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# Perceived Retaliation Against Military Sexual Assault Victims

n 2014, we estimated that approximately 20,300 active-component service members experienced a sexual assault in the previous 12 months (1.0 percent of men and 4.9 percent of women; Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015b). Fifteen percent of women and 2 percent of men had been sexually assaulted at least one time since joining the service (Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015b).

Sexual assault victimization is associated with a variety of negative outcomes, including short- and long-term medical problems, mental health symptoms, suicide attempts, and career

### **KEY FINDINGS**

- Over the past two decades, DoD has channeled resources into sexual assault awareness training, response, and prevention programs. To improve the likelihood that victims will choose to engage in response services after an assault, it is critical to understand and then mitigate the professional and social consequences that victims face after an assault, including the risk of retaliation.
- While perceived retaliation (social and professional) was highest among female victims who filed an official report, risk did not drop to zero among those who told no one or disclosed only to covered reporters. For these victims, the source of the perceived retaliation may be the perpetrator or someone in the perpetrator's confidence.
- Although the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act instructed DoD to assess retaliation among victims who file official reports, and the new Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Service Members (WGRA) measures of reprisal, ostracism, and maltreatment are assessed only for victims who indicate they filed an official report, our analyses suggest that this approach will neglect the negative events faced by nonreporting victims. Indeed, failing to capture retaliation against victims who do not file an official report may exclude those for whom retaliation was successful in preventing the victim from reporting the crime.
- Among female sexual assault victims, perceived professional retaliation was associated with hazing assaults that occurred in the workplace, without alcohol, and were perpetrated by multiple, familiar, and/or powerful offenders. Perceived professional retaliation is a particular risk when the perpetrator has authority over the victim via the chain of command.
- We found fewer predictors that mark increased risk for perceived social retaliation, but analyses did reveal that assaults perpetrated by multiple offenders or service members and assaults occurring in the workplace were associated with perceived social retaliation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>A</sup> The research reported here was completed in May 2018 and underwent security review with the sponsor and the Defense Office of Prepublication and Security Review before public release. Documents that were published subsequent to May 2018 are not cited.

disruption (Frayne et al., 1999; Kimerling et al., 2007; Riggs et al., 2000; Skinner et al., 2000). Some of the harms associated with victimization may be attributed to experiences that occur in the aftermath of assault, rather than the assault itself. Victims who are disbelieved, stigmatized, or blamed when they confide in others are more likely than other victims to experience posttraumatic stress symptoms (Campbell et al., 2001). These experiences may be common in the military. In 2014, 30 percent of female military sexual assault victims self-reported that they experienced social retaliation, professional retaliation, or adverse administrative actions, or punishments for violations associated with the sexual assault (Jaycox et al., 2015). Among female victims who chose to file an official report with the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), perceived retaliation is even higher (54.5 to 62 percent; Jaycox et al., 2015; Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015a).

In response to the high and stable rates of perceived retaliation against sexual assault victims (Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015b; Rock, 2013; Rock et al., 2011), in 2014, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced new procedures that would better prepare commanders, junior officers, and supervisors to "reduce the potential for retaliation." He made clear that retaliation

directly contradicts one of the highest values of our military—that we protect our brothers and our sisters in uniform. When someone reports a sexual assault, they need to be embraced and helped, not ostracized or punished with retribution (Hagel, 2014).

This resolve was echoed by the U.S. Congress, which included in the National Defense
Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016 a directive to create a comprehensive strategy to prevent retaliation (Pub. L. 114-92, 2015). The resultant *DoD Retaliation Prevention and Response Strategy* includes the goal of "creating a culture intolerant of retaliation" and plans to "hold supervisors and leaders appropriately accountable for preventing, detecting, and addressing retaliatory behavior" (DoD, 2016). To guide this effort, it may be helpful to better understand the situations in which retaliation against military sexual assault victims is most likely to occur. Although fear

of retaliation is often identified as a barrier to reporting sexual assault (Davis and Grifka, 2017b; Jaycox et al., 2015), little is known about the predictors of retaliation when it does occur. This research documents the characteristics of the incidents, victims, and perpetrators that increase risk for perceived retaliatory behavior against military victims. Because telling others about the sexual assault increases the number of people who know about the assault and thus may retaliate against the victim, we also explored the relationship between disclosure choices and retaliation and subsequently controlled for disclosure choices when identifying risk factors for retaliation.

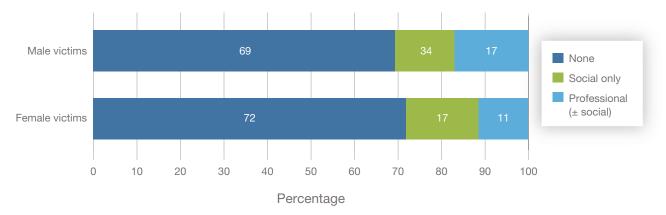
## Perceived Social and Professional Retaliation

Among all service members who were categorized as having experienced a sexual assault in the previous year, 31 percent of male victims and 28 percent of female victims self-reported that they experienced social or professional retaliation as a result of the assault (Figure 1). Male and female victims did not differ significantly in their rates of perceived retaliation ( $\chi^2(2) = 1.76$ , p = 0.41).

#### Comparison with Other Estimates

Given substantial differences in how retaliation and related concepts have been defined and measured across surveys and reports, it is not surprising that estimated rates of retaliation also differ. In this analysis, we found that among all service members who were classified as experiencing a sexual assault in the past year, 29 percent perceived either social or professional retaliation "as a result of the unwanted event." In a previous report, using the same survey data and definition of social or professional retaliation but limiting the population of victims to *only* those who filed an official report, 52 percent indicated that they experienced social or professional retaliation (Jaycox et al., 2015). This report also found that when adverse administrative actions and punishments for violations associated with the sexual assault are included in the measure of retaliation, the percentage of victims who filed an official report who perceived retaliation is 54 to 62 percent (Jaycox

FIGURE 1 Weighted Percentage of Sexual Assault Victims who Perceived Social or Professional Retaliation Against Them as a Result of the Assault



SOURCE: 2014 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Service Members (WGRA), in Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015a.

et al., 2015; Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015a). In other words, the evidence suggests that victims who make reports that could be released to investigators are more likely to face perceived retaliation than the group of all victims, many of whom keep the assault

In the 2016 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey, a two-year follow-up to this data set, the survey items assessing perceived retaliation that were used for this analysis were replaced with a new and more comprehensive survey measure. It more carefully matches respondents' self-reported experiences to DoD criteria for criminal or policy-prohibited ostracism, maltreatment, or reprisal. In a 2017 report describing using data from this newer measure, and limiting the population to only sexual assault victims who filed an official report, 32 percent experienced ostracism, maltreatment, or reprisal (Davis and Grifka, 2017b). Given that ostracism, maltreatment, and reprisal are more precise concepts than victim perceived retaliation (see sidebar Changes in DoD Measurement of Retaliation), it should be expected that the estimate is lower than the rate of perceived retaliation among victims who report.

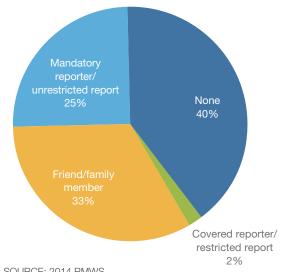
### **Disclosure**

Because the RAND Military Workplace Study (RMWS) survey sample included a larger number of female victims than male victims, estimates of

retaliation risk for women were available for a larger number of assault, perpetrator, and victim characteristics and, therefore, were the focus of all subsequent analyses.

Among service women who experienced a sexual assault in the previous 12 months, Figure 2 illustrates whom they told about the assault. As noted previously, the categories for this variable are mutually

FIGURE 2 Disclosure Choices Among Service Women who Experienced a Sexual Assault (weighted percentage)



SOURCE: 2014 RMWS.

NOTE: Individuals in a given category may or may not have told someone in a category with a lower number but did not disclose to anyone in a higher category.

### **Methods**

In 2014, at the request of DoD, the RAND National Defense Research Institute conducted an independent assessment of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination in the U.S. military. More than 170,000 service members completed the survey, fielded as part of the RMWS. Survey weights were used to account for the sampling design and survey nonresponse, using 40 administrative variables that assessed sociodemographic, occupational, and survey fieldwork information. All demographics of the weighted sample match the demographics of the population of active component service members. A complete description of the study design and implementation has been published (Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2014; Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015b).

#### **Sexual Assault Measure**

The RMWS defines a service member as having experienced a sexual assault on the basis of a nested, three-part series of questions that assess whether events satisfied all Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) criteria for sexual assaults: (1) an unwanted experience occurred like one described in the law (e.g., unwanted penetration of an orifice, unwanted contact with genitalia), (2) the event was intended to abuse or humiliate the victim or done to gratify a sexual desire, and (3) one of the UCMJ-defined coercive actions was used (e.g., threats, incapacitation).

#### **Disclosure Measures**

To assess the extent to which victims disclosed the sexual assault, we created three dichotomous items that describe whether the victim told (1) a friend or family member, (2) a covered professional who is permitted by military policy to keep the sexual assault confidential (i.e., Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, victim advocate, hotline counselor, medical professional, chaplain, therapist, Special Victims' or Victim's Legal Counsel, officer/noncommissioned officer [NCO] outside the victim's chain of command), or (3) a mandatory reporter who is obligated by military policy to report the assault (i.e., a supervisor or someone above the victim in the chain of command, someone in military law enforcement). A fourth dichotomous item described whether the victim filed an unrestricted report.

The dichotomous disclosure variables described here were used in the statistical modeling, as they can jointly account for all possible combinations of disclosure choices and also allow for conclusions to be drawn about the influence of each type of disclosure after controlling for disclosure to other sources. For descriptive purposes only, the four disclosure variables were also recoded to form a single variable with four mutually exclusive categories. These levels correspond to the victim having told

- 1. no one
- 2. covered reporter or having filed a restricted report
- 3. a friend or family member
- 4. a mandatory reporter or having filed an unrestricted report.

Respondents in a given category may or may not have told someone in a lower-numbered category and did not tell anyone in a higher-numbered category.

#### **Retaliation Measures**

Social retaliation was measured with a dichotomous item that asked, "As a result of the unwanted event, did you experience any social retaliation? For example, ignored by coworkers, being blamed for what happened." Professional retaliation was measured with an item that asked, "As a result of the unwanted event, did you experience any professional retaliation? For example, loss of privileges, denied promotion/training, transferred to less favorable job." For this analysis, we calculated the percentage of *all* sexual assault victims who indicated that they had experienced social or professional retaliation. In some prior reports, retaliation had been calculated only among those victims who indicated that they filed an official report (Rock, 2013).

For descriptive purposes only, we also summarized survey-assessed retaliation using a single, nominal variable that separated perceived retaliation into three, mutually exclusive categories indicating that the victim perceived

- 1. no retaliation
- 2. social retaliation only
- 3. professional retaliation (with or without social retaliation).\*

[W]e assessed the following victim-identified characteristics as possible indicators of risk for retaliation: hazing-related assault, victim alcohol use, perpetrator alcohol use, workplace assault, number of assailants, relationship to assailant, offender status (service member, relative rank to victim, within victim's chain of command), victim service branch, and victim pay grade.

### Assault, Perpetrator and Victim Characteristics

Three assault characteristics were embedded in the sexual assault measure (victim injury, perpetrator intent [sexual or abusive], and assault type [penetrative, nonpenetrative, attempted]); all other characteristics were assessed via survey items that were presented to RMWS respondents who were categorized as having experienced a sexual assault in the previous year. Victims who had been sexually assaulted one time in the past year described the single assault, and victims who indicated that they experienced multiple incidents were instructed to answer follow-up questions for the one they considered to be the "worst or most serious." For this analysis, we assessed the following victim-identified characteristics as possible indicators of risk for retaliation: hazing-related assault, victim alcohol use, perpetrator alcohol use, workplace assault, number of assailants, relationship to assailant, offender status (service member, relative rank to victim, within victim's chain of command), victim service branch, and victim pay grade.

### **Analytic Approach**

All analyses were completed using survey weights and statistical methods to account for variance inflation due to weighting (Morral, Gore, and Schell, 2015b). All analyses were restricted to service women who had experienced at least one sexual assault in the past year. Because some assault characteristics are likely to influence disclosure (Fisher et al., 2003; Gartner and MacMillan, 1995; Starzynski et al., 2005), and disclosure—in turn—predicts retaliation, we used logistic regression models to estimate the relationships between all assault characteristics and perceived social or professional retaliation while simultaneously controlling for the four dichotomous disclosure variables described earlier. The goal of the analyses is to document assault, victim, and perpetrator characteristics that can serve as markers of increased risk of retaliation. To that end, models for each characteristic were run independently.

<sup>\*</sup>Most female sexual assault victims who perceived professional retaliation indicated that they had also experienced social retaliation (83 percent).

exclusive. Individuals in a given category may or may not have told someone in a lower category but did not disclose to someone in a higher category. While the majority of female victims chose to tell someone about the sexual assault (60 percent), a substantial minority told no one (40 percent).

### Victim Disclosure and Likelihood of Perceived Retaliation

The likelihood of perceived social and professional retaliation is related to disclosure ( $\chi^2(6) = 147.1$ , p < 0.0001). As shown in Table 1, analyses showed that female victims who told a mandatory reporter or filed an unrestricted report (26.4 percent) were significantly more likely to perceive social retaliation than victims who did not make a report but did tell nonmandatory reporters (*p-values* < 0.05) or victims who told no one (13.8 percent; p < 0.001).<sup>2</sup> Similarly, victims who told a mandatory reporter or filed an unrestricted report were also the most likely to perceive professional retaliation (27.8 percent). That is, they were significantly more likely to perceive professional retaliation than victims who confided in friends or family and possibly also a covered reporter (4.0 percent; p < 0.0001) or victims who told no one (7.1 percent; p < 0.0001). The percentage of victims who only told a mandatory reporter or filed an unrestricted report did not differ significantly from those who confided in a covered reporter. This is likely due to the imprecision of the covered reporter category,

which included a small number of victims and had a large confidence interval around the estimate.

Rates of perceived social and professional retaliation were highest among service women who disclosed to a mandatory reporter or filed an unrestricted report. One explanation could be that unrestricted reporting sparks an investigation and disclosure to a commander. Although many of the individuals involved in an investigation are expected to protect the confidentiality of the victim, some do not have this obligation (e.g., potential witnesses who are interviewed as part of the investigation). As a result, it is possible that knowledge of the assault, the victim, and the victim's report will disseminate more widely through the victim's social and professional network than is true when victims disclose only to friends, family, or covered reporters. This dissemination to more people may, in turn, increase risk that at least one individual with knowledge of the assault will retaliate against the victim. Alternatively, it may be that victims who are willing to take the relatively public step of filing an unrestricted report are those who are generally willing to and do share the story more widely. Willingness to disclose, rather than the report itself, may explain the increased risk for retaliation. Interestingly, choosing to avoid telling anyone about the assault does not entirely protect female victims from perceived retaliation; a substantial minority of victims who told no one still experienced perceived social or professional retaliation as a result of the assault (20.9 percent). In these cases, it may be that the perpetrator(s) or someone in the

TABLE 1
Weighted Percentage Who Perceived Retaliation by Disclosure Choice Among Female Victims of Military Sexual Assault

Perceived retaliation	Most Public Level of Disclosure			
	No one	Covered reporter or filed restricted report	Friends or family	Mandatory reporter or filed unrestricted report
None	79.1 <sub>a</sub>	77.0 <sub>a,b</sub>	82.7 <sub>a</sub>	45.8 <sub>b</sub>
Social only	13.8 <sub>a</sub>	2.1 <sub>a</sub>	13.3 <sub>a</sub>	26.4 <sub>b</sub>
Professional (+/- social)	7.1 <sub>a,b</sub>	20.9 <sub>b,c</sub>	4.0 <sub>a</sub>	27.8 <sub>c</sub>

SOURCE: 2014 WGRA.

NOTE: Values within rows that do not share a subscript are significantly different at the p < 0.05 level based on post hoc paired comparisons using a Tukey-Kraemer adjustment for multiple comparisons.

perpetrator(s)' confidence (e.g., a friend or colleague who was permitted to watch the assault) was the source of the perceived retaliation. It may be that the similar rates of retaliation against victims who disclosed to trusted confidents (i.e., covered reporters, friends, family) as against those who told no one is an indicator that for these victims too, the source of the perceived retaliation is the perpetrator(s) or someone in the perpetrator(s) confidence.

# Rank of Person Who Committed the Perceived Social Retaliation

Among female victims who indicated experiencing social retaliation, 56.2 percent indicated they were retaliated against by someone who outranked them, 68.0 percent by someone of a similar or lower rank, and 11.2 percent by nonmilitary personnel.<sup>3</sup> The RMWS did not include an item assessing the source of professional retaliation, as professional retaliation must necessarily be by a superior or supervisor with the power to deliver professional consequences.

# Assault Characteristics Predict the Likelihood of Perceived Retaliation

Many factors influence a victim's decision to tell others about an assault, including the severity of the assault, the victim's relationship to the offender, whether he or she experienced social or professional retaliation as a result of a prior assault, and whether victims believe they will receive the support they need if they report (Fisher et al., 2003; Gartner and MacMillan, 1995; Starzynski et al., 2005). Seeking help is a path to receiving medical, legal, and social support, but the cascading effects of officially reporting an assault also make it more likely that victims will experience social or professional retaliation. Thus, to understand whether certain characteristics of the sexual assault increase the risk of retaliation, it is important to control for whether or not the victim disclosed the assault. In the following analyses of potential risk markers of perceived retaliation, all associations control for disclosure to friends or family, a covered reporter, a mandatory reporter, and whether a restricted or unrestricted report was

filed. The goal of the analyses was to identify markers that could help leaders and program developers to identify victims at risk for retaliation. Consistent with this goal, analyses tested each predictor independently, while controlling for disclosure, rather than in a large model that adjusts effects based on the covariance between risk factors. All characteristics described here were assessed for their relationship with professional and social retaliation. Only those relationships that were statistically significant are described hereafter.

As illustrated in Figure 3, female sexual assault victims were more likely to perceive professional retaliation as a result of an assault when the offender's perceived intent was abusive rather than sexual (adjusted odds-ratio ( $OR_{adj} = 0.7, p < 0.001$ ), when the victim was injured ( $OR_{adj} = 1.4, p < 0.01$ ), when the incident was related to hazing ( $OR_{adj} = 2.6, p < 0.001$ ), when the victim was *not* drinking ( $OR_{adj} = 0.7, p < 0.01$ ), and when the assault occurred in the workplace ( $OR_{adj} = 1.7, p < 0.001$ ).

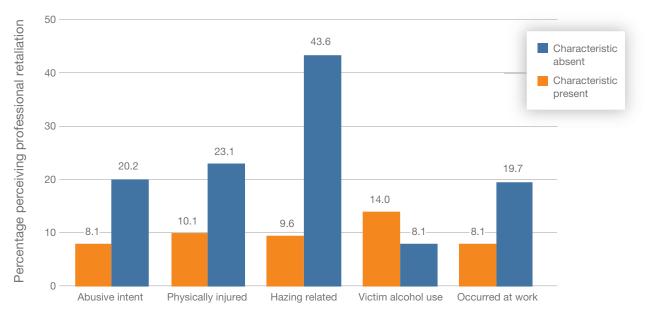
The risk of perceived professional retaliation also increased significantly when the perpetrator was higher-ranking than the victim ( $OR_{adj} = 1.7$ , p < 0.001) or in the victim's chain of command ( $OR_{adj} = 1.8$ , p < 0.001), as well as when there were multiple perpetrators ( $OR_{adj} = 0.7$ , p < 0.001, computed with multiple perpetrators as the reference group). See Figure 4.

Fewer characteristics were significantly associated with perceived social retaliation (Figure 5). After controlling for whether and to whom the victim disclosed the assault, we found that female victims were more likely to perceive social retaliation in response to the assault when the attack occurred in the workplace ( $OR_{adj} = 1.4$ , p < 0.01), when there were multiple attackers ( $OR_{adj} = 0.7$ , p < 0.01), and when the perpetrator(s) were service members ( $OR_{adj} = 1.5$ , p < 0.05) and known to the victim ( $OR_{adj} = 2.1$ , p < 0.01).

# Victim Characteristics Predict the Likelihood of Perceived Retaliation

The likelihood of perceived professional retaliation was similar across service branches, but the risk of perceived social retaliation was lowest in the Air

Weighted Percentage of Female Sexual Assault Victims Who Indicated Experiencing Professional Retaliation As a Result of the Assault, by Assault Characteristics



SOURCE: 2014 WGRA.

Force ( $OR_{adj} = 0.7$ , p < 0.05). The RMWS survey found that service women in the Air Force experienced lower rates of sexual assault than those in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, even after controlling for demographic and military factors (such as age, education, pay grade, and frequency of deployment; Schell and Morral, 2015). Although many demographic and personnel differences between the services have been ruled out as explanations, the reason why Air Force members are at lower risk for sexual assault (Schell and Morral, 2015) and retaliation is unknown. Perhaps differences in Air Force culture, training, policy, or programing have a protective effect for members.

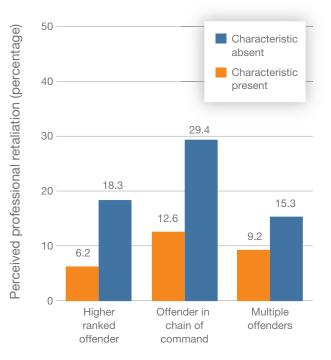
Relative to junior enlisted service women, perceived professional retaliation was higher among senior enlisted service members ( $OR_{adj} = 1.4, p < 0.05$ ).

### Limitations

The data used in this report measured victims' perception that they had been socially or professionally retaliated against. This approach has limitations and

strengths. Self-reported retaliation may not align perfectly with retaliation as assessed by an unbiased observer. It is also limited by imperfect alignment with DoD-defined retaliation (i.e., reprisal, maltreatment, or ostracism—see p. 7). It is possible that not all victims who perceived retaliation had experiences that, upon investigation, would have possible legal remedies. In addition, social and professional retaliation were assessed with single-item measures, which are less precise than the retaliation measures introduced for the 2016 WGRA. However, the perceived retaliation measures have the advantage of having been assessed for all sexual assault victims (including victims who did not file an official report). Because the updated 2016 WGRA retaliation measure is assessed only among victims who file a sexual assault report (i.e., excluding all victims who chose not to report the assault), this report provides a better assessment of the proportion of all victims who experienced events they perceived as retaliatory.

Weighted Percentage of Female Sexual Assault Victims Who Indicated Experiencing Professional Retaliation As a Result of the Assault, by Offender Characteristics

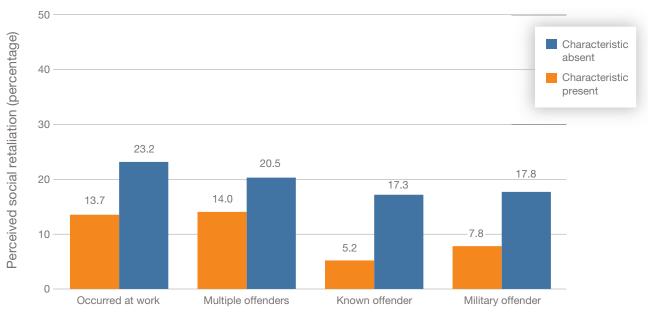


### **Notes**

- <sup>1</sup> All percentages are weighted self-report data.
- <sup>2</sup>The percentage of victims who perceived social retaliation did not differ significantly among those who told (at most) friends/ family, a covered reporter, or no one.
- <sup>3</sup> Percentages can sum to more than 100 percent, because some victims perceived retaliation from multiple people.

SOURCE: 2014 WGRA.

Weighted Percentage of Female Sexual Assault Victims Who Indicated Experiencing Social Retaliation As a Result of the Assault, by Assault Characteristics



SOURCE: 2014 WGRA.

### **Changes in DoD Measurement of Retaliation**

Since the 2014 fielding of the RMWS, the definition and measurement of retaliation against sexual assault victims has changed. The new definitions differ from the ones used in the 2014 RMWS and the current analyses. In 2013, the U.S. Congress directed DoD to "establish definitions of retaliation that can be criminally enforced" (DoD, 2016). As a result, retaliation was clarified to be an umbrella term that includes reprisal, ostracism, and maltreatment of a victim who has filed or is suspected of filing an official report (DoD, 2016). Here, we compare and contrast the RMWS measure of retaliation used with the new approach.

Reprisal is a criminal behavior defined in the UCMJ as taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action against a service member who is perceived as making or preparing to make an official report (10 U.S.C. §1034). In 2016, the WGRA included a new survey assessment of reprisal comprising a three-part series of questions that (a) assess specific unfavorable personnel actions, (b) establish that the action was due to the victim's report (not work performance), and (c) establish the motive of the offender (Davis and Grifka, 2017a). As opposed to the single-item assessment of professional retaliation used in the RMWS and previous WGRA fieldings, the new measure of reprisal assesses behaviorally specific events, purpose, and motive and, therefore, improves certainty that a criminal behavior has occurred. The new survey measure of reprisal diverges from the UCMJ by assessing reprisal only among those victims who have filed an official report about the sexual assault (Davis et al., 2017, p. 407), whereas the UCMJ also includes as possible targets of reprisal any victim whom the offender perceives as preparing to make an official report (10 U.S.C. §1034). Thus, the 2016 WGRA measure would not count as retaliation an instance in which the criminal behavior succeeded in preventing an official report of sexual assault.

In the 2016 WGRA assessment, ostracism and maltreatment take the place of the single-item measure of social retaliation. Ostracism includes insulting or disrespectful comments in public, exclusion from social activities or interactions, and ignoring the victim. Maltreatment includes insulting or disrespectful remarks in private; showing private images, photos or videos of the victim to others; bullying; physical violence; and property damage. Like reprisal, ostracism and maltreatment are assessed with a three-part series that assesses (a) specific behaviors, (b) offender belief that the victim had filed an official report, and (c) offender motive to discourage victim from moving forward with the report, discourage others from reporting, or, in the case of maltreatment only, to abuse or humiliate the victim (Davis and Grifka, 2017a). Ostracism is measured only among victims who filed an official report. The UCMJ definition of maltreatment requires the offender to be someone whose orders the victim is subject to (DoD, 2016). This requirement is dropped from the survey definition of maltreatment but is included as a follow-up descriptor (Davis and Grifka, 2017a; Davis et al., 2017, p. 408).

Both measurement approaches provide useful information. The 2016 WGRA measures of reprisal, ostracism, and maltreatment are more precise measures of retaliation that can be addressed with criminal or administrative actions. However, these measures are administered only to those victims who indicate that they filed an official report and, therefore, do not provide a comprehensive assessment of retaliation against all military sexual assault victims. The current study relies on the single-item measures of social and professional retaliation from the RMWS, which are less precise but have the advantage of having been assessed for all sexual assault victims (including victims who did not file an official report), which provides a better measure of the universe of events, criminal and noncriminal, that can discourage victims from reporting.

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### **About This Report**

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