

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIAL VICTIM CAPABILITY

The Army has fully implemented the Special Victim Capability. The core of this capability now includes 23 Special Victims Prosecutors, 21 Sexual Assault Investigators, and 28 Special Victim NCOs, located at 19 installations across the globe and trained in the unique aspects of investigating and prosecuting sexual assault cases. These teams have geographic areas of responsibility to ensure coverage Army-wide, including all deployed forces in theater. The Army JAG Corps has obtained authorizations for 23 Special Victim Witness Liaisons to fill out these teams. The new Special Victim Witness Liaisons, modeled on the job descriptions and duties for the Department of Justice personnel, will be assigned to assist victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse, and homicide cases.

The Army program began in 2009 when Secretary Gehren recognized the need for additional prosecutors and investigators with specialized training who would investigate and prosecute only special victim cases. The Army JAGC initially assigned 15 experienced trial attorneys as Special Victim Prosecutors and developed an intensive training program. As a result of the demand for these SVPs and the overwhelming initial success of the program, The Judge Advocate General authorized an additional 8 Special Victim Prosecutors. The SVPs represent the Army's most talented and experienced litigators, ranging in rank from LTC to senior CPTs.

By policy, the SVPs have oversight over every sexual assault case. SVPs do not try cases other than special victim cases without express exception by the Judge Advocate General. As a result, the expertise SVPs develop over their 3-year assignment is unparalleled in our Service.

LTC Jay Morse will speak with you tomorrow about the training and selection of these officers, but I am convinced of the success of our program.

In place since 2009, these specially-trained and selected personnel have overseen an increase of over 100% of the number of special victim cases prosecuted, convictions, and sentences that include a punitive discharge. The compassionate care provided to victims by these specialists has resulted in only a 6% "drop out" rate for our victims.