



INSPECTOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
400 ARMY NAVY DRIVE  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-4704

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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

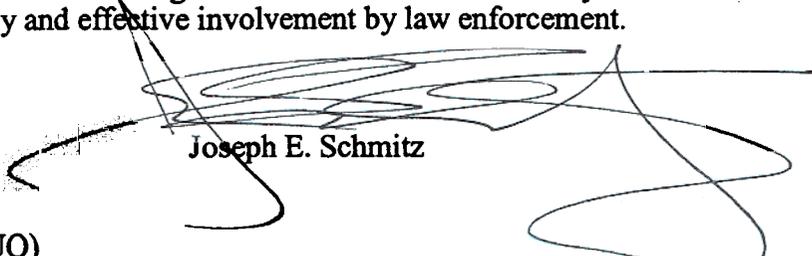
SUBJECT: Evaluation of Sexual Assault, Reprisal, and Related Leadership Challenges at the United States Air Force Academy (Report No. IPO2004C003)

We have completed our report evaluating sexual assault problems at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). Our work involved interviewing approximately 150 people and reviewing literally thousands of documents, including documents used in the previous Air Force Working Group and Fowler Panel studies. The attached report describes our work and presents factual findings and recommendations. It also identifies individuals sharing responsibility for contributing to or acquiescing in USAFA problems, including confidential sexual assault reporting policies and processes, some of which circumvented statutory and policy requirements.

As explained more fully in the attached report, we conclude that the overall root cause of the sexual assault problems at the Air Force Academy was "the failure of successive chains of command over the past 10 years to acknowledge the severity of the problem. Consequently, they failed to initiate and monitor adequate corrective measures to change the culture until recently." Although we address each Air Force leader implicated in our report individual-by-individual, in a general sense we found many leaders in positions of authority could have been better role models, could have been more vigilant in inspecting those placed under their command, failed to guard against and suppress sexual misconduct between and among cadets (whether or not prosecutable as a specific crime), and failed to hold cadets accountable for such misconduct. These leadership failures, whether based on lack of moral courage to confront difficult challenges, lack of discernment, or inadequate training, are precisely the types of failures that led Congress to legislate the 1775 Naval "Exemplary Conduct" leadership standard for the Army and the Air Force in 1997. On numerous occasions, including my own speech to the entire Corps of Cadets earlier this year (attached as an appendix to the report), I have urged Air Force leaders to utilize this statutory standard as a tool for teaching and training Air Force leaders and otherwise for addressing the leadership challenges associated with sexual assaults at the Air Force Academy.

On September 29, 2004, we forwarded for comment a draft copy of the determination (Part V, enclosed report) applicable to each official that we determined was responsible for creating, contributing to, or abiding the USAFA sexual assault problems. We adjusted the report based on the their comments, which are included in the report.

We appreciate the manner in which the Secretary of the Air Force and his staff have focused on this challenge since January 2003. On November 9, 2004, we forwarded a draft report to the Secretary of the Air Force, who concurred with all recommendations except one (see Appendix J). We share his concerns about ensuring that the policies and command climate encourage reporting, confidentiality, victim protection, and effective law enforcement, and we are willing to work with him to ensure that the evolving confidentiality policies address all of those concerns. However, we disagree with changes which address confidentiality concerns without simultaneously ensuring timely and effective involvement by law enforcement.

  
Joseph E. Schmitz

Attachment:  
Final Evaluation Report (FOUO)