



MILITARY TRAINING CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED QUICKLY

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Executive Summary

Following the Senate's vote to authorize the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" (DADT), the Defense Department is expected to request up to a year to train all service members in "issues related to repeal," and the Secretary of Defense is expected to refuse to certify the repeal of DADT until all service members have been trained. As a result, DADT may remain law until late 2011.

This study shows that the forthcoming Pentagon request for a year to train all service members is not based on a reasonable assessment of what it takes to educate the troops. Using case studies of other Pentagon training efforts, this study shows that

- The Pentagon can quickly train all personnel regardless of location
- Training in combat zones is not complicated, and can be done rapidly
- Training is not prerequisite to a policy going into force
- The repeal of DADT is an uncomplicated subject to explain via training

Any claim that DADT cannot be repealed until after the completion of exhaustive training is inconsistent with actual military needs.

Background

On November 30, a Comprehensive Review Working Group released its findings following an assessment, [ordered](#) by the Secretary of Defense, of "how best to implement a repeal" of DADT. Without addressing a timeframe, the report called for extensive training on the issue and concluded that such training ought to be completed in advance of the repeal of DADT.

The Working Group [report](#), along with its accompanying implementation [support plan](#), is not the first government document to raise concerns about training the troops in preparation for the repeal of DADT. An October 14, 2010 [declaration](#) by the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness mentions training and education twenty eight times, and inclusion of the declaration's supporting documents increases that number to forty four. The declaration states that "training programs cannot be provided instantaneously" and that "some number of months" will be necessary. Similar claims are iterated in an October 20, 2010 [emergency motion](#) by the Assistant Attorney General, who said that "effectively developing proper training and guidance with respect to a change in policy will take time and effort."

The Working Group's [support plan](#) for implementation conceives of a three-stage process: pre-repeal, implementation, and sustainment. The repeal itself is envisaged as going into effect sometime during the implementation phase.

Basics of military training

Military training can be formal or informal: formal training requires trained instructors, lesson plans and support materials. Informal training does not. When Pentagon policies are changed or created, a decision must be made as to whether formal or informal training is required.

When formal training is deemed necessary, the Pentagon often provides training guidance and then requests the services to report back with implementation plans. Training materials and/or additional policy guidance are then, in turn, disseminated through the chain of command and/or through functional (e.g. medical, legal, security) channels. Training support materials typically include *general*, *leadership* and *functional* modules, tailored to the respective audience's responsibilities.

The services rely upon their training commands, working with headquarters, to develop and deliver formal training modules. Historically, training has been left to the individual services, although in recent years the services have collaborated on a more frequent basis to ensure standardization.

Training can be as simple as notification by email for baseline awareness, or it can be as elaborate as a full-blown ancillary and familiarization training program with recurring requirements, tailored modules and specially trained initial cadres, groups of individuals who are used to train the trainers or act as facilitators. The arsenal of tools used to accomplish training ranges from a basic memorandum to Power Point presentations,

computer-based training (CBT), interactive videos, and live and facilitated briefings. The chosen tools are informed by the service, content and desired results. Oftentimes, more than one tool is used.

The Department of Defense Handbook [Glossary for Training](#) defines *ancillary training* as "training in subjects that pertain to the duty performance of personnel but are separate from the individual's primary job." *Awareness training* refers to the dissemination of "information that provides an individual with the basic knowledge/understanding of a policy, program, or system" and is commonly construed as a subset of ancillary training. The training of troops on the repeal of DADT could be construed as either awareness or ancillary training.

For those responsible for enforcing or implementing a policy, training is characterized as *familiarization training*, which is "training to acquaint personnel with a specific system or to keep personnel abreast of changing concepts and requirements." If the training were to focus on standards of conduct and military values, it could be construed (although somewhat awkwardly) as *refresher training* which is "used to reinforce previous training and/or sustain/regain previously acquired skills and knowledge."

Examples of current ancillary training programs -- the names of which may be service dependent -- include Force Protection, [DoD Information Assurance Awareness](#), and Self-Aid Buddy Care (SABC). Other examples include Sexual Assault Prevention and

Response, Combating Trafficking in Persons (SAPR), Suicide Prevention, and Homosexual Policy Awareness.

Most of these programs were initiated either through the National Defense Authorization Act or via presidential directive, and all entail recurring training requirements ranging from one to two years. With the exception of SAPR and SABC, all of the examples above are self-trained using computer based training modules delivered on-demand and globally through Army Knowledge Online ([AKO](#)), Navy Knowledge Online ([NKO](#)), [Marinenet](#), and in the case of Air Force, the Advanced Distributed Learning Service ([ADLS](#)). Many of the programs provide commander support materials and guidance.

An examination of how the armed forces implemented some of these government-mandated ancillary training programs shows that the time it takes to develop, deliver, and accomplish training depends not only on the complexity of the subject, but also on command buy-in, clarity, deadlines, and oversight. Absent these factors, training can take a long time. By contrast, if leaders set clear deadlines and monitor progress, training can be accomplished quickly.

In no case examined in this study was the implementation of a policy delayed by training. The military has treated training as a continuous improvement process, developed and executed concurrently with policy making. Formal integration of new or changed policies

into accession programs and professional military education (PME) curricula, and the publication of regulations often happen after a policy goes into effect.

Military training can be immediate, even in combat zones

The Pentagon can train all troops almost immediately, even in combat zones. This section of the study addresses three tools for immediate training: *notifications*, *commanders calls*, and *stand-downs*.

Before discussing these tools, however, a brief case study of immediate training is in order. One example which illustrates this point is the military's recent decision to loosen restrictions on internet use. On February 25 2010, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a [memorandum](#) which directed that all DoD unclassified computers be configured to allow access to "internet-based capabilities" such as YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and Google Apps.

Just over a month later, on March 29, the Marines issued a [message](#), thereby implementing the policy with immediate effect; it was announced that the policy would be later incorporated into regulations. On April 26, the Air Force [began](#) a two-week phased implementation. And, finally, on June 30 the Marines announced, by [message](#), the online availability of social media guidance. The Navy had previously opened up its network, so only policy guidance was required. On August 19, the Navy released [ALNAV 056/10](#) and [057/10](#). In the fall of 2010, the Navy released its [Social Media Handbook](#).

The Marines, concerned about security, had banned social networking sites in an August 2009 [message](#). Despite the security implications and extensive policy rewrites required by the Defense Secretary's new 2010 [policy](#), the services were able to comply with the order -- to lift the ban -- as early as a month after issuance. Furthermore, networks were opened up before the services published policy guidance materials. Here, policy guidance sufficed as training. A Pentagon official was [quoted](#) as saying "Training people so they know what can and cannot be disclosed on the Internet is a more effective policy than simply banning use of social media on work computers."

Notifications

The Defense Department can notify the entire military on any subject almost immediately. Depending on the service, DTMs and Program Guidance Memoranda (PGM), are then either transmitted by email or converted into message format for transmission through the Defense Messaging System (DMS). Dissemination of such communiqués can and does happen in a matter of hours through command and functional channels. Once in the hands of commanders, promulgation to the lowest ranks can occur electronically within hours, as well; if a live briefing is warranted or directed, the information can be delivered through morning formations or commanders calls easily within a week or two (if not within days) whether in garrison or deployed. The DoD maintains a list of Directive-Type Memoranda (DTM) [here](#).

Consider several examples of the use of messages for the purposes of immediate notification. During a Pentagon [news briefing](#) on March 25 2010 the Secretary of Defense announced that he would be signing, immediately following the briefing, a memorandum that established new policy on the handling of discharges under DADT. That same day, the Commandant of the Coast Guard signed a [memorandum](#) which said: "These interim policy changes take effect immediately, although the Services have 30 days to promulgate guidance. An ALCOAST providing greater detail for unit commanders is forthcoming. In the meantime, commanders should consult with the Personnel Service Center and their Servicing Judge Advocate."

Some of the most recent examples of the Pentagon's capability to rapidly develop and disseminate policy came in October, 2010. Following a court-ordered [injunction](#) against DADT on the October 12, the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness had, by the October 15, issued a [memorandum](#) which advised gays against revealing their sexual orientation. An in-garrison soldier confirmed having received that information during morning roll call on October 19, seven days following the triggering event.

Similarly, recruiters were directed on October 15 to begin accepting openly gay recruits, three days following the triggering event. The Defense Secretary and Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness [issued](#) memoranda on October 21st in response to the stay of the injunction, which had occurred the day prior. The next day, October 22, a Marine [message](#) and a Navy [message](#) were released, thereby implementing the guidance at the service level with immediate effect. Here again, mere notification sufficed as

training; neither formal familiarization training plans nor materials were developed, or even deemed necessary.

Commanders Call

One particularly effective tool for immediate training of the entire force is the *commanders call*. In this case, commanders simply decide, or are directed, to hold commanders calls to present and discuss important issues. This was [the approach](#) used by the British Ministry of Defense when it decided to lift its ban on gay in its military, and training was limited to a "comprehensive briefing pack" provided to commanders for use in live briefings. By ordering service-wide commanders calls, the Pentagon could complete training of the entire force within weeks if not days.

Stand-down

A more extreme and rarely used tool for training is the *stand down*. A stand down directive reduces a military unit to mission-essential operations only in order to give commanders the time and opportunity to meet with personnel, typically to emphasize safety. The stand down is an extreme tool that is judiciously employed and that establishes the services' capability to quickly assemble the troops for training, wherever they are.

In response to a string of ground and air mishaps, for example, the Air Force Chief of Staff [ordered](#) on February 5, 2002 that all Air Force units conduct a safety down-day by February 15, a 10-day compliance window. Following a December 29, 2006 incident in

which two sailors were killed, the Navy [ordered](#) an operational stand down on all submarines, with reports due by January 19, 2007. This left commanders less than three weeks to comply. In the wake of a nuclear safety mishap on August 30 2007, the Air Combat Command commander [directed](#) that a safety down-day be held on September 14, a 14-day compliance window.

Training in combat zones

Tallying across all services (including Guard and Reserve) and including civilians, there are over three million people in the military. According to the [Defense Manpower Data Center](#), fewer than 200,000 troops are deployed and 103,000 thousand are afloat, approximately ten percent of the total force. While there are of course special training considerations for this subset of the force, there is empirical evidence that training can occur in combat zones and has occurred when deemed necessary.

The Pentagon's Working Group [study](#) on gays in the military even concedes that “during this time of war, the Services have undertaken education and training in deployed areas on a number of important personnel matters” and that “the training and education associated with repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell can be accommodated.” Even in combat zones, notification (i.e. informal training) is immediate, as the military is adept at disseminating orders, particularly to the field. Commander's calls are possible as well in the combat environment. Most troops can be mustered for sit-down discussions within 24-48 hours.

Case studies

The next section of this paper offers case studies of military training. The case studies show that when the Pentagon sets clear goals and deadlines and monitors the development of programs, service-wide training can be accomplished quickly. In addition, the case studies show that policies usually go into effect before or concurrent with training. In no case examined in this study was the implementation of a policy delayed by training.

Homosexual Policy Awareness

On January 29 1993, President Clinton [directed](#) the Secretary of Defense to conduct a review of the policy that excluded gays and lesbians from military service. Four days later, the Secretary issued interim policy changes to the services with immediate effect.

A couple of months later, the Secretary directed the formation of a Military Working Group (MWG) to "develop and assess" policy; a RAND [study](#) ran concurrently. The MWG's [report](#), delivered on June 8, identified education as one of four policy areas to address in implementation. The report stated that "Each Service will provide training to their personnel, at every level, to explain the new policy regarding homosexuals. The DoD will provide an education plan for the Services to use as a guideline in their separate training programs, The education package will focus on the changes to the DoD policy and will not be an attempt to change any deeply held, religious and ethical beliefs; that is, sensitivity training."

Just over a month later, on July 19, the President [announced](#) the new "Policy on Homosexual Conduct in the Armed Forces", which was to go into effect on October 1. In [remarks](#) to the House Armed Services Committee a few days later, the Secretary said "you need a certain amount of time to get the word out to the troops, and get all the paperwork, and get everybody understanding what the new policy is. You can't just announce it on one day, initiate the policy the next. You've got to have some time for people to absorb it." That "certain amount of time" needed was presumed (at least in 1993) to be 73 days from the time that policy was declared.

On November 30 1993, the National Defense Act for fiscal year 2004 was enacted, codifying the policies that persist today. The Pentagon's [training guidance](#) was provided less a month later, as was a Secretary of Defense [memo](#) requesting implementation plans within 30 days and announcing that the new policy would be in effect on February 5 2005. In this case, just over 40 days were allowed for training to occur, if it was to occur at all, in advance of the policy's effective date.

Suicide Prevention

Suicide prevention (SP) ancillary training efforts have been developed largely independently by each service, dating as far back as 1984, with all the services stepping up efforts in 1996. For that reason, SP's training history is somewhat fragmented. The following discussion covers recent developments pertaining to SP training following increased government interest.

The Army's and Air Force's suicide prevention efforts demonstrate the services' capability to execute training worldwide rapidly. The Army's program in particular provides insight into current military training methodology (phased training, commander support materials, and video-facilitated briefings), as well as proof that training in combat zones is feasible. The Air Force provided training in deployed locations as well. Both programs relied heavily on commander involvement, an integral element of any successful campaign.

On October 14 2008, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2009 was signed into law. The law directed the Pentagon to form a task force on suicide prevention within 180 days. In turn, the task force was ordered to submit a report within twelve months of its formation, and to offer recommendations "regarding a comprehensive policy designed to prevent suicide by members of the Armed Forces." The Pentagon [announced](#) the members of the task force in August 2009, and its [final report](#) was delivered in August 2010. The report listed "Wellness Enhancement and Training" as one of four focus areas.

On February 6, 2009, the Army [directed](#) a three-phase suicide prevention operation. Phase I was a month-long stand-down beginning February 15 (nine days later) "during which all soldiers and DA civilians will participate in a mandatory training period conducted by commanders and leaders down to the squad or equivalent level. Unit commanders schedule and conduct training consistent with unit training and drill schedules, yet in such a manner as to be meaningful and to impress the seriousness of the

subject on all members of the organization.” The training lasted for two to four hours, and commanders were provided with a facilitators' guide and interactive video which were available at [Army Knowledge Online](#).

Phase II, from March 15 to July 15, was a ‘chain teach’ with supporting materials designed to develop "an increased awareness in commanders, leaders at all levels, soldiers, DA civilians and family members...” Phase III, a period that was referred to as ‘sustainment,’ established “routine mandatory annual training requirements, and institutionalizes Army suicide prevention training in Army policy and procedures.”

The executive order stated that, “These training requirements apply to all soldiers and DA civilians in army units and organizations regardless of component or deployment status. Units deployed are to organize and conduct Army suicide prevention stand-down and chain teach tasks in such a manner that it is meaningful to soldiers and DA civilians assigned, yet consistent with mission, security and other tactical constraints.”

On April 30, 2010, Air Force Public Affairs [reported](#) that the Air Force Chief of Staff had directed all units to hold a half-day 'Wingman Stand Down' by the end of May. The order was precipitated by a high suicide rate and a concern about motor vehicle safety. The [planning document](#) directed that the event should "emphasize awareness, accountability, team building, communication, and interaction..." The stand down featured unit commander comments, video presentations on safety and suicide prevention, guided small-group discussions, and wingman card distribution. Page nine

of a [pamphlet](#) on the Air Force's Suicide Prevention Program is an excellent treatment on matters of leadership, efficacy, and rapid dissemination.

Army and Air Force efforts to develop and implement service-wide training on suicide prevention show that such efforts can be completed quickly, even in combat zones.

Combatting Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) ([website](#))

Combatting Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) is an example in which the Pentagon provided substantial training before issuing a formal Defense Department instruction. That said, training modules were developed slowly, and CTIP is a cautionary tale of how, without command support, unambiguous language and specific deadlines, implementation and training may languish.

A year after [Executive Order 13257](#) established an Interagency Task Force to address what the President deemed a "[special evil](#)" and what a State Department representative [called](#) "a primary human rights issue of the 21st century," the White House [announced](#) the signing of National Security Presidential Directive 22 ([NSPD 22](#)), dated December 16t 2002. Government agencies, including the Department of Defense, were given 90 days in which to "promulgate plans to implement" the directive, which included government-wide CTIP training requirements.

According to the Defense Department Inspector General, those plans were [still being staffed](#) as of July 2003. Momentum was somehow lost and over one year later, in

January 2004, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a [memorandum](#) establishing the Defense Department's "zero tolerance" policy as well as the "objective" to educate all service members and civilians serving overseas.

In August 2004, it was [reported](#) that the Advanced Distributed Learning Co-Lab at University of Wisconsin-Madison had been selected by Defense Department to develop two online training modules: a general awareness module, and a leadership module. The next month, the Secretary of Defense [directed](#) "commanders at all levels to ensure their units are trained."

Two months later, on November 17, the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [announced](#) the availability of a downloadable training program as well as an on-line version to be available in January 2005. While the Defense Secretary's memo did not narrow the span, the Undersecretary's memo limited training to those deploying overseas. Neither memorandum established deadlines.

In [remarks](#) given by the Defense Department Inspector General in March 2005, three training modules were outlined: The *basic module* to offer core awareness training for all personnel serving overseas; the *commanders' module* for heads of large and small units; and the *law enforcement module* for investigators and law enforcement professionals.

The basic module was said to have been completed. A PowerPoint presentation with instructor notes had been in use for several months worldwide and "many if not most"

units had received training (in this case, likely meaning overseas units). It was also stated that an online, interactive multimedia version of the basic module would soon be available online (The January, 2005 delivery date had been missed).

In April 2005, more than two years after [NSPD 22](#) was signed and more than a year after the Defense Department's policy was established, the Marine Corps was the first service to send a [message](#) tasking leaders at all levels to ensure that TIP awareness training was accomplished. No deadline was set. A naval administrative [message](#), disseminated in November 2005, directed that sailors take TIP training on [Navy Knowledge Online](#) within 90 days, meaning that accomplishment did not occur until three years after Presidential directive.

On October 14 2005, the President issued [Executive Order 13387](#), which amended the Uniform Code of Military Justice to criminalize the solicitation of prostitution. The order was later incorporated into the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act ([TVPRA of 2005](#)) and signed into law in January, 2006. By June 2006, the Defense Department was reporting that more than 450,000 service members had accomplished training and the [Trafficking in Persons Report](#) announced that all military personnel would be trained by the end of the year.

At a [joint hearing](#) before the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee in June 2006, it was stated that a leadership module would be available by August, and criminal investigator training module by October.

A November 2006 [report](#) by the Defense Department Inspector General, *Evaluation of DoD Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons*, makes over 100 references to training and notes that the Air Force had sent a message in February 2006, stating that “....commanders at all levels are directed to ensure their units are trained...” The Air Force was reporting that 80 percent of personnel had completed initial TIP training by October 26 2006, nearly four years after enactment of NSPD-22.

On February 15th 2007, more than three years after the Pentagon declared its zero tolerance policy, a Defense Department [Instruction](#), *Combatting Trafficking in Persons*, was released, superseding all previous memos.

As [reported](#) by the Armed Forces Press Service, the Defense Department had "declared a zero tolerance policy and is employing training to achieve that objective, and is implementing new provisions of the Uniform Code of Military Justice." The progression is notable: declare, train, implement. Despite global concern about the issue, as well as the fact that CTIP employed a simple, 30-minute computer-based training tool and required few programmatic changes, the Defense Department was slow to execute. Initial communications from the Pentagon included ambiguous language and did not set deadlines. Consequently, the services were slow to comply.

Conclusion

These case studies demonstrate that training can take place quickly, even in combat zones, and that in general policies are implemented *before* training takes place or concurrent with training. Hence, the Pentagon's forthcoming request for up to a year to train the troops prior to the repeal of DADT is not based on actual military needs. The RAND Corporation has stated that once a decision is made to lift a gay ban, the transition should proceed quickly so as to minimize disruptions. Foreign military officials convey the same message.

Whatever preparations are ultimately deemed necessary, the Pentagon ought to be able to pull them off faster than it did the implementation of DADT in 1994, which took approximately 40 days. In invoking their certification rights, the President, Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should keep in mind that the [support plan](#) is complete; the Pentagon is presumably at least three weeks into the pre-repeal phase; and Leadership, Professionalism, and Respect (the key implementation message as per the support plan) are not new competencies for the U.S. military.

Following initial baseline notifications via memorandum, accompanied by early guidance (the support plan's Talking Points, FAQs, and Vignettes), the repeal can go into effect; 'flash to bang' can be a matter of days. And while the services toil over more elaborate training programs, they will find, as so many other nations' militaries discovered, that

unit cohesion and combat effectiveness will remain intact, that there will not be any
"[enormous consequences](#)," and that this was all much ado about nothing.