

## SUPPORTING STATEMENT – PART B

### B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

#### 1. Description of the Activity

This submission corresponds to research tasks funded by the Department of Navy (DoN) Office of Force Resiliency (OFR; Agreement #NMR-24-11717) and aligns with the Congressional requirements to improve the prevention of and response to sexual trauma affecting male service members in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Pub. L. 114-92). In addition, this submission aligns with the Department of Defense (DoD) Prevention Plan of Action 2.0, 2022-2024.

Sexual trauma is ubiquitous in the United States military and is a nation-wide crisis affecting people of all genders. The study's sponsor commissioned this research effort to investigate the help-seeking among men who experienced military sexual trauma (MST). Although servicemen are less likely than servicewomen to be sexually victimized while in the military, the actual numbers of men and women who are sexually assaulted while in the military are roughly equal. However, active duty men are substantially less likely to report MST relative to active duty women counterparts (DoD Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military, FY2021). In the civilian sector, a study of over 3,300 survivors of sexual violence found that only one male survivor sought therapy for every 7 female survivors, and male survivors waited significantly longer than females to seek help following sexual assault (Asadi, 2021). Unfortunately, research to date has focused primarily on the experiences of female victims (Langdridge et al., 2023); as a result, there is a significant gap in information about military sexual victimization and associated help-seeking behavior among male victims. The present study will help to fill this gap by conducting interviews with men who have experienced military sexual violence. Furthermore, and to support OFR sexual assault response prevention and response efforts, interview data will be used in concert with a systematic literature review and archival data analysis of deidentified data to develop a set of policy recommendations.

To achieve these aims, male survivors of MST will be invited to participate in a phone narrative/semi-structured interview about their MST experience(s) and whether they sought help following MST. First, we will recruit male active duty Sailors via email through Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) records. We will be working with DMDC to obtain contact information for Sailors who meet our study criteria. These Sailors will be sent an email invitation for study participation (reviewed and approved by NHRC's Public Affairs Officer and attached to this submission package response). Emails will be sent in groups of 250 until the maximum number of participants are reached. All Sailors will be informed that participation in the study is completely voluntary. Emails will include links to an online form where they may learn more about and sign up for the interview study.

If needed, we may recruit Sailors via online and paper flyers, which will allow them to volunteer without being publicly singled out or directly identified. We plan to focus

recruitment on active duty service members but will extend recruitment to veterans who discharged from the military within 2 years of service if recruitment of active duty personnel proves challenging. In other words, we will recruit active duty Sailors and if we cannot meet our recruitment goal, we will extend recruitment to U.S. Navy veterans who discharged from the military within 2 years of service. Print and online advertisements (reviewed and approved by NHRC's PAO) directed at the male active duty population will be designed and posted on public message boards on military bases and other community locations (e.g., military housing, VA buildings) or shared virtually with military networks through purposeful chain-referral strategies (i.e., snowballing). Copies of written authorization from identified organizations will be provided to NHRC IRB. Additionally, leaders in the military community may be contacted directly to request permission to post flyers at their locations, or to ask that they distribute information about the study to potentially interested parties. Flyers will include Quick Response (QR) codes that will direct them to an online form where they may learn more about and sign up for the interview study.

Respondents will provide their consent to participate and their general availability, phone or email contact preferences, and contact information for the investigator to schedule their interview. The interview will cover general questions about their personal characteristics and military background and will include a discussion of the respondent's MST experience, decision-making processes, and help-seeking behaviors following MST. Given that MST survivors may be hard to reach, a purposeful chain-referral strategy (i.e., snowballing) will be also used to recruit respondents for the study. Following the interview, the interviewer will ask the respondent to share study sign-up information with other military personnel who may be interested in study participation.

The universe of potential participants for this interview includes all male active duty Sailors who experienced MST. Though unexpected, should data collection wane, recruitment will extend to recent veterans (i.e., veterans discharged from service within 2 years of study participation).

## 2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

### a. Statistical methodologies for stratification and sample selection:

This study uses an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach and, in line with qualitative methods literature on IPA, 20 interviews is sufficient to reach thematic saturation. The sample size was based on current standards of practice for qualitative inquiry with IPA. The recommended sample size for IPA research in the qualitative methods literature is between 12 and 25 participants. With 20 participants, our study sample size fits within these recommended boundaries. There is no stratification. Power analysis is not required for this research.

### b. Estimation procedures:

Interview results will not be adjusted or weighted. The aim of this study is to identify determinants of help-seeking behaviors and help-seeking experiences among male MST survivors. Study findings will be used to develop formal recommendations for policy and to develop technical reports, presentations, and manuscripts for dissemination within and outside of the DoD.

c. Degree of accuracy needed for the Purpose discussed in the justification:

Interviews will glean rich, in-depth information about help-seeking experiences to help inform the development of policy recommendations. The focus of this study is on a particular context and particular phenomenon among a specific group; thus, generalizability of study results is not an expected attribute of this research.

d. Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures: N/A

e. Use of periodic or cyclical data collections to reduce respondent burden: N/A

### 3. Maximization of Response Rates, Non-response, and Reliability

Participants will be recruited via DMDC email outreach or online and paper flyers, which will allow them to volunteer without being publicly singled out or directly identified. Interviews will be completed during off-duty hours, and participants will receive a \$40 electronic gift card code for their participation. To increase the accuracy and reliability of responses, study participants will be provided with information about the study, including the risks and benefits of participation, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of study participation. Participants will be reminded that they may provide as much or as little information as they choose, skip any question they do not want to answer, and end the interview at any time. Interviewers will remind participants of data protection procedures prior to beginning the interview. The voluntary and confidential nature of this study is likely to increase the candidness of responses, though this cannot be assured.

### 4. Tests of Procedures

Interviewers will be thoroughly trained in sensitive, narrative/semi-structured interviewing and will conduct mock interviews before data collection with study respondents. Experts in sexual assault research, including the study Principal Investigator, reviewed the interview guide to determine appropriateness for project aims and sponsor priorities.

### 5. Statistical Consultation and Information Analysis

a. Provide names and telephone number of individual(s) consulted on statistical aspects of the design.

Qualitative data analysis falls within the statistical expertise of the project PI and Co-I listed below.

b. Provide name and organization of person(s) who will actually collect and analyze the collected information.

Kristen Walter, PhD (PI; interpretation of study findings)

Karen Tannenbaum, PhD (Co-I; data analysis, interpretation of study findings)

Lauren Hurtado, BS (Study coordinator; data collection, data analysis, interpretation of study findings)

Sarah Carinio, BS (Research staff; data collection and analysis)

Katherine Rose, BS (Research staff; data collection)

Michael Vieu, BA (Research staff; data collection)