



**Observation of Sexual Assault Response  
Coordinator (SARC) and  
Victim Advocate (VA) Sexual Assault  
Prevention and Response Training**

**Report to U.S. Navy**

**Prepared by the Department of Defense Sexual Assault  
Prevention and Response Office**

**FINAL - 8 March 2013**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND .....	2
APPROACH .....	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	3
FINDINGS .....	4
STRENGTHS OF NAVY SAPR VA TRAINING.....	4
Training Practices and Methods .....	4
Training Content .....	5
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NAVY SAPR VA TRAINING .....	6
Training Practices and Methods .....	6
Training Content .....	7
STRENGTHS OF NAVY SARC TRAINING.....	9
Training Practices and Methods .....	9
Training Content .....	11
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NAVY SARC TRAINING.....	13
Training Practices and Methods .....	13
Training Content .....	15

## BACKGROUND

This report is in response to the requirement in DoDI 6495.02 for Services and the National Guard Bureau (NGB) to submit a copy of their Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) training programs, or SAPR training elements, to the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) through the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) for evaluation of consistency and compliance with DoD SAPR training standards contained in DoDI 6495.02<sup>1</sup>.

At the heart of the Department's sexual assault response program are the Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) and SAPR Victim Advocates (SAPR VA), who support victims throughout the reporting and response process. In 2010, SAPRO began working with the Military Services to make revisions to DoD Instruction (DoDI) 6495.02, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program Procedures*, including revisions to SARC and SAPR VA training requirements. The version of DoDI 6495.02 currently being processed for reissuance includes a requirement that all DoD sexual assault responders—including SARCs and SAPR VAs—receive the same baseline training in order to standardize services throughout the Department.

With the passage of Public Law 112-81, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (NDAA for FY12), Congress underscored the importance of SARC and SAPR VA training by codifying into federal law a mandate for the Secretary of Defense to establish a professional and uniform training and certification program for SARCs and SAPR VAs. In 2012, the Department established the DoD Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program (D-SAACP) and contracted with the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA)<sup>2</sup> to administer the program to fulfill this requirement, standardize sexual assault victim advocacy across the Department, and professionalize the roles of the SARCs and SAPR VAs who perform victim advocacy duties. A key element of the D-SAACP is the evaluation and oversight of SARC and SAPR VA training that ensures the Department's victim advocacy core competencies are being realized and that the training complies with DoDI 6495.02 policy standards. The Services must have their training pre-approved by the D-SAACP Review Committee, and SARCs and SAPR VAs must complete training prior to applying for certification.

Another standardized document utilized is the DoD Standards for Victim Assistance Services, which was developed to establish a foundational level of victim assistance services while recognizing the distinct missions, skill sets, and responsibilities of the Department's various victim assistance-related

---

<sup>1</sup> Note: The DoD SAPRO team realizes that training requirements used to review this course include those outlined in the revised DoDI 6495.02, which has not yet been reissued as of the date of this report but is expected to be in the near term. However, the information provided in this report is intended to support the U.S. Navy in meeting the requirements set forth in the revised version of the DoDI.

<sup>2</sup> Note: NOVA is the National Organization for Victim Assistance, a 501(c)(3) organization. It is the oldest national victim assistance organization of its type in the United States. NOVA established the National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP) in 2003 as the first voluntary credentialing program available to crime victim advocates nationwide. The DoD contracted with NOVA to process the applications. The applications are reviewed by the D-SAACP Review Committee, which consists of NACP members and includes military subject matter experts.

programs. The Standards include both competency and ethical standards for DoD victim assistance personnel, including SARCs and SAPR VAs.

## APPROACH

DoD SAPRO utilized a team of military personnel and training experts to review the U.S. Navy training for SARCs and SAPR VAs. The review focused on evaluating instructional practices and methods as well as course content against the DoDI 6495.02<sup>1</sup>, the DoD Standards for Victim Assistance Services, and the SARC/SAPR VA Competencies Framework. The DoD SAPRO team consolidated findings among three reviewers in order to develop the strengths and recommendations of the Navy's SARC and SAPR VA courses in this report.

The DoD SAPRO team reviewed the following two Navy course offerings:

1. **SAPR VA Training.** This 40-hour course is a requirement for all Navy SAPR VAs and SARCs and consists of eight training modules with presentation slides, discussions, videos, and practical exercises. The Navy recently revised this course and submitted the draft instructor's guide to DoD SAPRO for evaluation and compliance with training requirements in the DoDI 6495.02.
2. **SARC Program Online Course.** This online course hosted on the Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC) Counseling, Advocacy & Prevention Training Portal is a 40-hour course required of all Navy SARCs. The course consists of five training modules consisting of training content and a quiz with twenty multiple-choice questions. DoD SAPRO reviewed the online course and developed the strengths and recommendations outlined in this report.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Navy's SAPR VA training meets the D-SAACP 40-hour requirement for certification, provides both SARCs and SAPR VAs with a good introduction to their SAPR roles and responsibilities, and employs elements of adult learning theory, which is a requirement outlined in the forthcoming version of the DoDI 6495.02. The Navy's SAPR VA course employs effective adult learning techniques, assesses students' mastery of course content, leverages experts when possible, and uses professional and polished training materials. To improve, the Navy should consider alternating instructional strategies to keep the student's attention, and tailor the content to address the needs of SAPR VAs. Factual errors and adding missing training content required by the DoDI 6495.02 will also need to be addressed.

The Navy's online SARC training course expands on the content provided in the SAPR VA course and introduces new information specific to the SARC's role. The online format is an acceptable training delivery method for geographically dispersed, onboard ship, and forward deployed Navy SARCs. The ease of course access and usability also contributes to the student's learning experience. To improve, the Navy should consider incorporating adult learning strategies, applying additional best practices for the design of online training, and using an alternate delivery method to enhance the SARC training experience.

Details of all strengths and recommendations can be found in the Findings section.

## FINDINGS

### Strengths of Navy SAPR VA Training

#### Training Practices and Methods

1. **The Navy SAPR VA course employs effective adult learning strategies and interactivity.**

Each module in the Navy SAPR VA course provides multiple opportunities for students to engage in active learning techniques and apply new skills and knowledge in a variety of ways (e.g., small group discussions, practical exercises, panel discussions, etc.). These strategies are a best practice because they reinforce learning of important SAPR VA responsibilities and SAPR program elements.

- a. In Module 1, the “Roles and Responsibilities” practical exercise asks SAPR VAs to recall information about the various SAPR roles and responsibilities. This is important for SAPR VAs because they need to be aware of key resources in the SAPR program in order for them to develop successful networks and form critical relationships to help support victims.
- b. In Module 3, the “Reporting Options Response Scenarios” practical exercise presents four different scenarios where students must decide if a report can be restricted or unrestricted, explain their reasons, and discuss next steps in the reporting process. This is an effective exercise because it helps SAPR VAs to bring together all the information they learned about the two reporting options, their advantages, limitations, and exceptions and apply them to real-world situations.
- c. In Module 4, the “Crisis Intervention Case Study” practical exercise provides the opportunity for students to work in small groups of four, where one person acts out the role of a victim, and three act as SAPR VAs. The victim reads information provided on cards and each SAPR VA is given a chance to practice talking about difficult topics. This practical exercise may be the most important in the course because it provides SAPR VAs the opportunity to practice critical communications skills that are required when working with victims. The exercise helps SAPR VAs practice providing introductions, establishing rapport, ensuring victims understand their rights, providing support, and asking appropriate questions.
- d. In Module 7, the “Subject Matter Experts Panel” provides an excellent way for students to engage with commanders and others from within the SAPR program to learn from their experiences and recommendations. The Navy SAPR VA instructor’s guide describes the panel as an optional exercise; however, the DoD SAPRO highly recommends its use because it provides the opportunity for SAPR VAs to interact, pose questions to experienced SAPR key players, and it will help them start building networking relationships.

2. **Training evaluation methods are used to capture student’s reaction to training and measure learning.** The Navy SAPR VA course uses two evaluation methods: Module Evaluation forms and a pre-test and post-test. Module Evaluation forms are provided at the end of each training module to capture students’ feedback on the course material, instructor performance, and transfer

of knowledge. The form also allows students to provide recommendations and additional comments. The use of this evaluation form after each module rather than waiting until the end of training is an effective practice because students are more likely to provide accurate feedback, which in turn provides the Navy with better evaluation data in order to make decisions about the training course. The Navy SAPR VA course also uses a pre-test and post-test to measure the increase of knowledge before and after the course. This is also an effective practice because the data can be used to help make decisions about course content specific to the audience (e.g., identifies topics that may require more attention).

3. **Use of experts to deliver SAPR VA training modules is a best practice.** Several modules in the Navy SAPR VA course recommend the use of subject matter experts to deliver certain modules of training content. For example, in Module 5: “The Medical Process”, it is recommended that a forensically trained medical provider present the module and provide additional information about local laws, restrictions, protocols, and contact information. In Module 6: “The Investigative and Legal Processes”, a Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) representative is recommended to share insights regarding investigations of sexual assault and in Module 7: “Command and System Response”, a person from leadership is recommended to emphasize a commitment to supporting victims, SAPR VAs, and providing appropriate response referrals to sexual assault victims. Incorporating the use of subject matter experts and leadership presence during SARC/SAPR VA training is a best practice that demonstrates commitment to the Navy SAPR Program.
4. **Training materials are professional and provide students with helpful reference material.** The DoD SAPRO team reviewed the Navy SAPR VA instructor’s guide, which contains comprehensive instructor notes and thumbnail images of each of the slides to effectively support course delivery. The instructor’s guide is well organized, has a polished and professional look, and as a result, adds further credibility to the Navy SAPR program. The instructor’s guide also references other course materials such as the Student Manual, slides, handouts, and videos that complete the Navy SAPR VA training support package.

### Training Content

5. **All training modules dedicate time to dispelling sexual assault myths and facts.** Each of the modules in the SAPR VA training course begins with a “Sexual Assault Myths and Facts” discussion lasting about 25 minutes where the instructor poses a statement and generates dialogue with the students by asking targeted questions (e.g., why do some think this is a myth, why do some think this is a truth, etc.). This exercise is important because it helps to dispel any myths students may have about a particular aspect of sexual assault up front, before getting into the content and then having to spend dedicated time dispelling myths.
6. **Information about the DD Form 2910 is addressed effectively.** The DD Form 2910, Victim Reporting Preference Statement (VRPS) is the most important form for SARCs and SAPR VAs to understand because it outlines the reporting options available to the victim and the implications of each of the options. The explanation of the DD Form 2910 in Module 3 is concise, easy-to-understand, and is followed by the “Understanding the VRPS” exercise where students are asked to each write a question about the form and quiz their classmates to ensure everyone was clear on all aspects of the form.

7. **Barriers to reporting and special considerations for victims are excellent topics.** In Module 3, the section on “Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault” provides a thorough explanation of the three categories of barriers: individual, institutional, and cultural. This level of detail behind the specific barriers is important for SAPR VAs to understand so that they can better understand why a victim would be hesitant to report an incident of sexual assault. The “Special Considerations” section also addresses the unique populations that a SAPR VA may encounter such as male victims and lesbian, gay, and bisexual victims and includes information about reporting barriers specific to these groups.
8. **Complex processes and topics are explained in simple language and address SAPR VA needs.** The medical process described in Module 5 and the investigative and legal processes in Module 6 are all complex topics that are addressed very clearly, in easy-to-understand language for SAPR VAs. Module 5 includes comprehensive information about medical and forensic examinations, including all aspects of medical treatment, victim’s rights, role of the examiner, evidence collection and a detailed explanation of the examination process. This is important information for the SAPR VA to know so that they have a better sense of the medical process and can help prepare the victim. In Module 6, the investigative process is described in detail and addresses the SAPR VA role in all aspects of the process. The “Military Judicial Process” and “Civilian Judicial Process” sections also provide a thorough explanation of military and civilian judicial proceedings and the differences between both. These complex topics are easy to follow and explain the experiences to SAPR VAs in a very clear way.

## Recommendations for Navy SAPR VA Training

To improve the Navy SAPR VA training, the Navy should consider expanding the use of adult learning strategies, providing additional opportunities for SAPR VAs to practice techniques for working with victims while being critiqued by the experienced facilitator or an Installation SARC, and addressing factual errors and missing topics required by DoDI 6495.02.

### Training Practices and Methods

1. **Consider expanding the use of adult learning strategies to increase application of knowledge and skills.**
  - a. **Delivery of myths/facts.** As mentioned earlier in the report, each module begins with a discussion about sexual assault myths and facts. While it is important for SAPR VAs to be aware of the various sexual assault myths, the Navy may want to consider alternate methods for delivering this content. For example, the instructor could ask students what myths they have heard and begin a discussion that way. The Navy may also consider developing an interactive game as a way of dispelling myths. A third way could be to discuss myths in the context of the module and not have a separate activity. Delivering content in the same way within each module may allow some students to tune-out and not pay as close attention to the important myth information so alternating strategies for delivery is recommended.
  - b. **Consider review of existing learning strategies.** The Navy may want to consider reviewing the types of strategies used to enforce the learning of content within each module. For example, in Module 1, consider reinforcing the learning of the SAPR

program roles in a way other than having students complete a fill-in-the blank exercise. An alternative could be to pose a case study and have students identify the key players in the SAPR program and address their role and responsibilities that way.

2. **Provide additional opportunities for SAPR VAs to practice techniques for working with victims.** Less than two hours of the Navy SAPR VA course is dedicated to role-playing with SAPR VAs and victims. More time should be built into the course to allow students to practice their advocacy and response skills and obtain feedback from an experienced SAPR VA or SARC. These skills are essential to the SARC and SAPR VA roles and are most effectively learned through practice. In Module 4, the “Crisis Intervention Case Study” (40 minutes) and “Initial Session Role-Play” (40 minutes) are the only two practical exercises that require students to act out the roles of SAPR VA and victim in small groups. The Navy should consider expanding these exercises or perhaps creating a new culminating exercise at the end of the course where SAPR VAs can spend time practicing the necessary skills they need when working with victims. The instructor should set aside time for all students to perform the role-play in front of the class, allowing peer and instructor feedback to contribute to group learning. By expanding time for role-plays, each student would have the opportunity to play the SAPR VA role, and the instructor could take the role of the victim during role-play, engaging students and acting in a way they have seen victims respond, based on their experience, to provide a realistic learning environment.

### Training Content

3. **Review the forthcoming DoDI 6495.02 when signed and add instruction on missing topics, as required.** Review the forthcoming DoDI 6495.02, the DoD Standards for Victim Assistance Services, and SARC/SAPR VA Competencies Framework to ensure all training topics are included in the SAPR VA course. Missing topics that were identified include:
  - a. Discussing D-SAACP credentialing requirements, to include completing the DD Form 2950, Department of Defense Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program Application Packet.
  - b. Emphasizing that SAPR VAs should not provide services to victims when experiencing a mental or physical condition that impairs personal ability and judgment to perform their duties
  - c. Explaining that reports shall be included in sexual assault quarterly and annual reporting requirements
4. **Tailor training content more to the SAPR VA role.**
  - a. The first module on the history of sexual assault and prevalence in the United States is quite comprehensive and helpful for SAPR VAs to understand; however, the Navy should consider reducing the amount of time spent on this topic and adding more time to Module 4 where SAPR VAs practice techniques for working with victims.
  - b. Module 8 “Prevention Strategies and Bystander Intervention Techniques” is three hours in duration and is not as relevant for SAPR VAs as their role is primarily focused on sexual assault response and victim care. The Navy may consider reducing the content of this module or providing it in the Student Manual as reference material.

- c. The content about the Case Management Group (CMG) in Module 7 “Command and System Response” could also be reduced and the practical exercise removed since SAPR VAs are not required members of the CMG. While the information is good for VAs to know since they will attend a CMG to ensure proper representation of the victim, the SARCs are the target audience for this subject matter. In the SAPR VA course, the CMG content should be tailored towards what a SAPR VA will be responsible for if/when they attend a CMG.
5. **Explain the importance of duty status when providing services to victims.** The Navy SAPR VA course should include information on handling cases with victims on different duty statuses (e.g., Title 10, active or inactive, and Title 32) in the event of dealing with a Reservist. This is important to ensure victims are referred to the appropriate resources in their geographic location and to discuss any other differences in their eligibility for services based on their duty status.
6. **Address factual errors/omissions in the Navy SAPR VA course.**
  - a. **Module 1, Slide 21:** SAPR Command Liaison – “Communicate concerns and needs of victim to CO (they will normally not be known throughout the command).” - this is the job of the SARC not a SAPR liaison. “Represents the command at the SACMG” – this is incorrect; the CO can only represent the command at CMG.
  - b. **Module 1, Slide 26:** The three bullets under “The SAPR Program” are incorrect. The SAPR program provides short, intermediate, and long-term assistance. It is up to the victim when services are terminated.
  - c. **Module 2, Slide 1:** The following statement is incorrect. “The DoD estimates that only 13.5 percent of sexual assault victims report the assault and based on this figure, in 2010 alone, over 19,000 sexual assaults occurred in the military. (Department of Defense SAPRO, 2011)” It should state that “Based on results of the 2010 Workplace Gender Relations Survey and the end strength of the Armed Forces, the Department estimates the prevalence rate multiplied by the total end strength would equate to approximately 19,000 incidents of sexual assault occurred in 2010”.
  - d. **Module 2, Sexual Assault Myths and Facts Practical Exercise:** The following myth/fact statements are incorrect. “MYTH: Unwanted sexual contact is not sexual assault. FACT: Sexual assault represents a range of crimes, from wrongful sexual contact through rape. “Wrongful” sexual contact is no longer in the definition of sexual assault. It is now “abusive” or “aggravated” sexual contact.
  - e. **Module 2, Slide 4:** The definitions of sexual assault and consent are not correct and will need to be updated to reflect the DoDD 6495.01 and the new UCMJ Article 120 (dated 28 June 2012). For example, the third paragraph under the “Department of Defense Definitions” section states “Any expression or lack of consent through words or conduct means there is no consent as a matter of law”. This description is taken from the old UCMJ. The new UCMJ Article 120 states: “A person cannot consent to sexual activity if-  
(B) A sleeping, unconscious, or incompetent person cannot consent. A person cannot consent to force causing or likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm or to being

rendered unconscious. A person cannot consent while under threat or in fear or under the circumstances described in subparagraph (C) or (D) of subsection (b) (1).

(C) Lack of consent may be inferred based on the circumstances of the offense. All the surrounding circumstances are to be considered in determining whether a person gave consent, or whether a person did not resist or ceased to resist only because of another...”

- f. **Module 2, Slide 4:** “Substantial incapacitation” has been taken out of UCMJ Article 120 as of 28 June 2012.
- g. **Module 4, Slide 28:** States that SAPR VAs must receive 16 hours of training/year. This is incorrect. The D-SAACP requires 32 hours/two years.
- h. **Module 6, Sexual Assault Myths and Facts Practical Exercise:** One myth states that in the military, sexual assault is a capital crime. This reference was taken from the old UCMJ and is no longer correct. The maximum punishment and sentencing for sexual assault is now life imprisonment. (See UCMJ 28 June 2012).
- i. **Module 7, “Trauma-informed Care Myths and Facts” Practical Exercise:** The first fact states that responders’ communications are “open and permeable”. This is not true as SARCs and VAs have privileged communication with victims under Military Rule of Evidence (MRE) 514. This means that a victim can refuse to disclose and prevent any other person from disclosing a confidential communication made between the victim and a SAPR VA (if such communication was made for the purpose of facilitating advice or supportive assistance to the victim).
- j. **Module 7, Slide 12:** In the “Process” section, the first paragraph includes the following statement: “If the SARC is a contractor, then a military or DoD government employee serves as the chair...” This statement should be updated to reflect guidance in the NDAA for FY12 SEC 584 (a) (2), which states, “On and after October 1, 2013, only members of the armed forces and civilian employees of the Department of Defense may be assigned to duty as a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator”.
- k. **Module 8, “Dangerous Situations”:** Please consider revising these tips for mitigating sexual assault vulnerability, as they can be perceived as victim blaming. More importantly, if a Service member follows this guidance, he or she can still be sexually assaulted.

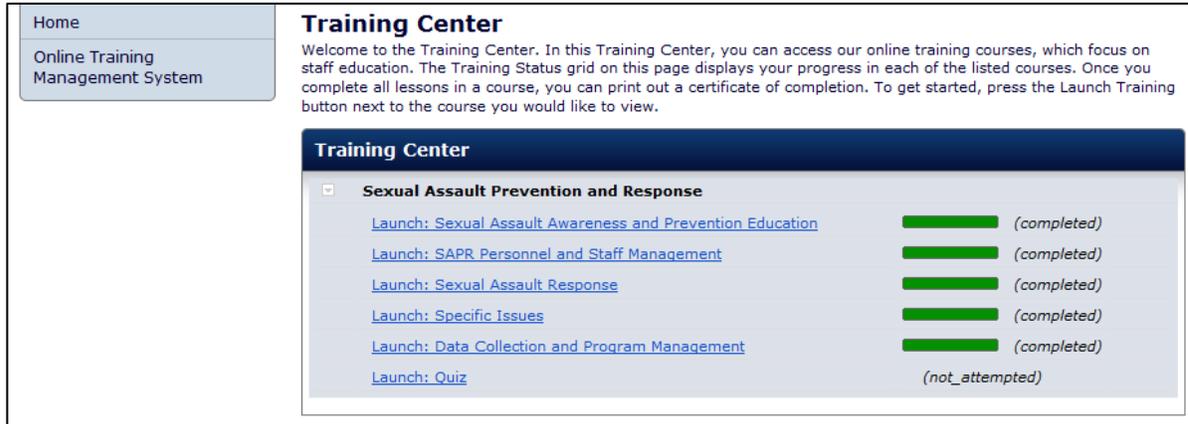
## Strengths of Navy SARC Training

The Navy’s online SARC training provides SARCs with a dedicated course including some refresher material from the SAPR VA training as well as new information targeted at the SARC role. The online format of the course is appropriate for Navy SARCs who are located in various parts of the world, and the ease of accessing and using the course contributes to the student’s learning experience.

## Training Practices and Methods

1. **The online SARC course is easy to access and navigate.** To access the Navy’s online SARC training course on the CNIC Counseling, Advocacy & Prevention Training Portal, students

complete a simple online registration process and are then able to log into the course with a username and password. Once logged in, students are able to see the course in the Online Training Management System and can click on any of the links to access the course modules (see Figure 1 below). The simple process for accessing the course and logging in allows SARCs to find the SARC training quickly and get started.



**Figure 1. Navy SARC Course Main Menu**

After clicking a link, a training module opens in a new popup window. The course navigation that appears at the bottom of the course interface (see Figure 2 below) consists of four clickable buttons (Menu, Quit, Back, and Next) and provides SARCs with simple, easy-to-understand course navigation. The simple navigation eliminates the need for lengthy instructions on how to use the course and allows SARCs to focus on the training material.



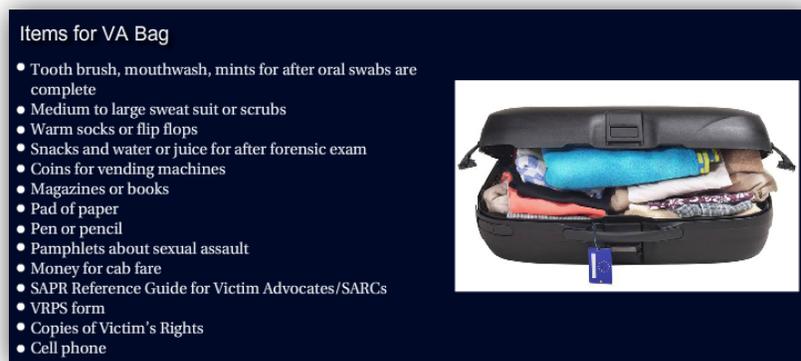
**Figure 2. Navy SARC Course Navigation**

2. **Online training is an acceptable delivery method for Navy personnel.** The Navy is a unique Service in that SARC personnel may be geographically dispersed, working on land and sea, which makes online training an appropriate option for the delivery of training. Using online training, the Navy is able to provide on-demand and cost-effective training to SARCs regardless of time and location. As a result, SARCs are provided greater flexibility to complete the 40-hour training course at their own pace and not have to be pulled away from their duties for a week.
3. **The SARC course follows some best practices for online course design and delivery.** The Navy SARC course includes some standard elements of online course design that make it successful. For example, the course provides introductory syllabus information, includes training content, and allows for some student interaction, feedback, and assessment in the quiz module.
  - a. Course syllabus information – the Navy SARC course identifies the course title clearly, provides a brief course description, outlines course goals, and lists required text and materials at the beginning of each module.

- b. Course content - training material is broken down into smaller, more manageable modules, which helps students to know where they are in the course and allows for greater flexibility in pacing their learning.
  - c. Opportunities for interaction – the quiz module provides students the ability to interact with the course content by answering 20 multiple-choice questions in order to complete the course.
  - d. Opportunities for feedback – the quiz module provides students with “correct” and “incorrect” feedback responses after a student answers each question. Depending on the question and response, additional feedback is sometimes also provided to explain the reason behind the answer.
  - e. Opportunities for assessment – in order for SARCs to be able to complete the course, they must complete the quiz and receive a score of 80% or higher to pass. Students are able to re-take the test as many times as may be needed.
4. **Quiz is used to measure learning of knowledge and skills.** As mentioned above, the quiz at the end of the Navy SARC course provides an opportunity for SARCs to apply what they learned in the training course by answering scenario-based test questions. In order to be certified as a Navy SARC, students must obtain a passing score of 80% or higher. The use of the quiz in the SARC training provides a way of measuring the knowledge and skills gained through taking the course.
5. **A separate SARC course provides an opportunity for role-specific training.** In addition to completing the required Navy SAPR VA course, the online SARC course provides an additional learning opportunity for SARCs to receive specific training on their roles and responsibilities within the SAPR program. The advantage of not having a combined SARC and SAPR VA course allows content to be covered that may not be pertinent to VAs (e.g., data collection, program management).

### Training Content

6. Module 3: “Sexual Assault Response”, page 56 provides a list of items for a SAPR VA Response Kit, a bag that SARCs/SAPR VAs can bring with them when working with victims (see Figure 3). This content is not often covered in SARC/SAPR VA training and is a helpful on-the-job reference.



**Figure 3. SAPR VA Response Kit Items**

7. Module 4: “Specific Issues”, pages 24-32, provide SARCs with valuable information about networking with various subject matter experts that SARCs and SAPR VAs should collaborate with when possible. The course suggests SARCs and SAPR VAs create a list of all specific agencies, points of contact, and what they are responsible for. It also recommends that SARCs have formal memorandums of understanding through the installation command with these agencies.

The networking section suggests SARCs communicate with the following organizations. This detailed list is a helpful starting point for new SARCs/SAPR VAs as they begin to identify and develop their own networking relationships.

- a. Joint basing/other Military Services (e.g., SARCs from other Military Services)
  - b. Fleet & Family Support Center
  - c. Local rape crisis centers
  - d. Victim Witness Assistance Program
  - e. Drug and Alcohol Programs Advisor
  - f. Command Managed Equal Opportunity Officer and Equal Opportunity Advisor
  - g. Ombudsman
8. Module 4, pages 3-19, provides in-depth information about male victims, and covers the specific topics noted below. The training content is comprehensive and provides SARCs/SAPR VAs with not only important background information on male victims but more importantly, detailed information about how they can support male victims.
    - a. Male biology and emotions
    - b. Conditioning and masculine identity
    - c. Themes and beliefs unique to male sexual assault victims
    - d. Male conditioning and healing
    - e. Information about why males do not seek help
    - f. Implications of these factors for SARCs and SAPR VAs
    - g. Information about offering options to men and supporting them in their choices
  9. Module 1, page 1, provides a reference to the “Sexual Assault - Megan’s Story” video, which depicts a real example of a sexual assault incident involving a “non-stranger”, the most common type of sexual assault offender. The video touches on various topics such as common situations of sexual assault, typical behaviors of offenders, and reactions from both the victim and offender after the assault. This video is a good training resource that shows the situation surrounding a sexual assault incident and depicts all the factors that are involved.

## Recommendations for Navy SARC Training

To improve, the Navy should consider incorporating adult learning strategies, applying additional best practices for the design of online training, and adopting alternate training delivery methods to enhance the SARC training experience and increase on-the-job performance.

### Training Practices and Methods

1. **Incorporate the use of adult learning theory in the online SARC course.** The Navy will need to incorporate the use of adult learning theory into the online SARC course, as required by the revised DoDI 6495.02. A few examples of adult learning theory considerations are provided below for reference.
  - a. Training should provide sufficient opportunities for active learning so that students have a chance to apply what they learned. Examples of active learning techniques for an online course include interactive games, scenarios, and exercises that allow students to apply knowledge and skills learned in the course. The addition of interactivity to allow SARCs to practice applying new skills and knowledge is critical to the role of a SARC.
  - b. Training should provide an opportunity for students to apply life experiences. For example, in an online course, SARCs could be provided with scenarios of sexual assault incidents and be asked to respond to questions based on real-life experiences to deepen their understanding of a new concept or skill. The scenarios could be text or video-based and would give students an option to interact and respond with correct responses/actions.
  - c. Training should explain the immediate usefulness of course material. This can simply be incorporated into the Navy SARC course by adding content to the modules that explains how the learning of a new concept/skill can be used right away. If adults do not see a need to learn something new, the likelihood that they will retain the information is diminished.
  - d. Training should explain the reasons for learning. A way to accomplish this is for the Navy SARC course to not just introduce a topic but also to include the importance and relevance to the SARC's role/job.
  - e. Training should be tailored to meet the needs of the intended target audience. The course should provide an indication of the training audience and equip students with the necessary skills and tools to successfully perform their job. This could be implemented in the Navy SARC course by targeting course content to the SAPR role (not SAPR VAs) and providing the necessary information, tools, and resources so that SARCs are able to perform their job after training. Other recommendations include: (1) removing references like "You are a SAPR VA..." from the quiz and various other parts of the SARC course since the course is targeted towards SARCs; (2) linking to or embedding training resources within the Navy SARC course to provide easier access to course material and increase the likelihood of SARCs reviewing it.
2. **Apply additional best practices for online training design and delivery.** The Navy should consider adding more opportunities for student interaction, feedback, and assessment to create a more effective training experience for SARCs. The Navy SARC course will also need to be made

accessible in accordance with the Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (<https://www.section508.gov/>).

- a. Examples of interaction could involve students interacting with course content (e.g., any interactive element that requires students to engage), students interacting with one another (e.g., consider adding exercises where new SARCs engaged with experienced SARCs via in-person or virtual classroom technology), and students interacting with the instructor (e.g., consider adding a live facilitator in a virtual classroom setting or having a fictional character like an avatar interact with the students).
- b. Examples of feedback could include adding more detailed explanations into the existing quiz feedback. It could also mean the development of new elements such as interactive scenarios where the SARC is put into a real-world situation, asked to make decisions, and then provided feedback on the choices that they make. Feedback can also be provided by creating a discussion forum using online classroom technology where SARCs can post questions about the course materials. These questions can identify problem areas or identify where further explanations in the course may be necessary. Yet another example of feedback could be the implementation of an end-of-course survey to collect anonymous feedback from SARCs so that course improvements can be made.
- c. Examples of assessment can include the use of embedded knowledge checks within the course to check SARCs' knowledge as they progress through new topics. The knowledge checks can be scored or not but should provide enough feedback for the SARC to understand how they are mastering the training content. The Navy should also consider revising the existing quiz at the end of the course by aligning the questions more closely with the course and module learning objectives to more effectively measure the transfer of skills and knowledge. The DoD SAPRO team made multiple attempts to pass the existing quiz and could not. At times, the questions and answers did not seem to align with course objectives and material and contributed to the difficulty.
- d. The Navy SARC course does not comply with Federal Section 508 requirements. Section 508 requires electronic and information technology (includes online training) that is developed by or purchased by the Federal Agencies be accessible by people with disabilities. In order to make the Navy SARC course Section 508 compliant, below are a few considerations that must be met. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of Section 508 requirements. For a complete list, please visit the Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act web site provided on the previous page.
  - i. Text must be readable by screen reader assistive technology.
  - ii. Alternative text must be provided for non-textual elements (e.g., graphics, photographs, course graphical user interface elements).
  - iii. Alternate options for course navigation (i.e., using keyboard functionality) must be provided.
  - iv. Scanned documents (i.e., PDFs) must be compatible with assistive technologies.

- v. Certain font styles and color combinations should be avoided. Those who are visually impaired in some capacity are not able to read the information (e.g., those who are colorblind cannot tell the difference between red and green).
3. **Consider an alternate format for the delivery of SARC training.** While online training is an acceptable means of delivering Navy SARC training, the Navy should consider alternate or additional delivery modes such as virtual classrooms or live in-person training to increase training effectiveness for new SARCs. In order for a SARC to be able to perform their job successfully, they will require additional learning opportunities and engagement with other SAPR personnel that is not possible in an online environment. For example, the use of experts to share best practices and lessons learned becomes more difficult in an online setting. SARCs also need the ability to practice job-specific tasks that cannot be accomplished online. For example, one of the responsibilities of a SARC is that they are responsible for delivering SAPR training to commanders, SAPR VAs, and other SAPR personnel. In an online training course, SARCs are limited in how they can practice this skill in a realistic setting. The assessment of the skill also provides to be a challenge in an online course.

### Training Content

4. **Consider restructuring training content to improve flow and comprehension of material.** The Navy SARC course covers a multitude of topics in a given module, and would benefit from a reorganization of content to ensure information is presented in the most efficient manner possible and transitions are used within the course to improve content flow. By organizing training content into smaller, more manageable chunks of information, SARCs will be able to more easily digest the content and be able to reference back to specific topics, if needed.
5. **Explain the importance of duty status when providing services to victims.** The Navy SARC course should include information on handling cases of victims on different duty statuses (e.g., Title 10, active or inactive, and Title 32) in the event of dealing with a Reservist. This is important to ensure victims are referred to the appropriate resources in their geographic location and to discuss any other differences in their eligibility for services based on their duty status.
6. **Review the forthcoming DoDI 6495.02 when signed and add instruction on missing topics, as required.** Review the forthcoming DoDI 6495.02, the DoD Standards for Victim Assistance Services, and SARC/SAPR VA Competencies Framework to ensure all training topics are included in the Navy SARC course. Many of the same topics that are missing from the Navy SAPR VA course are also missing from the Navy's online SARC course. Additional missing topics include those explaining the following SARC duties:
  - a. Facilitation and coordination of SAPR training and briefings for SAPR personnel
  - b. How SARCs will be trained in and understand the confidentiality requirements of MRE-514
  - c. How SARCs will competently facilitate referrals
  - d. How SARCs will offer victims the option of requesting a different SAPR VA (subject to availability)

- e. How a SARC being reassigned is required to confirm in writing to their supervisor that they transfer stored DD Forms 2910 to the next SARC
  - f. How the SARC will coordinate medical and counseling services between military installations and deployed units related to care for victims of sexual assault
  - g. How the SARC will collaborate with medical treatment facilities or medical clinics within their area of responsibility
  - h. How the SARC will collaborate with local private or public sector entities that provide medical care
  - i. How the SARC will assist the victim in the transfer case management documents
  - j. How the SARC will provide information to assist installation senior commanders to manage trends and characteristics of sexual assault crimes at the Military Service-level and mitigate risk factors that may be present
  - k. Importance of monitoring closely a victim's progress and recovery
  - l. Documentation of all services referred to and/or requested by the victim from the time of report through final disposition
  - m. Obtaining ongoing feedback and evaluation from victims about quality of care
  - n. Demonstrate training on entering reports into the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID)
7. **Address factual errors/omissions in the Navy SARC course.** Many of the same errors and omissions that were identified for the Navy SAPR VA course also need to be addressed in the Navy SARC course. Additional errors/omissions for the SARC course include those explained below:
- a. **Module 1, page 7/54:** The first bullet states that SARCs must complete the 30-hour SAPR VA training course before assuming SARC duties. The "30-hour" reference should be changed to "40-hours" to reflect the updated Navy SAPR VA course.
  - b. **Module 2, page 4/40:** The first paragraph states that a commander should meet with their SARC within 90 days of the taking the position. The forthcoming DoDI 6495.02 states this should be done in 30 days. Once the DoDI 6495.02 is signed, the Navy will need to update this content in the SARC course.
  - c. **Module 3, page 6/104:** The DoDD 6495.01 is listed as a policy reference but the current version is not from 2008. The date of the current DoDD 6495.01 should be updated to 23 January 2012.
  - d. **Module 3, page 16/104:** The fourth bullet states that family members under 18 are eligible for an unrestricted report. This bullet is not true and should be deleted.
  - e. **Module 3, page 21/104:** The restricted reporting applicability list is incomplete. Please review restricted reporting eligibility and add to the content on this page.
  - f. **Module 3, page 34/104:** The Victim Response Pathway (PDF) incorrectly states one-year retention of records and needs to be updated to reflect the new retention schedule for

sexual assault forensic evidence (reference DTM 11-062, Document Retention in Cases of Restricted and Unrestricted Reports of Sexual Assault).

- g. **Module 3, page 76/104:** The summary information provided about court-martial is not correct and is not authorized for sexual assault.
- h. **Module 3, page 98/104:** The information on this page will require updates to include details about DSAID, which has been approved since 2012.
- i. **Module 5:** This module does not refer to D-SAACP requirements and is missing information about DSAID.