

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES (DACOWITS) MEETING REPORT

October 27-28, 2003

DACOWITS held a meeting October 27-28, 2003 at the Hilton Hotel Crystal City at National Airport, 2399 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA. Members and other attendees are listed in enclosures (1) and (2), respectively. The general purpose of the meeting was for the Committee members to create/review the annual report, with emphasis on the report's recommendations. The meeting was open to the public.

On **Monday, October 27, 2003**, LtGen Carol Mutter, USMC, Retired, Chair, DACOWITS, opened the meeting at 8:47 a.m. She welcomed everyone, including Her Royal Highness Colonel Princess Aisha Bint al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Director, Directorate of Women's Affairs, Jordanian Armed Forces and Dr. Irene Trowell-Harris, Director, Center for Women Veterans, Department of Veterans Affairs, Ex-Officio to DACOWITS.

The whole day was designated Committee time with a 15-minute public forum scheduled for 4:45 p.m. However, nobody had advised the Committee they wished to speak or hand out any items, so the whole day was the Committee's. LtGen Mutter started business by reviewing the Committee's voting guidelines, excerpted from the DACOWITS Handbook. She then asked Dr. Lynda Davis and COL Ladd Pattillo, USAR, Retired, members, to explain the process they used to draft the report's findings and recommendations. Dr. Davis explained her approach. First, she looked at how previous DACOWITS committees made recommendations. Second, she reviewed the body of the report and extracted findings. These findings were lengthy, but were a good basis for creating recommendations. Third, she broke down the findings into the three topic areas and then further organized them by themes. Fourth, she drafted recommendations from the findings. Dr. Davis stated she stayed away from recommendations not achievable within the scope of DACOWITS' responsibility, and made recommendations that added value and were achievable. General Mutter asked members to speak up if they felt something was left out, and also indicated that "achievable" should be thought of in the long-term. There was a short discussion that an introduction should be added to the recommendations to set the tone, i.e., the current climate is different than it was six months ago.

The Committee members took several minutes to read the draft findings. Then they went directly to the draft recommendations to begin discussion and voting. Before any voting was done, it was noted that Ms. Julie Hamre authorized LtGen Carol Mutter to act as her proxy and Mrs. Catherine Aspy authorized COL D. Ladd Pattillo to act as her proxy. The Committee proceeded to review the recommendations in the following order throughout the day: Personnel Retention, Support During Deployment, and Women's Health Care Issues.

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5:45 p.m.

On **Tuesday, October 28, 2003**, the meeting convened at 8:40 a.m. The Chair gave an overview of the day's events. The Committee then finished its discussion and voting on recommendations. As Mrs. Constance Horner was unable to be present in the morning, she asked COL D. Ladd Pattillo to act as her proxy during the morning voting session. Enclosure (3) presents the recommendations and requests for information that the Committee discussed October 27-28 and the voting record.

Dr. Davis then volunteered to streamline the findings and to combine the Findings and Recommendations sections within the next week. Next, the Committee discussed the sequencing of the recommendations, and decided who would brief which recommendations to Dr. Chu and Mr. Abell later in the afternoon. Ms. Ricky Silberman and Ms. Virginia Rowell, members, then volunteered to review and revise the Executive Summary by November 12; all members agreed to review the Summary and provide comments by November 17.

Next, the Committee decided they would like to have everyone sign the report. The staff will prepare a signature page, and members will sign the page at the next meeting. The Committee reviewed their requests for information and agreed to let them stand as is.

In the afternoon, the Committee decided that they would not write statements of appreciation. Members felt they had recognized noteworthy programs and processes in the report itself. This would not preclude them from thinking about statements of appreciation next year.

The Chair briefly reviewed the appendices of the report with the members. She then asked members to provide any feedback on the appendices to the staff and to vote on whether to include Appendices I and L in the final report by Nov 3.

The members then discussed the report's distribution plan. Members agreed to a wide distribution of the report, but also recognized that the Office of the Under Secretary of Personnel and Readiness would have final approval on distribution.

Dr. Janice Laurence, former Research Professor, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, briefed the Committee on the report she and Dr. Armando Estrada recently completed: "[Content Analysis of DACOWITS Installation Visits \(1995, 1997, 2001\).](#)(.ppt)"

This brief was a good segue into a discussion of the topics for FY04. The Committee discussed exploring deployment effects further, possibly visiting installations where a large concentration of those who had returned from deployments were stationed. Most members also seemed to think a further, more in-depth look at female officer retention was in order. Members further discussed the hostile work environment as a possible topic. Some members cautioned against taking on the topic of sexual assault or sexual harassment, stating the members would have to fully understand the definition of the terms and how each is measured. The Chair then asked members to think about FY04 topics some more and provide input to the staff by November 12. Selection of topics will be a major part of the next

DACOWITS meeting, scheduled for November 20-21, 2003.

Dr. David S. C. Chu, Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) and Mr. Charles S. Abell, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) joined the Committee at 4:00 p. m. The Chair presented a quick summary of the year's efforts, resulting in the report with the Committee's recommendations. Committee members then took turns presenting the recommendations to Dr. Chu and Mr. Abell. Both officials interacted with the members, asking questions and expressing appreciation for the Committee's valuable insights as well as reinforcement of the importance of some evolving DoD programs and policies. At the end of the discussion, both Dr. Chu and Mr. Abell thanked the members for responding to the issues they raised at the beginning of the year, working hard over the year, and presenting their information in a well-organized manner.

Dr. Chu mentioned the challenge of separation as a possible topic for the coming year. He stated that many military personnel are deployed overseas alone (e.g., Iraq and Afghanistan) while their families are back home. This is likely to be the situation for the next several years. What will be the impact on the Services? How will we respond to this separation? What will support services need to look like? What really matters to Service members and their families? Answering these questions will help the Department to concentrate their efforts on that which is important.

Dr. Chu then presented Mrs. Constance Horner with a certificate of appreciation and a small departing gift. Mrs. Horner expressed her thanks and her deep respect for the men and women in uniform.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Report submitted by

LCDR Shannon E. M. Thaeler, USN

Operations Officer, DACOWITS

Attachments:

As stated

Report certified by

LtGen Carol Mutter, USMC (Ret)

FY 2003-04 DACOWITS Chair