DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH CAROLYN COLLINS, CHIEF, SHARP DIVISION; CHARLES COSGROVE, GENERAL ATTORNEY IN THE OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL, CRIMINAL LAW DIVISION; GUY SURIAN, ASSISTANT DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, U.S. ARMY CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION SUBJECT: U.S. ARMY HARASSMENT/SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION SUMMIT LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C. TIME: 1:00 P.M. EDT DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2010

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MR. MINITREZ: Hank Minitrez again from G1 Public Affairs. I'm the spokesperson for the Army's Sexual Harassment Assault Responsive Prevention Program.

I have with us here at the summit, Ms. Carolyn Collins, who is the program manager for the Army SHARP program. Also, Mr. Charles Cosgrove from the Office of the, excuse me, OT JAG.

MR. COSGROVE: Judge Advocate General.

MR. MINITREZ: Judge Advocate General. Yes. Acronyms are killing me. Also, Mr. Guy Surian from the Army's Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID. They are the investigators and also Ms. Janet Mansfield, also from the Judge Advocate General's office.

And Wendy, I turn things over to you, our wonderful moderator. Thank you for setting this up.

WENDY: Well, first of all, if you can possibly give us a couple minutes of opening remarks from one of the speakers there and then we'll turn it over to questions.

Is there anybody have any context to give us on the conference or can provide us a bit of an introduction?

MR. MINITREZ: Absolutely. Carolyn, do you want to take that? I can certainly do it.

MS. COLLINS: I certainly would love to do that. This is Carolyn Collins. As Hank mentioned, I'm the program manager for the Army Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Prevention program or SHARP.

Our conference this year, our 2010 conference this year is the third conference we've had since launching our new strategy in September '08 and it's a five-year prevention strategy. And with this conference, our theme this year was, "Hurts One Affects All," that's AFFETS and it talked to the commanders and the leaders and the importance -- (inaudible) -- when a sexual assault happens, it not only impacts the individual, but also all the individuals around them, and obviously, families, communities, units as well.

The conference this year, we have grown each year. Our first conference was about 70 general officers from division and higher senior leaders and program managers. We had about 250 folks at that. The next year, we focused on our senior leadership, again, command sergeant majors and with that conference we had about 500 folks there, as well as program managers. But both of those kind of were focused on the first phase of our strategy, which was committed Army leadership. The second phase we launched April last year during Sexual Assault Awareness Month and that's Army-wide conviction and that is where every soldier, every family member, every civilian is convicted in stopping sexual harassment and sexual assault at the earliest point and intervening, acting and motivating others to take action to stop these crimes and issues within our communities.

We are very focused on being the national leader in prevention and not only the prevention of sexual assault, but also the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault as well. And so as we hit the summit this year, we're at the midway point of Phase II, again, Army-wide conviction. It is a little over a two year phase and we want to kind of assess where we were on the execution of that because we have a requirement at the end of this phase to have ownership by every community member of sexual assault prevention. That is our exit criteria for going out of this phase and going into Phase II of the strategy, which is achieve cultural change, and then, finally, Phase IV, which is sustain, refine and share best practices. Obviously, we meet all of our goals to reduce the numbers of sexual assaults and harassments down, we also want to maintain that momentum and sustain the program in the out years, continue to refine it based on our metrics. And then, again, work with our internal and external partners across, not only the Army and the nation, but cause worldwide engagements on this issue.

So this year's conference had, we had over 600 attendees this year. We had about 650 attendees and we took it down to more of the middle, the operational and tactical levels of the Army. So the preponderance of attendees this year came out of brigades and battalions, again, down at the tactical level, the operational area, really affecting those everyday soldiers and civilians and communities.

And so, again, they are a critical aspect of this program, as well as their program managers that came with them and the other first responder attendees, so that could have been their chaplains, CID agents, law enforcement, but again, across the board, medical personnel and others that work with this crime that were at the conference this year.

And it was really, how do we really energize the second half, continue the momentum and put full energy and strength to make sure that we are where we want to be in executing this campaign in the next year. And we plan to report out at that on the next year what we've achieved with our way ahead this year.

So we had, not only were they all provided, a lot of professional development the first couple days, but the third day they broke into working groups of about 100 each and they worked through their ideas on how to augment our current strategy and campaign, to improve upon it, again, they're assessing what we've already done. We looked at lessons learned so far, our best practices so far, where we could partner better and some new initiatives as well and they just reported those out to Lieutenant General Bostick, who ultimately, he is in charge of personnel for the Army, the Army G1, deputy chief of staff for personnel. And they just reported those out. He is going to be taking those recommendations back to the chief of staff of the Army.

All of those recommendations were done in alignment with the challenges that the chief of staff of the Army and the G1 put to them earlier this week at the beginning of the summit of looking at the way ahead and their engagement on that.

So they briefed him out on their plan and what they plan to take back next week and start engaging down at their command level immediately. And that's just a little bit of an overview of where we are and what was incorporated in this summit this year. WENDY: Great. Thank you so much for that introduction. And we'll go ahead and turn it over to questions. Mike Schindler (sp) with Operation Military Families.

You have a question?

Q Yeah, I do. Ma'am, there was an article that came out about, I'd say probably about two weeks or maybe three weeks ago in Time Magazine and I don't know if you guys saw that that addressed specifically the sexual assault issue that was happening in theater for many of our female service members in that they figured that a third is probably a low reporting because many, they figure don't report.

What is being done on the disciplinary action in theater when a sexual assault happens or sexual harassment? And how do you guys really overcome this, you know, what happens in Iraq, what happens in Afghanistan stays there? How is what you're doing going to effectively combat that?

MS. COLLINS: Well, I'd like to stay on our strategy. We are very point of two goals with our metrics on our strategy throughout our campaign and those were posted with our annual report this year as well in the last couple of weeks. But the goals of the strategy is to reduce down the actual number of assaults, at the same time, increasing propensity to report the crime and bringing trust within the commands and the confidence of the individuals that are a victim of these kinds of assaults to come forward and report the crime.

What we do know about this crime, it's the most under-reported crime in the nation and so, although only about 18 percent of personnel assaulted within the nation report the crime, we know we are at a 33 percent report rate when we started our campaign in September '08. And so we've got clear target markets of wanting to bring up the propensity to report, excuse me.

So with that in mind, we did a lot of actions to try to reduce down that stigma of reporting over the last year and a half. We've engaged and partnered with our Better Opportunities Single Soldier program, our BOSS program across the Army, since we know most of our assaults happen within the 18 to 24-year-old populace of the Army. That is the same populace that the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program works with.

The majority of our assaults happen in barracks, and again, those individuals work, live in the barracks, obviously, work together and their proponent within their command to kind of bring quality of life to soldiers.

So we sponsored with them. We gave them material, train them. They have been very active within their commands of talking out on this issue. They do six events per quarter in the 79 BOSS programs across the Army, again, bringing down that stigma of reporting.

We send materials to every commander down to the battalion level to get out to every soldier, both in active and Reserve component, materials, as well as training materials for the command to engage with their soldiers. We conducted over 600 interactive training sessions across the Army to include three tours in theater and we, in addition to that, sponsored the Army concert series, as well as the Army soldiers' show and that was purposely done because those are very community event-oriented, or or I should say community-oriented events that occur. And as an example, our soldiers show went to not only all around the United States, but to Korea last year and at each one of those events, BOSS soldiers greeted and our program proponents greeted everyone that came in for those entertainment shows and provided our materials, and again to drive discussion in the community.

This is primarily in most civilian communities a little talked about issue. And we wanted to bring it to the forefront, make it easy for folks to communicate, and again, reduce that stigma.

So the same thing with the concert series. We were very active in the concert series on the ground, on site, with materials and sponsoring them and advertisements, again, reducing that stigma. And I can tell you we've had lots of soldiers come forward and talk to us about the issue that they feel more comfortable coming forward in reporting and that their commands are taking this seriously.

What I will say is based on that, we expected our numbers, our reported numbers of assaults to increase this year and that is part, it is online with our strategic metrics, with our campaign plan. We expected it to go up. Last year, we had a little over, close to 1,600

reports. We expect our reports to be around 1,802 this year. They came in at 1,795, that's the combined unrestricted and restricted together. And we see that as a good news story with all the efforts we're doing to try to get individuals to come forward and report these crimes. Not all of those were new assaults; some of those were older assaults that folks felt comfortable, they were now capable of coming forward and reporting.

And what one of our subject matter experts talked about this week is, obviously, it is up to when the victim feels comfortable and capable and not every victim will come forward and report. But we are definitely trying to increase that, not only to take care of the victims, but the survivors of these events, but also to pursue investigation and prosecution effort.

And with that, I'll let CID and OT JAG speak to the other areas of this. MR. SURIAN: This is Guy Surian from CID. Part of the Phase II of the campaign plan is to hold people accountable for offenses that they do, and as part of that program, we've hired special sexual assault investigators, specially trained investigators that do nothing but supervise and investigate sexual assault crimes within the area.

We have them stationed at about 20 some odd installations around the world and there's one in theater, too, also as part of the program.

We've also hired additional forensic laboratory-type folks, scientists and examiners to process and make a quicker turnaround of any evidence obtained and seized during a criminal investigation. And we've gone through a massive training program in the last year and it's continuing this year where we've actually gone out on mobile training teams to take a training packet out to each and every place where I've got a CID agent at to get them all trained up on at least the basics here, victim trauma, victim memory, focused on the victim, it's focused on doing better investigations, more thorough investigations. It's focused on catching serial predators. It's focused on catching similar or MOs that are the same that the guys may have committed and have never been reported on before.

We've taken that program and have gotten all the agents on that. We've developed a two-week training program specially geared towards the sexual assault investigators and their supervisors. We did a couple of iterations of that the last fiscal year. We've got three more planned for this fiscal year where we train the supervisors and the more experienced agents in this critical area so we can get better investigations and can pass it off to the commanders and their supported SJAs so that those individuals are able to make a good decision as to what they want to do in the way of appropriate action.

And I guess that's kind of a segue over to OT JAG.

MR. COSGROVE: Excuse me, this is Charlie Cosgrove of OTJ, I'm sorry, Office of Judge Advocate General. In line with what Guy said, we've hired seven, excuse me, we're about to hire seven highly qualified experts and I apologize for butchering that name or title. Five of them go to the prosecution side of the house. These are civilian people who

have had a great deal of experience prosecuting sexual assault cases and those folks will assist in training at our level here at the Department of the Army in terms of simply taking phone calls from the field and they will assist in going out to the posts, camps and stations and prosecuting, excuse me, in training our young prosecutors and prosecuting these cases.

We have also instituted a program similar to a -- (inaudible) -- program where we specialize and train prosecutors that are aimed solely on sexual assault. We're going to bring in other experts from around the country to assist in training them. We've already hired all but one of our highly qualified experts. That's the one that's going down to the school, that's going to improve our program at our schoolhouse. I think we're about ready to hire somebody. It was not an easy position to fill. But the other -- (inaudible) -- experts are on board and are training. I was privileged to see part of that training just a few weeks ago and it was exceptional. In addition to using those folks, we also used our experts in those services. For example at that training was Ms. Teresa Scalzo, who, although she's an employee of the Navy right now, literally wrote the book for the National District Attorneys Association on prosecuting alcohol, alcohol-induced sexual assault. So we're reaching out, not only to those services, but civilians. We take this program very seriously. We want to help combat this problem.

Additionally, the Army has created a program, the JAG, of course, created a program with the help of the Army where we have added 15 special prosecutors who are dedicated to prosecuting sexual assault cases. We've assigned them out around the Army. The positions are not all filled, but should be all filled, either by late this summer or early fall and these folks have been screened for their ability to prosecute cases. They get extra training. They have responsibility, not only to prosecute these cases at their local post, camp or station, but they have a regional responsibility and they have a responsibility to train other attorneys in the prosecution of these cases.

They are, as you might imagine, they're expected to work hand and glove with our criminal investigators and our medical people in the prosecution of these cases.

WENDY: Great. Well, thank you so much for your responses. Bryant Jordan with military.com. Did you have a question?

Q Yes. Thank you very much.

I was wondering, you know, you mentioned that some of the reports that you've gotten, the most recent are not current, but people feel more comfortable coming to you and saying, okay, this is what happens.

What's the oldest, oldest situation or claim that you've had that you've been able to successfully prosecute?

MS. COLLINS: I think we would have to look at that. I wouldn't have that data, because, obviously, older cases are more difficult to not

only investigate and prosecute because you lack some of the evidence and then you're dealing with older memories if there were victims, both the victims and the witnesses.

We have had some very old cases come through and then we've had a lot that, well, I'll tell you this, when we ran our numbers about two years ago, the majority of our cases try to come through in the first five days. We haven't run at full scrutiny on this year's numbers yet of reported cases, although we have had folks wait up, if we looked at the cases reported in the last year period that they waited almost 322 days to report the case.

MR. COSGROVE: Yeah.

MS. COLLINS: I think our oldest case we know of was a 1940s case that came forward and reported. There are certain crimes, sexual assault crimes that don't have a statute of limitations. So if they come forward, they are investigated to the best of our ability, you know, with available victims and witnesses.

MR. SURIAN: The best we can. A case came through last week that I saw that its just been initiated, so I can't say it's going to get prosecuted or not, but it happened in 2004, so it's a six-year-old case when it came in the front door. And like Carolyn was saying, it does make it difficult. There's a lack of physical evidence right off the bat and there's usually a definite memory lapse when witnesses or potential witnesses make the cases a lot more difficult.

Q Sure. May I ask, what did you do with this case that you heard about from the 1940s? And when did you hear this one?

MS. COLLINS: That was three, four years ago.

MR. COSGROVE: That was three, four years ago. I know we reported it. I doubt that any action was taken on it. I want to say the suspect was deceased, but I could be wrong on that. I'd have to look it up, sir.

Q All right. I was just curious. And who was speaking, sir?

MR. COSGROVE: Mr. Guy Surian from Army CID.

Q Thank you. Thank you very much.

Q Can I just clarify something real fast -- (inaudible) -- 322 days to report the case, is that an average it takes folks to report a case or again you said some of them come in the first five days after an incident.

MS. COLLINS: The majority, when we ran the numbers, the majority of them were coming forward in the first few days after an assault happens, but even if you're not coming in, even if you're coming in five days within the assault happening, there's still a loss of

evidence there, you know, if it's not an immediate report potentially, depending on what kind of crime we're talking about.

You know, sexual assault is a very broad-based term that includes everything from indecent touching, you know, physical contact with an intimate body part upwards of more violent crimes of rape or attempted rape.

So that's 1,795 just for me to clarify what that number means, that is the number of cases that were reported that involved either a soldier as a victim or as an offender in an allegation of sexual assault, which could be indecent touching up to the more violent sexual assault crime.

Q Got it. Okay. So what was the 322 number if you could clarify that for me again?

MS. COLLINS: I stated when we looked at some of the cases reported in a year as an example, one of the victims of a case waited 322 days to come forward.

Q Okay. Got it. Thank you. Thank you very much.

WENDY: And mike, did you have any other questions?

Q I don't. I'm good to go. Thank you.

WENDY: Okay. And Bryant?

Q Yes. I didn't realize there were two of us here. Yeah. You had mentioned that some sexual assault cases do not have a statute of limitations. Would those be allegations of rape or is it something else that I'm not thinking of?

MR. COSGROVE: Yes, sir, that would be rape because it authorizes the death penalty. When there is a death penalty authorized, there's a -- (inaudible) -- statute of limitations on the crime.

Q Oh, okay. All right. Thank you for that.

WENDY: And Bryant, any other questions?

Q If I might just if nobody else has a question. Sure.

WENDY: Keep shooting.

Q Sure. All right. I know you're dealing here with the active duty, the active duty force and all that. But are the programs here in any way linked to or is there any kind of outreach to veterans, you know, women veterans, especially who may have had a story to tell, but did not?

MS. COLLINS: We are certainly working with our counterpart office at the Department of Defense as a panel and as a group that we

work with and all the services, assistant secretaries, the manpower Reserve affairs representatives work with, that includes proponents on it from Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control, Department of Justice, as well as the Veterans Affairs. And so we do work closely with them. We try to partner as much as we can with other federal agencies, as well, at the more strategic level and then down at the community level, we also partner with local law enforcement, hospitals, rape crisis centers and others.

So we try to work to work that partnership across the board.

Q Sure.

MS. COLLINS: And as an example, our National Guard units, we have sexual assault response coordinators at the joint force headquarters and the commanders work with the governor offices and that as well.

What I do want to say though is with our prevention actions, you know, obviously, our goal is to prevent the crimes before they ever occur, and so our prevention strategy is built around intervention, action and motivation or in that our acronym is I AM STRONG.

Q Right.

MS. COLLINS: And so we are trying to incorporate that down to every soldier level on that intervention, that willingness to not only recognize when there are red flags out there, its seeing where there are situations where it just requires them to make conversations or engage themselves to ensure the safety of everyone. But that is our ultimate goal is to have them trained on those skill sets to not only recognize the red flags of sexual harassment and sexual assault, but to intervene and stop it, and obviously, stop it even at the harassment level if we're going to truly work prevention before it escalates or builds a climate where sexual assaults could occur, you know. But we do know is that there is sexual innuendo and sexual harassment going on in communities and that there is a more likelihood of things escalating up to sexual assault.

So we're trying to address it at the lowest level, so the strategy speaks to both harassment and assault prevention.

Q Sure. Thank you.

MS. COLLINS: What I would also like to say is one of the areas we're working with our accessions command within our U.S. Army Cadet Command underneath there is we're working to get training down, actually to the junior ROTC high school level, as well as working partnerships with the ROTC within our colleges, and again, training our cadre, making training materials available and as we work with our communities as well. Obviously, this is not a military problem; this is a national problem. It's an international problem. We see this issue down all the way to our elementary schools and we actually see children that have had issues of trying to be charged in our junior highs as well.

So we're trying to partner with the nation at all levels, local communities, states, at the federal level, as well, again to address this issue at all levels. It's not a gender-specific issue; it's across the board. And so we're trying to partner across the board to be the best at, not only working this, but the best partner with all of our community partnerships to address this crime because it is a crime, as we mentioned earlier, not just affecting one individual, it affects folks around the nation.

What we do know is about one in six females will be assaulted in their lifetime and the numbers say about 1 in 33 males, though, again, a problem, and again not unique to the United States, it's a problem worldwide.

Q Sure. Sure. Would you know, any of you, whether in the last number of years any of the female soldiers who have committed suicide were part of an investigation into a sexual assault against them at all?

MR. SURIAN: I know of one, for sure.

Q Was that case able to proceed after the woman died?

MR. SURIAN: I'd have to check the record on that. I don't have it with me.

Q Sure.

MR. COSGROVE: If he could, I could call back to Jennifer and get the specifics on that.

MS. COLLINS: I would like to say before we go though, we did just start a new pilot, 1 March of this year that we're excited about and that's expansion of the program. This was previously a soldier- only program and we expanded that 1 March in Europe to include family members or civilian employees and their family members, retirees and DOD contractors that are authorized health benefits at a medical treatment facility.

So we are actually piloting the expansion of the program for all of the Department of Defense with that and we expect the policy will be changed, a future policy, Department of Defense policy will be changing for the authorization and expansion of cost for services on this issue.

Q That's good. Okay. Thank you very, very much.

MS. COLLINS: You're welcome. WENDY: Okay. I think that wraps up our questions. Did you have any closing remarks or anything we didn't touch on that you'd like to address, Ms. Collins or anyone else in the room?

MR. COSGROVE: This is Charlie Cosgrove. I'd like to add a comment, please. I believe when I spoke I mentioned seven highly qualified experts and I would like to say that only five of those are

going to the prosecution side of the house. As you probably understand, the Army, everything in the Army is deployable, including its justice system. We have our own entire court, defense counsel. The Army has an obligation to provide defense services to all its soldiers and two of those highly qualified experts go to the defense side of the house.

Q Perfect. Thank you.

MS. COLLINS: And I just wanted to wrap up by saying, you know, again, we're continuing the momentum of our campaign, you know, and with that we want to ensure that Army-wide commitment that ownership of sexual harassment, sexual assault prevention and we have to achieve that to move into the next phase of our campaign, which is achieving cultural change.

The ultimate goal of the campaign is to change the culture within the Army so this doesn't occur within our community, and obviously, influence other communities and the nation on this issue. We want to, we think this is an issue that needs to be changed across America and just as an example of that, I would say that earlier this week, Mrs. Rosenthal from the White House, from the program of violence against women, which is a new program and the White House came and spoke at our summit as well, and again, we're working very hard.

We had our sister services at our summit as well and the joint offices as well with us. So, again, we're partnering across the board to address this crime.

WENDY: Great. Thank you so much, ma'am. Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you everyone for joining us from the conference there for taking time to address this issue. Thank you to the bloggers who dialed in. I'll have the transcript and the audio file following the Roundtable.

MS. COLLINS: Lindsey, if I could just add one thing, if they would like to know more about the program, they're certainly, if they'd like to look at preventsexualassault.army.mil, that would be great.

WENDY: Excellent. Thank you, ma'am.

MR. COSGROVE: Thank you.

WENDY: Thank you for joining us online. This concludes the Roundtable. END.