

Sexual Violence and the Trafficking in Women

Members of the Task Force realize that domestic violence is but one aspect of the overall problem of violence against women. Sexual violence is an important concern for the military as well. Such violence often exists within families and is a common aspect of domestic violence and child abuse. It is important that all our recommendations for training, assessment, safety planning, investigation, and intervention, as well as prevention, acknowledge that sexual violence is an often co-existing aspect of domestic violence. Any efforts to target sexual violence within families will also serve to educate and further condemn sexual violence against strangers, co-workers, and acquaintances. Another area that has received significant publicity over the past year is the issue of trafficking in women and in many instances, the involvement of military personnel as customers has been documented. Because of our military's worldwide presence, the scourge of such trafficking and the violence normally attendant to it, must be of special concern to the DoD. While recognizing the problem, since it is outside our charter, the Task Force has not attempted to deal with the issue of trafficking in women in this body of work. However, we urge the leadership in DoD to be mindful of the problem, to recognize that it is but another aspect of the overall tragedy of violence perpetrated against women, to reach out to collaborate with other federal agencies and advocacy groups seeking to end it, and to actively ensure that DoD personnel in no way contribute to or condone the problem.

- Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence
Third Year Report 2003, page xiii