

## SUPPORTING STATEMENT - PART A

### 2022 Spouse and Family Issues Survey – Active Duty – 0704-XXXX

#### 1. Need for the Information Collection

The 2022 Spouse and Family Issues Survey of Active Duty Spouses (SFIS-A) will serve as the primary source for reliable and generalizable survey data on the prevalence of suicide ideation and attempts by military spouses and dependents. Department of Defense (DoD) is required to report suicide data on military family members per section 567 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 “Improved Consistency in Data Collection and Reporting in Armed Forces Suicide Prevention Efforts”. This will be the first time the Department of Defense (DoD) has collected this sort of survey data for military spouses and dependents addressing suicide ideation, attempts, and vulnerability/ protective factors of suicide. Data available on suicide deaths and risk of spouses and dependents is currently limited. The majority of military family members are civilians whose suicide deaths do not occur on a military installation; as a result, the Department does not have visibility of, or jurisdiction over, these deaths and must seek other methods to obtain information.

The Defense Personnel Analytics Center (DPAC) does currently field the Active Duty Spouse Survey (ADSS) (OMB Control Number 0704-0604), however, it does not include items on suicide behavior and associated evidence-based risk and protective factors known to impact suicide ideations and behaviors. Working with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Joining Forces/Executive Office of The President, efforts were made to facilitate higher response rates and update the ADSS in 2021. The number of questions asked on the ADSS was reduced from more than 160 in 2019 to 74 as part of this effort and new topics on current issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic were added, therefore, ADSS could not accommodate a comprehensive series of questions on suicide behavior and associated evidence-based risk and protective factors. And, while the population of interest is the same as ADSS, the data collected is different. The focus of the SFIS-A is to collect data on suicide ideation and attempt among military spouses and their dependents while ADSS captures broad information on variables associated with military life such as permanent change of station moves, employment, child care, and financial well-being, for example. The information obtained through this collection is unique and is not already available for use or adaptation from another cleared source. The SFIS-A will be a critical source of data that cannot be obtained in other ways.

The survey is designed to help DoD inform programs and policies focused on strengthening resilience and mitigating suicidality in military spouses and dependents to enhance understanding of how spouse and family resilience impact force readiness and retention, and to inform the effectiveness of programs and policies under the purview of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO).

The SFIS-A will provide unique reliable data to equip policymakers with the information they need to make strategic, data-driven decisions on a vital component of the total force –

military spouses and families, providing DoD with information needed to inform programs and policies. The survey will allow for empirically-based responses to Congress related to suicide behavior, risk factors, and protective factors for military spouses and dependents. The SFIS-A would inform the DoD's understanding of spouse and dependent suicide risk, and would further inform the NDAA requirements. Congressional members have been briefed that this survey will take place and are supportive of the importance of this data to inform DoD efforts for military families.

## 2. Use of the Information

The population of interest for the 2022 SFIS-A will consist of spouses of active duty members from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force who are below flag (General Officer) rank. Eligible spouses must be currently married to an active duty member. The population is approximately 605,716 active duty spouses. In 2022, the number of survey questions will be 64 questions, including demographic items.

DPAC will administer the 2022 SFIS-A as a web-based survey with a paper survey option to maximize response rates. Based on the response data from the 2021 ADSS DPAC anticipates most responses to the SFIS-A to be completed via the web interface rather than paper. For the 2021 ADSS, 85% responded via the web and 15% respondent by paper. Selected sample spouses with a valid email address in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) will receive the following communications which include a total of 8 scheduled letters and emails with the possibility of 2 additional touchpoints based on survey responses:

- 5 letters: One letter will include a paper copy of the survey distributed to the entire sample. QR codes will be included on all letters.
- 3 emails: Email Announcement, Email Reminder #1, Email Reminder #2, and Email Reminder #3. DPAC may send 2 additional emails with approval of the DoD Survey Reviewer, based on the response rate, towards the end of the survey.

Respondents who indicate by phone, fax, postal mail, or e-mail they do not want to participate in the survey will be coded as actively refusing to participate. Information on the survey website will inform sample members (Privacy Advisory and Informed Consent Statement and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), "Once you start answering the survey, if you desire to withdraw your answers, please send an e-mail requesting this to Survey@mail.mil or leave a message any time, toll-free, at 1-800-881-5307." Upon such notification, DPAC's operations contractor will delete associated responses and code the individual as actively refusing to participate.

## 3. Use of Information Technology

Respondents may access the survey via the web on a device they select (e.g, phone, tablet, laptop). The web survey will be administered on proprietary software developed by DPAC's operations contractor, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC). Digitally signed e-mails, electronic files, and web-based technology will be used for respondent

communications and for data collection. To reduce respondent burden, web-based surveys use “smart skip” technology to ensure respondents only answer questions that are applicable to them. Respondents will be able to quickly access the web survey via QR codes. Postal notifications will also include a respondent specific QR code for respondents to quickly access the survey via mobile platforms.

4. Non-duplication

The information obtained through this collection is unique and is not already available for use or adaptation from another cleared source.

5. Burden on Small Businesses

This information collection does not impose a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small businesses or entities.

6. Less Frequent Collection

Without this survey, DoD would not have current data to guide limited resources to appropriate and effective suicide prevention programs, policies, and services supporting military spouses, their families and ultimately Service members. Less frequent collection of the data would not provide timely information, risks delaying responsiveness of policy makers based on the results, and may not capture significant trends early enough to impact outcomes. In the absence of data, policy offices and the Services may conduct their own research, increasing the potential for duplication/greater survey burden, less methodological rigor, lower response rates, and higher costs for DoD research. The SFIS-A ensures use of probability based samples to collect this data which accurately estimates the active duty spouse population.

7. Paperwork Reduction Act Guidelines

This collection of information does not require collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines delineated in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Consultation and Public Comments

Part A: PUBLIC NOTICE

A 60-Day Federal Register Notice (FRN) for the collection published on Tuesday, August 9, 2022. The 60-Day FRN citation is 87 FRN 48474.

No comments were received during the 60-Day Comment Period.

A 30-Day Federal Register Notice for the collection published on Monday, January 30, 2023. The 30-Day FRN citation is 88 FRN 5864.

## Part B: CONSULTATION

No additional consultation apart from soliciting public comments through the Federal Register was conducted for this submission.

### 9. Gifts or Payment

No payments or gifts are being offered to respondents as an incentive to participate in the collection.

### 10. Confidentiality

A Privacy Act Statement is not required for this collection because we are not requesting individuals to furnish personal information for a system of records.

The System of Record Notice (SORN) for this collection is DHRA 03 (Survey Data and Assessment [July 28, 2021, 86 FR 40498]). The SORN is located at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/07/28/2021-16054/privacy-act-of-1974-system-of-records>.

The survey is covered by a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) (Survey Database, 12/18/2020, DHRA/DPAC). PIA is published at: <https://www.dhra.mil/Portals/52/Documents/Privacy/PIA/DPAC%20-%20Survey%20Database.pdf>.

The current disposition authority for survey data is N1-330-03-001, item 8. FILE NUMBER: 1805-09 FILE TITLE: Survey and Census Database FILE DESCRIPTION: Records of census forms completed by military members, civilians, and all persons eligible for DoD benefits. Information in this database are used for policy planning purposes, manpower and benefits research, and other manpower research activities, included are: Survey and Census database master file, codebooks, record layouts, and other technical information required to use the database. OSD Records Disposition Schedules SERIES 1800 342 DISPOSITION: Permanent. Cutoff on completion of the report for the DoDCon office requiring the creation of the report. Transfer master file and system documentation to NARA at cutoff in accordance with the standards of 36 CFR 1228.270 and 36 CFR 1234. AUTHORITY: N1-330-03-00

Reports would fall under FILE NUMBER: 103-01.2 FILE TITLE: Policy Files – Evaluation FILE DESCRIPTION: Analyses, studies, and substantive correspondence and memos that evaluate or assist in the evaluation of a process, procedure, or function. These files accumulate in the offices of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, immediate offices of the Under and Assistant Secretaries of Defense, or any element of any OSD Component involved in making, promulgating, or analyzing policy relating to a Component's mission. They are not to be confused with Policy and Precedent (102-05.1), Publications (102-06.1), or Instruction (103-02.1) files. NOTE: Use 101-14 for background papers associated with policy case files. DISPOSITION: Permanent. Retire to the WNRC

when superseded or obsolete. Transfer to NARA 25 years after cutoff. AUTHORITY: N1-330-93-001, item 2 PRIVACY ACT: Not applicable

DPAC currently has an SF-115 request for disposition authority for all survey records, to include the reports, labeled DAA-0330-2021-0008. That has a temporary retention of 30 years for confidential data, permanent retention of 30 years for public use data, and permanent retention of 30 years for reports.

#### 11. Sensitive Questions

The SFIS-A includes questions regarding experiences with suicide and self-harm, suicidal ideation, plans, and attempts. The SFIS-A also asks respondents to voluntarily self-identify race and ethnicity. This data are collected for the Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO) for program evaluation and OSD metrics. The Informed Consent information will inform sample members that the survey is voluntary, that they may decline or skip questions they do not wish to answer, and identify any potential risks and benefits of participation. A certificate of confidentiality will be obtained to further protect this information.

Sensitive questions are asked on the SFIS-A because the experiences of military spouses in this area directly relate to the mission and purpose of the DSPO office, which serves military members, spouses and their families in the area of suicide prevention. There is no way to measure, report, or respond on this sensitive topic without asking such questions. The survey will take into account the potential need for support among the response population and will provide notification of the types of questions asked, and will offer links to confidential support services.

#### 12. Respondent Burden and its Labor Costs

##### Part A: ESTIMATION OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

###### 1) Collection Instrument(s)

###### SFIS

- a) Number of Respondents: 11,500
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 11,500
- d) Response: .25 hours
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 2,875 hours

###### 2) Total Submission Burden

- a) Total Number of Respondents: 11,500
- b) Total Number of Annual Responses: 11,500
- c) Total Respondent Burden Hours: 2,875 hours

##### Part B: LABOR COST OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

###### 1) Collection Instrument: SFIS

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 11,500
- b) Response Time: .25 hours

- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$28.01
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$7.00
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$80,500

2) Overall Labor Burden

- a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 11,500
- b) Total Labor Burden: \$80,500

13. Respondent Costs Other Than Burden Hour Costs

There are no annualized costs to respondents other than the labor burden costs addressed in Section 12 of this document to complete this collection.

14. Cost to the Federal Government

Part A: LABOR COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1) Collection Instrument(s)

SFIS

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 11,500
- b) Processing Time per Response: .0834 hours
- c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses : \$69.16
- d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$5.77
- e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$66,355

2) Overall Labor Burden to the Federal Government

- a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 11,500
- b) Total Labor Burden: \$66,355

Part B: OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

1) Cost Categories

- a) Equipment: \$0
- b) Printing: \$0
- c) Postage: \$126,750
- d) Software Purchases: \$0
- e) Licensing Costs: \$0
- f) Other:
  - i. \$63,000 for printing, paper, and misc. costs
  - ii. \$311,650 for contractor labor costs (calculated as in Part A)

2) Total Operational and Maintenance Cost: \$501,400

Part C: TOTAL COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1) Total Labor Cost to the Federal Government: \$66,355

2) Total Operational and Maintenance Costs: \$501,400

3) Total Cost to the Federal Government: \$567,755

15. Reasons for Change in Burden

This is a new collection with a new associated burden.

16. Publication of Results

Results will be reported as needed in fulfillment of section 567 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 as well as for others requests as needed. The results will be provided to DSPO who may use it in their reporting to DoD leadership and Congress. Some results may also be included by DSPO in the DoD Annual Suicide Report.

17. Non-Display of OMB Expiration Date

We are not seeking approval to omit the display of the expiration date of the OMB approval on the collection instrument.

18. Exceptions to "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Submissions"

We are not requesting any exemptions to the provisions stated in 5 CFR 1320.9.