



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

DEC 20 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

SUBJECT: Sexual Harassment and Violence at the U.S. Military Service Academies

Sexual assault and sexual harassment have no place in the Department of Defense (DoD) or the military service academies. The young men and women enrolled at the service academies must be able to learn and develop as future leaders in an environment free from sexual assault and sexual harassment. They must feel secure enough to report without fear of retribution, and offenders must be held appropriately accountable. I know you share my commitment in creating an environment at the academies and across the Department that fosters mutual dignity and respect, develops leaders of high caliber, and ensures compassionate and responsive support for victims.

Despite our considerable and ongoing efforts, this year's Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies demonstrates that we have a persistent problem. I am concerned that we have not achieved greater progress in preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment among academy cadets and midshipmen. These crimes and abhorrent behavior are incompatible with the core values we require of our Armed Forces' future officers.

A strong and immediate response is needed. Therefore, I am directing you to enhance your respective academy programs by identifying new ways to advance a climate of dignity and respect and by more completely integrating sexual assault and harassment prevention into the full spectrum of academy life and learning. The goal of this effort is to create sustainable change to academy culture that specifically will lower the prevalence and increase reporting of sexual assault and sexual harassment. I expect that you will work collaboratively with the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office in developing these initiatives.

Report back to me on your plans and progress, through the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, by March 29, 2013.

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to the Secretary of Defense, is located in the lower right quadrant of the page.

cc:
Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy
Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy
Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy

