



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

FORCE RESILIENCY

Ms. Sharon Block
Acting Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Block:

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 C.F.R. Part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public, I request that the proposed Department of Defense (DoD) information collection, "Wingman Intervention Training (WIT) Program Evaluation," (enclosed) be processed as an emergency clearance request in accordance with 5 C.F.R. § 1320.13, Emergency Processing.

I have determined that this information must be collected prior to the time periods established under Part 1320 of the regulations and that this information collection is essential to evaluate a sexual violence prevention program for first term Airmen/Guardians. This study responds to the extensive problem of sexual harassment/assault in the military. The most recent available DoD data on sexual assault (2018) indicated that sexual assault victimization prevalence increased by 44 percent among women (the prevalence of sexual assault victimization reported by men stayed the same) from the previous year.¹ More than 20,000 Service members were the victims of sexual assault in 2018 (13,000 women and 7,500 men) but fewer than 8,000 per year reported that assault.²

This emergency clearance request is necessary due to the timing of this study in relation to the revised policies on the OMB Paperwork Reduction Act, extending OMB's oversight to DoD information collections for specific sensitive topics such as sexual assault. When this study was planned, contracted, and implemented in 2020, the new guidance requiring OMB approval for surveys with military personnel was not issued. This new OMB approval requirement represents an unexpected review element that has contract and study implications that could put the government's substantial investment at risk if not expedited. If granted, this emergency clearance request will avoid a work stoppage and major setbacks for the evaluation.

The current study is also consistent with a call from the 2021 Independent Review Commission (IRC) on Sexual Assault in the Military report (see [*Hard Truths and the Duty to Change*](#)) and the Secretary of Defense's reply to the report. The IRC made recommendations

¹ Breslin, R., Davis, E., Hylton, K., Hill, A., Klauberg, W., Petusky, M., Klahr, A. (2019). *2018 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members: Overview Report*. Report No. 2019-027. Alexandria, VA: Office of People Analytics, 26. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/AD1072334>.

² DoD SAPRO. (2021). Appendix B: Statistical Data on Sexual Assault. *Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military*, 11. https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/Appendix_B_Statistical_Data_On_Sexual_Assault_FY2020.pdf.

related to: Accountability; prevention; climate and culture; and victim care and support. In particular, the IRC noted the lack of high-quality data on sexual harassment and sexual assault. The IRC stated that prevention activities in military communities is greatly hampered by this lack of quality data that the current study will help address with the collection of up-to-date sexual assault and sexual harassment data (through anonymous survey protocols approved by the project IRB). Conducting this survey and associated program evaluation aligns with the IRC's call for greater accountability in the military services in the area of sexual assault prevention.

The Department is requesting an expedited approval for this critical evaluation to proceed. NORC has been contracted by the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) to conduct training/program evaluations for the Innovations in Sexual Assault Prevention Pilot Program (ISAPPP) under Contract/Order# GS00Q14OADU213 / 47QFPA20F0112 (GSA R9 FAS AAS Project Number ID0200065). As part of ISAPPP, NORC, in collaboration with the Department of the Air Force (DAF), is conducting the ISAPPP surveys (a baseline survey and one follow-up survey) with DAF First Term Airmen/Guardians for the purpose of program evaluation. The results will be used by the DAF to evaluate rigorously the USAF Wingman Intervention Training (WIT) and expeditiously update their prevention programming across the entire Air Force based on these results.

Because of the nature of the public health emergency related to sexual harassment and sexual assault, the urgent need for the Department to identify successful prevention programming, and the need to preserve the government's investment in this evaluation, it is impractical for DoD to consult in advance with interested agencies and members of the public in order to minimize the burden of the collection of information pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 1320.13(c). Therefore, DoD requests a 180-day emergency clearance to obtain the information required for "The Wingman Intervention Training Evaluation Air Force Survey." During the 180-day emergency clearance period, DoD will work to establish a regular clearance submission. As this request for approval concerns an urgent safety need, DoD is also seeking OMB's approval to waive the need for the Federal Register Notices otherwise required by 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(a)(1)(iv) and 1320.8(d)(1) prior to publication and implementation of this disclosure.

We would appreciate if you could please provide an approval/disapproval determination of this request to collect information under an emergency clearance by close of business on December 30, 2021.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth B. Foster
Executive Director, Force Resiliency

Enclosure:
As stated