim Reporting Preference Statement

Once signed by a victim with the SARC or VA, the Victim Reporting Preference Statement (i.e., DD Form 2910) officially documents a victim's desire to make either a Restricted or Unrestricted Report. The Department annually audits the Victim Reporting Preference Statements received at each Academy and compares the results with the data academy SARCs entered into DSAID. This year, the Department found that all forms were accounted for and appropriately stored at the Academies. No discrepancies were noted.

Expedited Transfers between Academies

Victims who file an Unrestricted Report of SA may request a transfer to a new duty location or installation to promote recovery and healing. In November 2019, the Department updated guidance to expand expedited transfer eligibility and procedures. Section 555 of the NDAA for FY 2020 required the Secretaries of the Military Departments concerned to develop regulations that inform cadets and midshipmen who are victims of a SA that they may request a transfer to another Academy or to enroll in a Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program affiliated with another institution of higher education.

DoD SAPRO hosted monthly working group meetings to help the Academies identify common policy elements and procedures to support development of Service policies responsive to this requirement. As a result, the Academies jointly developed standardized policy language to address transfer requests from cadet and midshipman victims of SA. In APY 20-21, the MSAs successfully transferred three cadets and midshipmen. In addition, USAFA continued to discuss their expedited transfer case at CMG sessions after it closed to ensure that the transferred cadet was well-acclimated and connected to resources.

Actions to Address

Additional refinement is needed within each Academy's response system and process. Academies must now focus on the following action items.

CMG Opportunities for Improvement

Variations exist in CMG processes across the Academies. For the most part, these variations are permitted by DoD policy. However, certain practices at the Academies may encroach on victim privacy and the regulatory requirement to keep case information consolidated to those parties who have a demonstrable "need-to-know." To standardize variations in Academy CMG processes, the Department directs the MSAs to develop localized

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Prevent Military Protective Order Violations

Cadet and midshipman survivors of SA who participated in DoD SAPRO's Survivor Summit shared that being in the same classroom with their alleged perpetrator can be triggering and distracting for them during and after the military justice process. Therefore, to the extent possible and practical, the Academies will accommodate survivors by de-conflicting where they and the alleged perpetrators are assigned in their companies and classes, or notifying survivors ahead of time of the conflict so that they may best prepare themselves. In the next APY, the Academies will formalize processes and procedures to de-conflict victims' and alleged perpetrators' schedules to prevent Military Protective Order violations.

Assist the Department to Devise an Expedited Transfer Policy from the Academies to ROTC Detachments

As described above, Section 555 of the NDAA for FY 2020 required the Department to devise policy and the Secretaries of the Military Departments to develop procedures to allow cadets and midshipmen who are victims of a SA to transfer to another Academy in an effort to help promote recovery and healing. Section 555 also directs that procedures be developed to allow academy cadets and midshipmen who are victims of a SA to transfer to a ROTC detachment at a civilian college or university. The transfer of academy cadets and midshipmen to a ROTC detachment presents potential challenges, including:

- Loss of Active Duty Service member status and a break in military service by transferring to ROTC.
- Loss of access to healthcare and mental health counseling.
- Inability to ensure acceptance into a civilian college or university on the timeline required by the victim.
- Inability to ensure full transfer of academic class credits to gaining college or university.
- Loss of Service Academy scholarship, which would not necessarily be available at the gaining civilian college or university or through ROTC.

The Department continues to explore ways to minimize potential impacts of transfers from or between Military Service Academies.

Improve SARC and SAPR VA Knowledge of Military Justice Process

Department policy allows SAPR personnel to provide victims with general information about available reporting options and resources. However, SARCs and SAPR VAs may benefit from additional training on key elements of the investigative and military justice processes, accountability measures, and other topics as identified in coordination with the staff judge advocates of the Academies concerned, and SVC/VLCs.

Way Forward

The Department continues to approach SA holistically by focusing on prevention and leaders at all levels, addressing problematic culture, and promoting reporting options, including confidential venues. This report is an assessment of academy programs and policies and highlights areas for continued action.

Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military (IRC)

On February 26, 2021, the Secretary of Defense directed the IRC to conduct an impartial assessment of the Department's efforts to address SA. The Commission provided 82 recommendations on July 2, 2021 to improve the Department's approach to accountability, prevention, climate and culture, and victim care and support. On September 22, 2021, the Department approved a roadmap to implement IRC recommendations wherever possible. As of the time of the current report, the Department is executing action plans. As the Military Departments make associated changes to policy, programs, and personnel, the Academies' programs will also change significantly. A few of the key changes that will likely impact the Academies are identified below by the IRC Lines of Effort (LOE):

- **LOE 1 – Accountability:** an independent Special Trial Counsel and not the Academy Superintendent will prefer and refer court-martial cases involving certain offenses, including SA, as appropriate.
- **LOE 2 – Prevention:** IRC recommendations focused on creating a prepared prevention workforce and improving leadership capabilities to support the prevention mission. In addition, the IRC recommended updating and revising prevention interventions and resources for Service members early in their careers to address pre-military experiences and other risk factors. Implementation of these recommendations may influence the training that leaders and prevention personnel receive and the resources available to cadets and midshipmen. The Service Academies are generally ahead of the rest of their Military Departments given the investments they have made in prevention programming and personnel: the Academies have full-time, trained personnel assigned to prevention activities. Nonetheless, all three Academies have considerable work ahead of them to be at the end-state capability recommended by the IRC.
- **LOE 3 – Climate and Culture:** IRC recommendations focused on improving climate assessment and equipping leaders to use climate assessment data to address risk factors early. The tools and training developed to support these recommendations will likely influence the leadership development that cadets and midshipmen receive at the Service Academies. The Department directs the Academies to align their climate assessment process with the Secretary's Immediate Actions (February 2021) and develop an accountability process by which cadet and midshipman risk factors can be identified, addressed, and reported by both class year and by cadet/midshipman organizational unit structure. Cadets and midshipmen should also be required to participate in development of actions to address and oversight of solutions to risk factors identified in climate survey results.
- **LOE 4 – Victim Care and Support:** IRC recommendations for the force largely focused on eliminating collateral duty SARCs and SAPR VAs and freeing these SAPR personnel from inappropriate command influence. The Department's recent on-site assessments found no evidence of inappropriate leadership influence on

SAPR personnel, as described by the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee or the IRC. Each of the Academies have a cadre of full-time SARCs, SAPR VAs, and Program Managers. SARCs and SAPR VAs operate in a SA response structure that allows them to provide unfettered support to victims and advice to command.

Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Sexual Assault

The Academies have demonstrated observable increases in prevention capacity and capability. To sustain and make this progress permanent, the Academies should:

- Identify, hire, and empower senior prevention decision-makers;
- Review academy policy and codify prevention elements; and,
- Evaluate impact of individual activities within the comprehensive prevention approach, as well as the impact of the comprehensive approach overall.

Efforts to Increase Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Reporting

Substantial improvements in reporting have been made. To maintain and encourage greater SA and SH reporting, the Academies should:

- Provide additional resources for victim access to the CATCH program; and,
- Track SA cases associated with the Safe to Report policy.

Efforts to Strengthen Victim Assistance

To promote greater help-seeking and assistance to victims of SA, the Academies should:

- Develop localized CMG operating instructions;
- Deconflict class schedules to the extent practicable, of victims and alleged perpetrators, to help prevent violations of Military Protective Orders.
- Identify topic areas in which SARCs and SAPR VAs can be better informed about the investigative and military justice processes.