

SUPPORTING STATEMENT - PART A

Understanding Soldiers' Experiences with Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination – OMB Control Number 0704-0644

1. Need for the Information Collection

This study will use focus groups discussions with Soldiers and leaders (i.e., Soldiers in command positions) to gain a deeper understanding of what Soldiers actually experience during sexual harassment (SH) and gender discrimination (GD) events than can be gleaned from quantitative survey data. Focus group discussions will focus on environmental factors that contribute to SH/GD, including the general climate and culture in Army units that may contribute to or prevent these behaviors from occurring. Results of this study will help the Army to identify critical gaps in current prevention training efforts and materials from a diverse range of perspectives (i.e., inclusive of differing rank/grade levels, by gender).

Analysis of qualitative data collected through focus group discussions will produce foundational knowledge to enable evidence-based implementation of the Independent Revision Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military (IRC) **Recommendations 2.3** (“Implement community-level prevention strategies unique to Service members’ environments.”) **and 2.3a** (“The Services and the National Guard Bureau should resource and implement prevention strategies at organizational and community levels,” under POAM milestones 7-15) in the Army.

Study findings are also directly related to a number of additional IRC recommendations, including Recommendations 2.1c / 2.4 / 3.2 / 3.5 / 3.5a / 3.5b / 3.6 / 4.4c / 4.4d.

Analysis of qualitative data collected through focus group discussions will produce foundational knowledge to enable evidence-based implementation of a number of additional IRC recommendations, including development and delivery of “informed” prevention messages (**Recommendation 2.1c**, “The Services and the NGB should equip all leaders to develop and deliver informed prevention messages in formal and informal settings”); modernization of prevention education to reflect younger Soldiers’ experiences (**Recommendation 2.4**, “Modernize prevention education and skill-building to reflect today’s generation of Service members”); contextualization of prevention education within Service Values (**Recommendation 3.2**, “USD(P&R) should direct the Services to educate the force about sexual harassment and sexual assault within the context of the Services’ core values”); and the criticality of improved training modules for leader response to sexual assault and sexual harassment (**Recommendation 4.4c**, “Revise and update training modules on appropriate response to sexual assault and sexual harassment in professional military education for Officers and Non-commissioned Officers”). Execution of Task 5, as outlined in the Project Description, “Develop training curricula for prevention of sexual harassment/gender discrimination based on findings from discussions and focus groups,” and analysis of qualitative data collected through the focus group protocols, specifically Section D (Conclusion/Training) of “FG Protocol_Jr Enlisted and Jr Officers” and

“FG Protocol_Mid Level Leadership,” will also produce foundational knowledge to enable evidence-based implementation of IRC Recommendations 2.1c, 2.4, 3.2, and 4.4c in the Army.

Analysis of qualitative data collected through the focus group discussions will also produce foundational knowledge to directly support evidence-based implementation of IRC recommendations related to the criticality of qualitative data, including leader selection, development, and evaluation (**Recommendation 3.5**, “Use qualitative data to select, develop, and evaluate the right leaders for command positions”); empirical understanding of what “right” leadership looks like (**Recommendation 3.5a**, “Use qualitative data to select and develop the right leaders”); empirical foundations for “meaningful” use of qualitative data in leadership performance evaluations (**Recommendation 3.5b**, “Include a meaningful narrative section in performance evaluations for Officers and Non-Commissions Officers”); and empirical foundations to support requiring climate for the reduction of sexual harassment and sexual assault as a fundamental leader development (**Recommendation 3.6**, “Building a climate for the reduction of sexual harassment and sexual assault as a fundamental leader development requirement”). Analysis of qualitative data collected through the focus groups protocols, specifically Section C (Discussion of Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Behaviors) of “FG Protocol_Jr Enlisted and Jr Officers” and “FG Protocol_Mid Level Leadership” and focus group discussion protocols, specifically Section B (Understanding Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment) of “Protocol_Senior Level Leadership” and “Protocol_Installation Commanders,” will also produce foundational knowledge to enable evidence-based implementation of IRC Recommendations 3.5, 3.5a, 3.5b, and 3.6 in the Army.

Finally, this project’s methodology, as well as analysis of qualitative data collected through the focus group discussions, will produce foundational knowledge to directly support and enable evidence-based implementation of the IRC’s recommendation to use research to identify root problems and enable input from survivors (**Recommendation 4.4d**, “Use an action research model to identify root problems, test interventions, and create best practices with survivors’ input”).

2. Use of the Information

We will be collecting qualitative data via focus groups of active-duty Soldiers (under the rank of flag officer) across six CONUS installations. These focus groups cover a number of topics including unit members’ understanding of what behaviors constitute SH and GD; factors that contribute to the climate for SH and GD (i.e., risk and protective factors); reporting and intervention by unit members and leaders; and recommendations for what Army prevention training should include.

Focus groups will be conducted separately for men and women, officers and enlisted, and by rank (junior, mid-level, and senior). There are a total of six focus group protocols: junior enlisted/officer (E1-E4/O1-O2), mid-level enlisted/officer (E5-E6/O3-O4), and senior enlisted/officer (E7-E9/O5-O6). These focus groups are intended to be 60 minutes. A 30-

minute discussion protocol tailored to installation commanders (generally at the O6 level) is also included. In total, we anticipate including:

- Jr. Enlisted (E1-E4)/Jr. Officers (O1-O2): up to 500 individuals
- Mid-Level Leaders (E5-E6/O3-O4): up to 500 individuals
- Senior Level Leaders (E7-E9; O5-O6): up to 320 individuals
- Installation Commanders: up to 6 individuals

These installations vary in their risk of experiencing sexual harassment (identified from a prior Army-sponsored RAND study, *Organizational Characteristics Associated with Risk of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the U.S. Army*; research report available here: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1013-1.html): two installations are high-risk for both men and women, one is high-risk for women only, one is high-risk for men only, and two are non-high-risk for both men and women. Within installations, climate data from the Defense Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) (for additional information, see: <https://www.opa.mil/research-analysis/opa-surveys/defense-organizational-climate-survey>) will be used to identify units that are in the “top” and “bottom” quartiles in terms of a composite measure of culture and climate characteristics associated with sexual harassment. This composite measure was based on a nearing-completion Army-sponsored RAND study (*Determining the Climate Predictive of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault in the U.S. Army: Identifying and Developing Measures of Unit-Level Climate*; note this research report is undergoing final stages of peer review and has not been cleared for public release). These climate/culture characteristics include cohesion, fairness, inclusion, leadership support (immediate supervisor), transformational leadership (organizational leader/senior NCO), and workplace hostility. The most recent DEOCS available from CY2022 will be used for selection.

At each of the six CONUS installations, Soldiers will be randomly selected with the help of an installation POC based on their 1) gender, 2) officer/enlisted status, 3) pay grade, and 4) unit membership. The analysis strategy will rely on variation across these different groups, as well as across the different installations (selected based on risk) to better understand Soldiers’ experiences and the environments in which SH and GD events do or do not occur.

Site visits will occur over two days. A total of 32 focus group discussions are possible; if there are no Soldiers who meet the eligibility criteria for a particular focus group discussion, then that discussion will be eliminated (e.g., if there are no female senior officers in the selected units). Each focus group will have 6-8 participants. One discussion will be held with the installation commander; they may choose to include members of their support staff if they wish. A mock schedule is included with this information collection request.

Consent will be verbally obtained at the beginning of each focus group or discussion and participants will be provided with a streamlined version of the consent language, along with a study description, information about whom to contact with additional questions, and a list of resources should the participant need them during or after the session. This form also contains a generic study email (available only to the study team), should participants want to provide additional information after the session. Verbal consent is

preferred so that the study does not retain any paper record of participants' identities. The consent form is included with this information collection request.

Dedicated notetakers will take verbatim notes during each focus group discussion. These notes will be immediately cleaned to remove any identifying information (e.g., names, titles). Notes will be entered into a Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) software package for analyzing qualitative data (e.g., NVivo) and will be stored on RAND-issued laptops and RAND servers, both of which require two-factor authentication. A Data Safety Plan has been approved for the study.

A peer-reviewed, sponsor-approved, and an Army Office of the Chief of Public Affairs (OCPA)-approved, published research report will be the end result and successful effect of the information collection as a whole.

3. Use of Information Technology

Zero percent of responses will be submitted electronically. Because focus groups and discussions are in-person, we are not using electronic submissions.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

The information obtained through this collection is unique. There is no similar, already available information that has been collected or is available for use or adaptation from another cleared source.

No other **systematic collection of qualitative data** (focus groups, interviews) on sexual harassment or gender discrimination currently exists within the Army. DoD's biennial Workplace Gender Relations Survey (WGRA) collects **quantitative survey data** on Service Members' experiences with sexual harassment and gender discrimination.

5. Burden on Small Businesses

This information collection does not impose an economic impact, significant or otherwise, on any small businesses or entities. All respondents will be enlisted Army Soldiers, NCOs, and officers.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This is a one-time data collection effort. If the data is not collected, it will not exist and the Army will not be able to update its prevention programming based on the results of systematically collected qualitative data.

7. Paperwork Reduction Act Certification

There are no special circumstances that would require this collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines delineated in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Solicitation of Comments

A 30-Day Federal Register Notice for the collection published on Friday, May 5, 2023. The 30-Day FRN citation is 88 FR 29101.

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.

A System of Record Notice (SORN) is not required for this collection because records are not retrievable by PII.

A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) is not required for this collection because PII is not being collected electronically.

Per the approved human subjects protocol, all data collected from the focus group discussions will be destroyed three years after the conclusion of the study (approximately May 2028).

11. Sensitive Questions

Though we are not asking participants directly about their own experiences with sexual harassment and gender discrimination, we are asking about what may be happening to other Soldiers in the respondent's own unit, the context in which these events occur, and how leadership would respond to such events, were they to occur. In order to better understand both the nature of Soldiers' experiences with sexual harassment and gender discrimination as well as the contexts in which they occur (to include risk and protective factors) we have to ask these questions. Although these questions do involve sensitive question topics (i.e., sexual behavior or attitudes), we have deliberately constructed the protocols' approach to not ask participants directly about their own experiences (i.e., instead, to ask about what may be happening to other Soldiers in the respondent's unit, the context in which events occur, and how leadership would respond to such events, were they likely to occur). In so doing, we have aimed to ensure that the nature of the questions posed to participants is significantly less sensitive than if the protocols were to involve asking respondents directly about their own experiences.

The necessity of asking these questions stems from the fact that information obtained through this collection will be unique. No other **systematic collection of qualitative data** (focus groups, interviews) on sexual harassment or gender discrimination currently exists within the Army. DoD's biennial Workplace Gender Relations Survey (WGRA) collects **quantitative survey data** on Service Members' experiences with sexual harassment and gender discrimination

12. Respondent Burden and its Labor Costs

Part A: ESTIMATION OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

1) Collection Instrument(s)

Junior enlisted/officer focus groups

- a) Number of Respondents: 500
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 500
- d) Response Time: 60 minutes
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 500 hours

Mid-level enlisted/officer focus groups

- a) Number of Respondents: 500
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 500
- d) Response Time: 60 minutes
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 500 hours

Senior enlisted/officer focus groups

- a) Number of Respondents: 320
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 320
- d) Response Time: 60 minutes
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 320 hours

Installation commanders

- a) Number of Respondents: 6
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 6
- d) Response Time: 30 minutes
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 3 hours

2) Total Submission Burden (Summation or average based on collection)

- a) Total Number of Respondents: 1,326
- b) Total Number of Annual Responses: 1,326
- c) Total Respondent Burden Hours: 1,323 hours

Part B: LABOR COST OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

1) Collection Instrument(s)

Junior enlisted/officer focus groups

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 500
- b) Response Time: 60 minutes
- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$23.25
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$23.25
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$11,625

Mid-level enlisted/officer focus groups

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 500
- b) Response Time: 60 minutes
- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$32.26
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$32.26
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$16,130

Senior enlisted/officer focus groups

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 320
- b) Response Time: 60 minutes
- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$46.00
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$32.66
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$14,720

Installation commanders

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 6
- b) Response Time: 30 minutes
- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$66.44
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$66.44
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$199.32

2) Overall Labor Burden

- a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 1,326
- b) Total Labor Burden: \$42,674

The Respondent hourly wage was determined by using the 2023 Active Duty Pay Table (<https://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/charts>). For the Junior, Mid-Level, and Senior Enlisted/Officer Focus Groups, we assumed an equal distribution of Enlisted and Officer personnel. Therefore, estimated wages are based on an average of their wages.

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)
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 0
 - b) Processing Time per Response: 0 hours
 - c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses: \$0
 - d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$0
 - e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$0
- 2) Overall Labor Burden to the Federal Government
 - a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 0
 - b) Total Labor Burden: \$0

Federal Government incurs no costs through processing any of the collection instruments. Federal Government employees will not process collection instrument responses. The only cost to the Federal Government is through typical Action Officer (AO) duties for the contracted labor (e.g., coordination of and attendance at meetings and briefings, review of draft product documentation). All AO labor burden is embedded in the AO's assigned/typical federal government duties, with no additional cost to the federal government.

Part B: OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

- 1) Cost Categories
 - a) Equipment: \$0
 - b) Printing: \$0
 - c) Postage: \$0
 - d) Software Purchases: \$0
 - e) Licensing Costs: \$0
 - f) Other: \$0
- 2) Total Operational and Maintenance Cost: \$0

Part C: TOTAL COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- 1) Total Labor Cost to the Federal Government: \$0
- 2) Total Operational and Maintenance Costs: \$0
- 3) Total Cost to the Federal Government: \$0

15. Reasons for Change in Burden

This is a new collection with a new associated burden.

16. Publication of Results

The results of this information collection are intended to be published as a peer-reviewed, sponsor-approved, and OCPA-approved RAND publication. The projected title of publication is *Soldier Experiences with Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment* and the projected publication date December 2024. Depending on the receipt of all necessary approvals, data collection is expected to occur between May and August 2023. Data analysis will occur between September 2023 and February 2024. Final report writing will occur between March 2024 and June 2024. Peer, sponsor, and OCPA reviews will occur between July and November 2024. These dates are all estimates.

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.