



Hagel Meets With Sexual Assault Response Systems Review Panel

NCO Journal

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel had his first in-person meeting Thursday in Washington with a panel charged with reviewing the Defense Department's response systems to sexual assaults and related crimes.

Before Thursday, Hagel had spoken to Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel members via teleconference. The Defense Department established the panel in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, he added.

"The panel will conduct an independent review and assessment of the systems used to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate crimes involving sexual assault and related offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice," Pentagon press secretary George Little said. "It will develop recommendations to improve the effectiveness of those systems."

The meeting came as a deadline nears for the Army's active component to complete a sexual assault prevention and response stand-down. The effort was outlined by a memorandum signed by Hagel on May 17. It asks that the Army conduct refresher training and credential

reviews as part of its Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention, or SHARP, program by July 1. The reserve component must be done by Sept. 1.

During the administrative portion of Thursday's meeting, Hagel thanked the panel members for bringing their expertise help the Defense Department address one of its most pressing challenges, Little said.

"Secretary Hagel made clear that his goal is to eradicate the crime of sexual assault from the military, and that he is open to all their ideas on how to accomplish this objective," Little said. "He believes the panel's findings and recommendations will play a critical role in ensuring that the department, working closely with Congress, makes well-informed decisions to improve sexual assault response and prevention — considering all the options on the table."

Hagel asked the panel to work deliberately and carefully, based on thorough research and analysis, but also emphasized the importance of acting quickly, Little said, and he pledged the department's full support for the panel's efforts ■



<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/NCO-Journal/>

<https://www.facebook.com/NCOJournal>

<https://twitter.com/NCOJournal>

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NCO Journal, the U.S. Army, or the Department of Defense.

