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Defense Department Press Briefing via Teleconference with Maj. Gen Patton and Lt. Col. Galbreath on the Annual Military Academy Sexual Assault Report

MS. CYNTHIA SMITH: We've allocated 30 minutes for Maj. Gen. Gary Patton, the director of the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, to discuss with you all today the findings of the annual Military Academy Sexual Assault Report.

You guys did receive the executive summary and the SecDef memo, so we'll allow Maj. Gen. Patton a 10 minute to 15 minute introduction, and then we'll leave the remaining 15 minutes for Q&A. I'll just go down the list of the folks that have RSVP'd to see if you have – if you have a question.

And once again, let me reiterate, if you have questions for specific academies, please – please contact them.

General Patton, I'll turn it over to you.

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Okay, thank you, Cynthia.

I think somebody – (inaudible) – either joining or dropping off. I'm just gonna talk through the beeps and the people joining here, being respectful of everybody's time.

I want to thank everybody for being on the line here today, and so I'll just start off with a couple points and then leave some time for questions and answers.

So today the department released its annual report on sexual harassment and violence at the military service academies. This report shows that sexual assault and sexual harassment remain persistent problems at the academies.

Congress requires the Department of Defense annually to report on the effectiveness of our policies, our training and procedures to eliminate sexual harassment and sexual violence at the service academies.

And as directed by law, this report this year consists of self-assessments from each of the academies in a scientific anonymous survey of cadets and midshipmen.

And it's important – just want to make sure that that point is understood, that there are two components to the report. And I'm going to be referring to that survey piece of the – of the report later on in my points, and also probably in your questions.

Today, the – we submitted from the department to Congress – we submitted the annual report, and we posted the report, along with the results of this survey I just referenced. And you can find that on www.sapr.mil.

And also, I thought Cynthia mentioned that she has also provided the memorandum that Secretary Panetta has signed and – and released, as well. And this is a memorandum that he wrote and issued to the department secretaries of the Navy, the Air Force and the Army.

I'd like to take just a moment to review three key findings in the annual report. And the first piece is on reports. The report shows – the annual report shows that there were 80 reports of sexual assault made at the service academies during this year, and that represents a 23 percent increase from the previous academic year.

Overall, the number of sexual assault reports at the academies has been on an upward trend since the academic year 2008. And here's – this is an important point. Because sexual assault is a – is a grossly underreported crime, not only in the military but also in society, we view an increase in reports to be a positive trend that's indicative of increase in victim confidence, and especially when you compare the reports – and I'll get to this in my next point – but when you compare the reports to the prevalence, which the survey reflects.

We know that the – the reports of sexual assault – again, it's an underreported crime, so we view any report being positive; because it means that there's a victim that has made the report, because they've made a report is receiving some sort of care. And if it's an unrestricted report, which means it's an open report that's shared with law enforcement and change of command and so forth, that – that an unrestricted report means that now we can take all the measures to hold offenders appropriately accountable.

That's why reporting – an increase in reporting is a positive trend.

So I'm gonna move to the second point, and the second piece from the report, and that has to do with prevalence. Prevalence is essentially occurrence, and we use the survey that I mentioned earlier as the measure for prevalence.

Again, knowing that sexual assault is underreported, we used the data from the service academy gender relations survey, which is submitted anonymously by cadets and midshipmen, to determine the prevalence or occurrence of unwanted sexual contact.

"Unwanted sexual contact" is a term that we use on the survey, but it relates directly to the crimes of sexual assault that we have under our military Uniform Code of Military Justice. And it ranges from rape and includes sexual assault, forcible sodomy, attempts at those crimes, and also aggravated and abusive sexual contact. That's the full range of crimes under the umbrella term for the survey, unwanted sexual contact.

So the findings of the survey show that the prevalence rates among these surveyed women and men at the academy of unwanted sexual contact are essentially unchanged from the 2010 surveys, which are the last ones we administered at the academies. These rates are 12 percent for women and two percent for men, and these figures are the combined survey results of men and women, cadets and midshipmen across all of the

three academies – Army, Air Force and Navy.

So that's my summary point on the second piece of the report I'm highlighting.

And I'll move on to the third piece, and that has to do with sexual harassment. The survey we administered also shows no significant change in the prevalence of sexual harassment, except for decreases among women in Air Force and men at the Naval Academy. And we recognize that eliminating sexual harassment is critical to preventing sexual assault.

We know from the survey respondents – that those who experienced a sexual assault in the past year, the vast majority of those people also experienced sexual harassment. So this is an important correlation, and it gets at establishing a climate – a non-permissive climate or environment in which the – the solution to this problem is an environment – creating a non-permissive environment where sexual harassment, sexist behavior, stalking, and these types of behaviors are not condoned, tolerated or ignored. And we know that that would also contribute to establishing an environment where sexual assault is – would – would be reduced. So it's important that we survey the sexual harassment and we address that point, as well.

So the memo that Cynthia gave you from Secretary Panetta calls for a strong and immediate response, recognizing the – the prevalence rates as essentially unchanged over the past several years. Secretary Panetta expressed his concern that we've not achieved greater progress, not enough progress in preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment among academy cadets and midshipmen.

And from the memo he's directed two things within the next 90 days. First, the academies – the department secretaries and the academies to go out and review their programs for new ways to advance a climate of dignity and respect; and, secondly, to look at ways to more fully integrate previously of sexual harassment and sexual assault into the full spectrum of academy life and learning.

So in – in summary, the leaders in our military – from Secretary Panetta down to the academies' leaders, the staff, the faculty, the cadets, the midshipmen – we have to all be committed to ensuring that prevention efforts are strong, victims are getting the care they need, and offenders are held appropriately accountable, and that proper support is offered to cadets and midshipmen, as we all take aim at providing an academy environment that's free from sexual harassment and free from sexual assault.

So with that, I'm happy to answer any questions you have on the overall findings of the report. And just to reiterate, if you have some drill-down details specifics you're looking at for one of the three academies, I'm probably gonna refer you to the service who are prepared to take those questions in a separate contact with them.

(CROSSTALK)

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: So with that, I'll throw back to Cynthia for – how you want to handle the question?

MS. SMITH: Okay, great, sir.

We'll just go down the list to see – and to allow everybody a chance to ask a question real quickly here.

Claudette do you have a question?

Q: I have a clarification and then a question. In the initial statement I got, it said it was a biannual survey. That's actually a biennial survey. The (off mic).

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, let me explain that. Yeah, that survey is administered every two years. So

whatever the – the right descriptor is, it's administered every two years. The way that the survey and the annual reporting scheme works at the academy is that, on – on certain years the report includes a survey and an academy self-assessment and on the other years, in the two-year cycle, it includes a – a DOD assessment and focus groups, which – with the cadets and midshipmen.

So the one – the report we're issuing today is a product of the self-assessment and the survey, and then the report next year will be the focus group and the DOD assessment.

Q: Okay, thank you, sir.

So then my actual question is, was there any increase or decrease in the student population at the academies?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, that – that's probably a question we'll take and get the specific numbers for you. But our assessment is that the academy populations have been relatively stable. And – you know, I know that what the – the current enrollments are and so forth, and we got the breakout by – by men and women. I don't have the growth or the population changes, rather, of each of the academies.

So I'm gonna – I'm going to ask Cynthia to take that question, and that's something we can get to you in terms of looking at – I think probably where you're going at is looking at the population in previous survey years and the population today and – and that sort of thing. And I don't have that in front of me.

MS. SMITH: Actually, Claudette I think that would be a question for you to ask of the services, service academies. Okay, Jared? Is Jared Serbu in?

Jared, do you have a question?

Q: I am. General, as you say, sexual assault is underreported across society. What's your level of confidence that you're accurately capturing the prevalence of sexual assault with the survey, recognizing it's an anonymous tool? But – but is there any concern that victims might not be acknowledging that they had been victims even in an anonymous forum?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, we have confidence in that survey. I mean, it's the – it's the – it is, really, we consider, the best indication that we have. And we know that the actual reporting, like you mentioned, unrestricted and restricted reports that come in, across the military, the active duty military, we see only about 14 percent of the actual crimes reported by an unrestricted or a restricted report; 86 percent go unreported. And we see about the same split, the same percentage at the academies showing it's underreported.

In terms of the prevalence survey, we do have confidence in that survey. We asked the same questions every year. And we've been asking the same questions of the DOD at the – across the DOD level, as well as at the academies. We've been doing that since '06.

We do it in the active component and the reserve component. We ask the same identical questions every year, because – for consistency and comparison's sake, and – and so forth.

But having said that, you know, we know that – especially among males, for example, even reporting an anonymous survey, because of the stigma attached to these type crimes, we know males are very hesitant and resistant to – to describing, you know, the incident and the crime. And of the survey respondents that we get on the male side, we generally see about a third of them really don't (inaudible) any kind of detail, even on the anonymous survey, other than to say that something happened to them as an unwanted sexual contact. So we

don't get a lot of detail there.

But – but this survey, you know, from a statistician standpoint, we have 95 percent confidence in the statistical methods. And like I said, it's consistent over the years, and it – we use it as an accepted tool for us to gauge the – the prevalence rates among men and women in the various populations I described.

MS. SMITH: Great.

Anna Mulrine, do you have a question? Is Anna on the line?

All right.

(CROSSTALK)

Q: Sorry, yeah, I'm here. I had to unmute myself.

So these reports are on the rise, and you say this is a positive trend because, you know, more people are reporting the crime. But – but certainly there's also the possibility that, you know, more people are experiencing the crime, as well.

And as Defense Secretary Panetta, you know, pointed out, that despite these continuing efforts, you know, this is still a persistent problem. You know, why do you think that is?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Okay. We're getting at the – the other piece I'd like to add in there, on the – on the reports is to – just to re-emphasize that, you know, every one of these reports represents somebody being victimized and traumatized by a terrible crime. And so I don't want to paint the picture that there's – that this is necessarily a good thing.

But we know by the prevalence surveys that the rate of occurrence is greater than the number of reports we see. And so because we know there to be a – you know, a grossly underreported crime, at least the ones that are being reported are the ones, then, that can be afforded the care, the mental support, the medical support, and then in the unrestricted realm, you know, they get attention by the chain of command and law enforcement, and ultimately with the aim to hold offenders appropriately accountable.

So that's the – the piece I wanted to just re-emphasize on the – on the reports. But everyone represents a crime against a human being, and that's a – a repugnant crime. It's an affront to our military values. And – and I just wanted to make that point, as well.

Now, getting to the why it's occurring, well, you know, one of the – one of the things is we know that this is a crime that occurs out in society. We know it occurs on civilian college campuses. And it's a problem that we know in the military we see especially present among youth. You know, 18 to 25 age group are the ones where we see the greatest prevalence and incident rate.

But the thing is, you know, in the military and at the military academies, we have to hold ourselves to a higher standard. So we – although we recognize it as a problem in the – in civilian, as well as military, we've got to hold ourselves to a higher standard in the military.

The people we're talking about at the academies are our future leaders. And if we're gonna solve the problem of sexual assault in the active duty force, we're gonna need those leaders in one or two or three or four years from now when they enter service and they're leading by example in setting and enforcing the

standards and so forth.

To get to the broader question of why it's occurring, I would just say that we recognize that the academies have programs in place that – that we check and they check, and they got problems in place where the sexual assault response coordinators are on the job. They're trained. They have counsel and support programs in place, and they're reaching out to victims.

They have education and information programs designed to, you know, prevent sexual assault and inform the different populations there of all the aspects of sexual assault and sexual harassment. These are things that are out there that are in the program.

But I think what we're – what we're really looking at here is a – is the need to look at ways that we can more fully integrate the prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment across the full spectrum of cadet and midshipmen life and learning, and also the – you know, the need to advance the values of dignity and respect in every aspect of cadet and midshipmen lives.

And – and these are things – I know the services and the academies are gonna be looking at here in the months ahead, and these are things that – you know, our aim is – is to make progress in the prevention of harassment and sexual assault in the academies by doing these things there.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, General.

Leigh Munsil, do you have a question for the general?

Q: Yes. You said that this report got submitted to Congress. Where in Congress did that get submitted? And do you expect any sort of follow-up on the congressional side on sexual assault moving forward?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah. For the – I'm going to have to let Cynthia run down the answer of who specifically got the report. I wasn't involved in that aspect of it this morning. I know our – our Department of Defense legislative affairs team delivered the report.

I believe – I believe they probably would have taken it directly to the House Armed Services Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee, but I'd asked Cynthia to confirm that.

On the point of congressional interest and so forth, I believe, you know, we – we recognize we have sustained congressional interest and passion and oversight on this issue. I've been over there multiple times to address groups of congress men and women and also individually. I expect to be doing that here in the – in the coming weeks – and not only on this point – not only on this report, but also the broader subject of prevention of sexual assault in the military and the response programs for victims in the military.

And this is an issue of continuing interest, focus and concern by our – by our Congress, as well as our leaders in the military.

MS. SMITH: Alan Jackson, do you have a question?

Q: No, thank you.

MS. SMITH: Okay, great. Jennifer Hlad?

Q: Hi. I was wondering – so my question's actually a little bit similar to Anna's. But, obviously, the DOD

has been focusing on this for a while. Secretary Panetta has been talking about it. And I think everyone knows that this is something that you are trying to prevent and trying to weed out.

But looking at the report, it looks like a large percentage of all of the women at all of the academies who reported – who didn't report unwanted sexual contact said that one of the reasons was they didn't want people gossiping about them. And then people who didn't report sexual harassment said they didn't think it was important enough to report.

So I was just wondering what your take on that is and how you think of that particular culture might be addressed, as far as people feeling like they couldn't report something because it was going to spread around and they were going to get a bad reputation, or just thinking it's not important enough even to bring up.

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, you know, what we – what we see in that response from the cadets and midshipmen is actually mirrored by what we see when we – when we survey victims in the active duty force, as well. And they're reluctant to report is also, I think, mirrored in civilian society. I mean, this is – this is a terrible crime.

And – and so fear, stigma and shame are really, essentially, the best way to characterize how, you know, some of the reasons – the reasons we hear from victims why they don't report.

So – and, you know, it's a – it's something that we have to constantly just remain persistent on in getting them the report, because for every unreported one, of course – I mean, they are not afforded medical care, any other sort of support or counseling. And -- and also, you know, for the – for the – only for the unrestricted reports, then, do you take that into law enforcement, investigate the crime, and potentially, you know, hold offenders appropriately accountable.

So what is it that we can do to improve this? Well, we – we got – we have victim confidence-building measures, where – where victims know that their report is gonna be taken seriously. And the way we do that is through, you know, the commanders, not only at the academy, but also in the active force.

The feedback we've gotten from a lot of different fronts is that the way the commander deals with the crime and the way the commander addresses the victim at the point of the crime is really key to the climate of trust that is established within that unit.

And in that climate of trust, I mean, if the victim is -- is taken care of immediately, is linked up with a sexual assault response coordinator, is walked through the process, is provided immediate medical care, counseling, and so forth, and then the report is taken seriously by the command, in terms of, you know, if it's unrestricted, putting it into the law enforcement means, conducting a thorough investigation; keeping the victim informed along the way.

If the victim asks for a transfer from the unit, that transfer is recognized and honored, and any number of other things that we can do to, you know, demonstrate the responsiveness, the seriousness by the command for that victim.

We also know that those steps I just described have an effect on future offenders. You know, a command where the climate is one where the victims know they'll be taken care of, where the report will be taken seriously, that's a climate of what we would call a non-permissive -- a non-permissive climate, where any sort of future offender knows that that's -- that things are going to be difficult, that offenders in that environment are investigated and offenders in that environment are the ones that are held accountable and punished.

And so I think it's important that -- that we -- we take these steps, you know -- and one of the things

we've just reviewed is the training objectives for the commanders. And the things I just described are a part of that -- of that training that we -- we give commanders across all the services before they take command.

And then, of course, there is the confidentiality that are in place for victims who don't want to make an unrestricted report, but choose -- but by their own choice make a restricted report. And in this case, there are protected communications afforded by way of military rules of evidence. There's confidentiality in providing mental health care, medical care, and -- and then -- but we keep these reports for -- for five years' time, the restricted reports so that, at any point in time, should the victim decide to change their mind and decide to make it an unrestricted report, that that information's still available out there and we can proceed with investigation and justice and that sort of thing.

So this is really at the heart of the issue, is -- and really everything we do is a victim-centric approach. Because at -- the victim-inspired confidence is what will lead to more reports, which will help in greater care and will help in greater accountability.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, General.

Lita, do you have a question?

Q: Yes. General, what types -- how much accountability-type statistics do you have? Can you say how many people have been -- were either sent on to law enforcement, were arrested, were punished, were disciplined, any type of accountability statistics that actually show that once a report is filed something is actually done?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, are you referring to the academies specifically or to the DOD? Because I've got data on both, so --

Q: The academies. Well, whichever you have is fine.

(CROSSTALK)

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Okay. All right. Well, I'll give you the academies since we're talking about the academies. First off, I'll give you the breakout on the reports by type. And then -- and then I'm going to ask my senior adviser, Dr. Nate Galbreath, who's sitting here with me, to give some data there on the -- the accountability for the -- the cases that I'm gonna refer to in the reports.

So over this academic year, what we saw was 80 total reports, and then the breakdown of that 80 was that 52 of those -- I think I got the -- no, I'm sorry -- yeah, 42 -- 42 of those reports were the unrestricted variety. And, again, the unrestricted are the ones that open themselves up to law enforcement and -- (inaudible). And then the balance, 38, were the ones that remained restricted. And those are ones where the law enforcement justice accountability steps don't take place, but the -- but the victims do get the medical care.

So in addressing the -- the accountability, I'm gonna ask Dr. Galbreath to give us some information on that.

LT. COL. GALBREATH: So as General Patton described, there were 42 unrestricted reports initiated this year. Keep in mind that reports aren't -- aren't always fully investigated by the end of the academic program year when we cut off our accounting. So there is a little bit of a time shift that goes on here.

But if you want the data, as far as the flow chart goes, you'll find it in the annual -- you'll find it in the

report that we placed on our website and you can see these numbers yourself.

However, if we take the 23 cases or the -- that were opened and closed this year, and then 17 cases that came from previous years that weren't closed at the end of the previous year, all total, we had 40 investigations to -- that we can tell you about that involved 39 subjects. The reason we're one short is that one subject at one of the academies was investigated twice for two separate offenses.

This year, there were seven out of those 39 subjects that did not fall underneath the jurisdiction of the department. And so at the end -- at the end of the year, we had an information on 27 subjects that we can tell you about.

Of those 27 subjects, there was sufficient evidence to support commander action against 14 subjects. Of those 14 subjects, 11 subjects received action for a sexual assault charge. Eight out of those 11 had court martial charges preferred on them. One subject received non-judicial punishment. One subject received an administrative discharge. And one subject received adverse administrative action on a sexual assault charge.

And we also had three subjects that received punishment not on a sexual assault charge, but due to misconduct that arose as a result of being investigated for sexual assault, and I can tell you a little bit more about that.

As far as cases not going forward this year, the reasons were -- we had 13 subjects where command action was actually precluded. We couldn't go forward. Four of those subjects involved victims that declined to participate in the military justice action. For six subjects we had insufficient evidence of an offense to prosecute.

And in three cases the action was declined by a commander because they found the allegations to be unfounded against the person who was accused. So that's the -- that's the breakdown of what occurred to folks.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, Dr. Galbreath.

Q: Thank you.

MS. SMITH: Mik, do you have a question?

Q: Yes. So out of the 40 investigations involving 39 suspects, eight of them went to court martial? Is that correct?

LT. COL. GALBREATH: That's correct. This year, we had eight preferred for court martial. That's correct.

Q: And what were the outcomes, if they'd been completed?

LT. COL. GALBREATH: I have outcomes for five of those. Three of them weren't yet done, so I recommend that you go to the academies themselves and ask for the outcomes. But we had five cases that were completed in -- or court martials (sic) that were completed in this year. And -- and four actually went forward to trial. One court charges were dismissed.

Of the four that proceeded to trial, all four were convicted on some charge -- on at least one charge there.

The one case that was dismissed, it was eventually -- it was referred into the cadet disciplinary system, and that individual received a discharge under other than honorable conditions.

Q: Okay. So there were four convictions (off mic).

LT. COL. GALBREATH: Four convictions of the five that went to court this year.

Q: Okay. All righty. Thank you.

MS. SMITH: David Alexander, do you have a question?

Q: Yes. I just had some questions about the numbers. On the -- of the 80 reported cases this year, were -- were they all -- the victims all women? Or were there some men among the victims?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: (off mic) yeah, there's -- there's men and women in that 80. And we're -- you know, flip through our data here.

If we can -- I don't have that at my fingertips, but we can flip to it here pretty quickly. So let me ask Nate to pull that data. If not, we can come back to it. Okay, you got it?

LT. COL. GALBREATH: Yes.

Q: I've got another -- I can ask you another little question (off mic).

LT. COL. GALBREATH: I got it right here.

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, go ahead.

LT. COL. GALBREATH: In our unrestricted reports this year, there were -- that were made, there were 36 female victims and three male victims. In our restricted reports this year, there were 42 female victims and one male victim.

Q: Okay.

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Just repeat that one more time, please, Nate.

LT. COL. GALBREATH: So in our unrestricted reports this year, there were 36 female victims and three male victims.

Q: Okay.

LT. COL. GALBREATH: And in restricted reports, there were 41 female victims and one male victim.

Q: Okay.

LT. COL. GALBREATH: And if you want to look on the page number, this is on page -- starts on page 34 of the report. And the accountability data that I read to you was also off of page 26 in the report.

Q: Okay, there's also -- it also mentions there were 13 of the instances that were -- that happened before the person was at the -- was a part of the service. Do you have any numbers that compare that to how

the previous year were --

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah. Yeah, we do. We track that, because we think that's a -- an indicator that we watch that -- that shows a trend, a positive trend there in victim confidence is -- when that number comes up. And so in 2010, 2011, there were five reports of the total that were made by people where the incidents occurred prior to their military. And this year, like I said, it was 13.

Q: Uh-huh, okay.

MS. SMITH: Thank you. Ernesto, do you have a question?

Q: Yes. General, you mentioned earlier that a lot of men are very reluctant to -- to speak out about -- about being victims of sexual assault. I was wondering if you'd taken a look at whether the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" has had any impact on their willingness to -- to report these crimes?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Well, the -- when we're looking at -- I've been asked that question before, you know, the -- the effect of the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" on anything we might be seeing on the sexual assault prevention and so forth.

And all I'll say on that is that, you know, sexual assault is a crime involving power, where people are abusing power and coercing other human beings to do something against their will. It's not a crime of sexuality. And we don't correlate sexual assault and -- and sexuality. Because like I said, sexual assault's a crime of power. And -- and so I'll just kind of leave it at that.

Q: But in -- I mean, in your research, have you found that in the past men who may have -- you know, regardless of sexual orientation, may have been reluctant to -- to speak out because they didn't want to get embroiled in an investigation into --

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah. Yeah, I think it's fair to say that with the repeal, you know, that's -- that's one less barrier in terms of reporting, where, you know, potentially your sexual orientation is -- is not an issue or -- or a reason to not report. Where -- you know, that's a removal of a -- of a barrier, I guess, is the best way to put it.

But, you know, in the repeal, it just has been in effect here for -- what? -- the last 15, 18 months? And so that's just something that -- again, we're more focused on the crime here of -- the crime against human beings that sexual assault is, regardless of -- you know, really is irrespective of gender in that case or sexual orientation.

MS. SMITH: Great, thank you, sir.

Is Jakob Rogers on the line?

Q: Yes.

MS. SMITH: Question for the general?

Q: Yeah, a quick question, on restricted reports versus unrestricted reports. You already have -- (inaudible) -- that you had expected? And would you have like to see that shift one way to the other? And is it indicative, perhaps, of the process of going -- (inaudible) -- why do you see that number right there?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, I'm going to have to ask you to repeat that question. I think -- (inaudible) --

we're getting a lot of -- (inaudible) -- phone calls and -- (inaudible) -- I'm talking over an operator.

MS. SMITH: Can I ask everyone on the line to please mute their lines?

Thank you.

Jakob, can you ask the question again, please, for the general?

Q: (off mic) it sounds like about half -- nearly half of the reports were restricted reports. Just wanted to get a sense for what you see in that number, if it's what you had expected, and would you like to see that shift one way or the other in the years ahead?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, okay. I got the question that time. What we see in the active duty force is roughly a 75 percent, 25 percent split in reports, with 75 percent being unrestricted and 25 percent being restricted. What we see here at the academies is more of a -- really, a closer -- a 50/50 split, like we broke out for you.

We obviously would want to see more of the unrestricted reports, and we would want the trend at the academies to move in the direction of the active duty force, which is that -- that 3-to-1 split. Again, for every unrestricted report that's one where not only is the victim cared for, like in a restricted report, but the case then becomes open to investigation, the chain of command, and -- and into the justice and accountability system.

So we would -- we would watch that split closely. We would like it to trend -- we want it to trend toward more unrestricted and less restricted. But -- but overall, again, I'll just reiterate that an increase in reports we view as -- as long as we have a prevalence rate at the point it is and as long as we know it's a grossly underreported crime, every report is -- is a report heading in the right direction there, in terms of victim care.

Q: (off mic) do you see a reason why -- why it's nearly half for academies and there's -- (inaudible) -- difference between active duty?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Yeah, that's a tough one to describe. I don't have a good answer for you on that. You know, one factor could be the -- you know, the proximity to one another and their living environment and the -- in the -- in the cadet -- in midshipmen environment. And so, you know, maybe they're less likely to want to reveal their identity in that environment.

You know, very -- I mean, I was a cadet at West Point. You're living with your brothers and sisters there in your same floor in every aspect of life and living together there. And so maybe that proximity is something that -- is something that causes the people to want to have that information, you know, more restricted than -- than others.

So that's -- that's just a point. I think that requires some further assessment. But -- but that's -- that's my best answer for you on that.

MS. SMITH: Great, sir, thank you.

Kristin Davis, do you have a question for the general?

Kristin, are you on the line?

All right. Richard Sisk, do you have a question for the general?

All right. With that, I think I've given everyone an opportunity who RSVP'd to ask a question.

General, do you have a closing statement?

MAJ. GEN. PATTON: Well, thanks for the questions and thanks for the time and your attention.

I'll just really close this out pretty quick. I think the most important thing to summarize is that the cadets and midshipmen are our future leaders of the military. And it must be clear to everybody involved about the importance of providing an environment at the academies and across the Department of Defense that, one, fosters dignity and respect, two, develops leaders of high caliber, and, three, ensures the full support for victims.

These are the leaders that we're growing at the military academies that are going to be the future leaders of our military. We need them setting the example. We need them enforcing standards when they become commissioned officers. And we need them to be part of the solution in the future as they join our -- the ranks of our military, a solution in preventing and effectively responding to sexual assault in our military.

Thank you.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, General. Thank you for everyone -- thank you to everyone who participated in this call. Have a great day, and happy holidays.