



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

MAY - 3 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Internal Review Team on Racial Disparities in the Investigative and Military Justice Systems

Racial disparities in the investigative and military justice systems have been a problem for far too long, and it is incumbent on the Department to take immediate action to correct these issues wherever they exist. Our people deserve nothing less.

To address this issue, I am directing the establishment of an Internal Review Team (IRT) on Racial Disparities in the Military Justice System. This review will be a 3-month effort that will focus on addressing the root causes of racial disparities in the investigative and military justice systems.

The review will provide actionable recommendations that the Department can implement to improve policies, programs, processes, and resources to address these disparities. It will incorporate ongoing work within the Military Departments, and complement independent external reviews of this issue. This review will be a subset of the broader and more comprehensive Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) initiatives the Department is already pursuing under the leadership of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)).

The IRT will be co-led by two subject matter experts (SMEs): one with expertise in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility and the other a general/flag officer with command-level experience and expertise in the military justice system. Additionally, the IRT leads will be supported by a core group of executive-level SMEs. To that end, I am directing the Military Services to each nominate members, as follows below, to serve on the IRT on a full-time basis for 90 days (after which, the time commitment may be less than full-time, but may last up to 6 months) for my final review and selection.

- Operational Lead with the following qualifications: minimum two-star grade; experience as a General Court-Martial Convening Authority; operational career field representing a core Service competency (e.g., combat arms, aviation, Navy Line Officer)
- One Senior Executive Service (SES) or general/flag officer member of a Military Criminal Investigative Organization
- One SES or general/flag officer SME on military justice from the Judge Advocate General/Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps;



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- One SES or general/flag officer SME in DEIA; and
- One GS-14/GS-15 or O-5/O-6 to serve as an action officer and liaison between the IRT and the action officer's Military Service.

The USD(P&R) will identify an Executive Secretary to administratively support the IRT.

To inform its recommendations, the IRT will meet with SMEs, may establish ad hoc subcommittees focusing on specific elements of the investigative and military justice processes, and utilize Military Department-level and Military Service-level assessments and reviews related to racial disparity in the military justice system and investigative processes (e.g., the Air Force's 2020 and 2021 Independent Racial Disparity Reviews), to be provided by the Military Departments.

The IRT will commence its work no later than June 1, 2022, and produce a charter for my signature within 10 days. The IRT will provide its findings to me by August 24, 2022.

Please provide all of your documents associated with reviews or assessments you have conducted regarding racial disparities in the military justice or investigative processes, and your IRT nominees (names, bios/resumes, and contact information) for the positions described above to my point of contact for this matter, Julie Blanks, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, at julie.a.blanks.civ@mail.mil.

It is my expectation that the Department is timely and thorough in addressing all requests made by the IRT for the duration of its review. Thank you for your support of this very important matter.

