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Report to M. Kathleen Carpenter, Department of Defense: Deputy Assistant Secretary (Equal Opportunity); by H. L. Krieger, Director, Federal Personnel and Compensation Div.

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A draft report sent to the Secretary of Defense in 1976 identified certain problems in race relations training programs given at selected Army and Air Force installations. The report noted that the services had no formal method of evaluating the effectiveness of their training, that the focus of the training was misplaced, and that the training as it was given would not change discriminatory behavior. A recent follow-up assessment indicated that current race relations training has led to a decrease in discrimination complaints and racial incidents at military installations. Although race relations education is still provided as part of basic training and is given again later in the enlistment period, it is not now offered in individual Army units unless racial unrest at a particular installation warrants such training. Both services have now instituted programs to perform periodic qualitative evaluations of their training programs. Revised training curricula in both services are job relevant. The Army's curriculum focuses on individual and group situations and recommends strategies for dealing with such situations. The Air Force's seminars examine how discrimination in the work unit affects job performance. Both services said that their training personnel receive high-quality training, and the Army's trainers have the same career-enhancing opportunities as do personnel assigned to other specialties. A sufficiently high degree of support of the training is present in both services. (RBS)



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

FEDERAL PERSONNEL AND
COMPENSATION DIVISION

April 18, 1978

B-182739

Ms. M. Kathleen Carpenter
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Equal Opportunity)

Dear Ms. Carpenter:

We thought it would be useful to provide you with our reaction to DOD's, the Army's, and the Air Force's efforts to address the problems identified in our report on race relations training programs given at selected Army and Air Force installations. Our draft report was sent to the Secretary of Defense on October 28, 1976. As you can see from the digest of that draft (Appendix I), we found that the Services had no formal method of evaluating the effectiveness of their training, that the focus of the training was misplaced, and that the training as it was given would not change discriminatory behavior.

The Services' response to our draft indicated they had already begun to take measures to correct many of the problems we had found. (See Appendix II.) Based on that information, we suspended our involvement so they could incorporate these changes into their training.

We made a recent follow-up assessment (See Appendix III.), to determine the current status of the training program. We were told that current race relations training has led to a decrease in discrimination complaints and racial incidents at their military installations. This improved climate has led to a reduced emphasis on Army's race relations training. Although race relations education is still provided as part of basic training and is given again later in the enlistment period, it is not now offered in individual Army units unless the racial unrest at a particular installation warrants such training. We noted, however, that unit race relations training is required by current Army regulations. Army may want to revise their regulations to reflect this change.

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(964045)

Both Services have now instituted programs to perform periodic qualitative evaluations of their training programs. Army's study of its current race relations training is being prepared and will not be completed until Spring of 1978. In 1977, the Air Force completed an evaluation of its current training program, and that assessment led to changes in their race relations training.

The revised training curricula in both Services are job relevant. Army's training curriculum focuses on individual and group situations and recommends strategies for dealing with such situations. Air Forces's seminars examine how discrimination in the work unit can affect job performance. The major thrust of current and future programs is to tailor training to address not only the overall racial environment, but also elements in the local climate which impact on unit effectiveness.

Both Services said their training personnel receive high-quality training, and Army's trainers have the same career-enhancing opportunities as do personnel assigned to other specialties. These trainers are evaluated every 2 to 3 years (a test of quality and competent job performance) to determine whether they are being promoted as quickly as their peers in other fields. For Air Force officers and enlisted men, the selection of race relations trainers utilizes stringent quality standards.

We learned from our recent discussion with your associates and with the individual Services that a sufficiently high degree of command support of the training is present in both Services. The Services' EEO regulations and their training documents assign specific command responsibility for EEO programs and EEO matters.

We believe the actions the Services have taken and have underway satisfy the problems noted in our draft report. We are aware of and support the provisions in your plan for a periodic assessment of the effectiveness of the training in this important human relations area. We are available for such further discussion as you may desire. We trust this summary will be of some assistance to you.

Sincerely yours,



H. L. Krieger
Director

MAJOR CHANGES NEEDED IN
AIR FORCE AND ARMY RACE
RELATIONS TRAINING PROGRAMS

D I G E S T

In 1970 a serious problem of racial turmoil existed within the military services which prevented the U.S. Armed Forces from accomplishing their mission. As a result, the Department of Defense and the military services initiated a race relations training program to increase racial and ethnic awareness, promote racial harmony, reduce tension, and increase understanding among the races. The program was designed to change behavior and to enhance the services' equal opportunity programs. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this report were derived from assessments made by GAO at Army and Air Force headquarters and at three Air Force and three Army installations. GAO does not know the extent conditions observed at these six installations exist at Navy and other Air Force and Army installations. The Department of Defense and military services should find out.

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Scope and Cost

The scope and cost of the training has been extensive. Air Force-wide about 1,204,000 military and 309,000 civilian personnel were trained during fiscal years 1972 through 1976. Army-wide, about 3,068,000 military and civilian personnel were trained during fiscal years 1973 through 1976. By June 30, 1976, the Air Force estimated as much as \$142.4 million will have been spent on race relations training and the Army estimated it will have expended \$192.3 million.

Program Effectiveness

The Air Force and Army had not developed a formal method for evaluating the effectiveness of their race relations training programs.

Both services had attempted to evaluate program impact through critiques, studies, surveys, and various assessments. GAO's review of these efforts coupled with its own program evaluation, using the services of a consultant expert, leads it to believe that while the race relations training at the six installations reviewed had increased awareness and understanding and improved

perceptions, it had been ineffective in changing behavior. Both the Army and Air Force have recognized the need to evaluate their programs, and they are researching ways to measure training effectiveness.

Focus of Training Programs

The programs reviewed had been designed around educational objectives. Therefore, the instruction given was not training at all. Much of the course material and many of the in-class discussions did not focus on the real world. The discrepancies between mythology and reality were apparent, especially to members of minority groups.

Program designers failed to state clear, reachable, and practical goals, and to supply the guidelines and resources whereby they could be attained. Discussion of the daily occurrences of on-the-job discrimination were avoided.

Another problem with the focus of the race relations training was that discriminatory practices were viewed as a one-way street. While it may be true that white people are

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responsible for creating the discriminatory systems we now have, it is not the case that the behavior of white people is solely responsible for its maintenance at certain levels. Focusing only on the white behavior side of an interpersonal issue (by definition) such as race discrimination leads to a variety of conceptual and emotional difficulties.

A further focus problem arises from the consistent, invariable, and exclusive attention given to white-black discrimination. While black people are the largest minority group and are, therefore, discriminated against more frequently, it is unfortunate from a tactical standpoint, at least that other minorities, and most recently women as well, are mentioned only in passing, leaving the impression that race relations (or human relations) training is intended primarily to benefit blacks. About 90 percent of the current course content on the average was so tailored.

The negative reaction of other minorities and women are predictably heightened by the fact that their vested interests are briefly mentioned in a patronizing manner. Most women and virtually all minorities other than blacks voiced such objections during and after all courses.

Program Management

Management of the race relations program had a number of weaknesses. There was a lack of clear, sincere and high priority direction from command personnel. There was a negative stigma attached to virtually all staff operatives, instructors, and supporters of the program. Further, there was an absence of career-enhancing incentives necessary to provide highly competent program workers. Upper level management appears to have little knowledge concerning who attends or what occurs. Command support for the program needs to be increased.

Trainer qualifications varied between services, from base to base, within bases, and from course to course. Trainers seemed

to be selected solely on the basis of interest in the issue. Few felt their preparation was completely adequate.

Need for a broader program

No training effort, no matter how well designed, managed and taught, can produce the program's goals under the existing conditions. The organizational, systemic changes which must accompany course structure changes appear to be more critical than the needed course alterations themselves.

What appears to be in order is a goal oriented, job relevant, systematic intervention program which should probably, but not necessarily include a training element. There obviously is a need for a more sophisticated effort. GAO believe the effectiveness of the services' race relations programs could be improved if the Secretary of Defense acts on recommendations of:

- GAO for providing adequate program evaluation
- GAO's consultant expert for altering the services' training courses and establishing a goal oriented, job relevant, systematic intervention program.
- GAO and its consultant expert for strengthening program management.

Informal Response Provided by the
Office of the Secretary of Defense
and Departments of the Army and Air
Force

We laud your report for its detailed coverage of an extremely complex area. Your extensive efforts in attempting to relate detailed costs to specific programs is but one example. The Report does an excellent job in isolating a key weakness which existed at the time the study was made. This weakness was the Air Force and Army lack of a formal method for evaluating the effectiveness of their race relations training programs. We in the Defense Department discovered this deficiency, focused the attention of these two Services on the problem, and now in addition to other efforts, both Services have ongoing research programs designed to correct this deficiency.

The Report also highlights the controversial issues of educational versus training objectives and mythological versus real world goal. Comments on the responsibilities of minorities regarding discrimination are quite perceptive. The Report also reflects a great deal of investigation of program management. For example, we agree with the finding that command support for the program needs to be increased. Another key issue highlighted by the study is the need for a goal oriented, job relevant, systematic inter-

vention program. This need was determined previously and steps to satisfy this need have been taken.

In sum, we believe that the Report will serve as a valuable instrument, and in certain areas it confirms our own beliefs. On the other hand, we are troubled by a few points. In many areas, the Report generalizes from inadequate samplings, which are to some degree compounded by preconceived conclusions. For example, it focuses on data collected from the initial stages of the programs sampled and does not recognize the Service assessments, changes, and ongoing efforts. In addition, and more specifically, the Report reflects the improper inclusion of program participant's salary costs in overall program costs.

The Air Force bases selected can in no way be considered "key bases" or representative of the Air Force in general. The Army posts selected were all school installations and only one was not in the deep South. In this same portion of the report, it is highly evident that the consultant uses a dual standard for determining an acceptable methodology and program effectiveness. To wit: he disregards critique data as inadequate, yet uses similar techniques in his study. In this vein, the consultant also seems to accept the opinions of the trainees as valid while discarding those of the commanders as delusions. We also believe that although he didn't mean to, the consultant over-

looked the fact that the Air Force and Army programs do have measurable objectives, and that training is job relevant.

The Report also does not consider the total thrust of the Air Force and Army endeavors and accordingly fails to give credit for other than race relations education. In addition, this study treats the Air Force and Army programs as a single unit, whereas there is minimal commonality of relevant variables regarding the two.

On balance, we are heartened by the fact that the General Accounting Office has prepared a study on this subject. In addition, we are pleased that some of these findings confirm our own intuitions.

Attachments

II Specifics: Additional responses keyed to specific GAO comments are follows:

a.

1. GAO Finding: "Estimate Air Force-wide cost of Phase I and II training was at least \$142.4 million."

2. Response: This figure includes approximately \$124 million for the participants' salary cost. This constitutes a sunk cost because the standard allowance built into the manpower requirements determination process allows for 2.99 hours of social training per month. The estimate of approximately \$18 million for instructor salaries is correct.

b.

1. GAO Finding: "The Army has invested in excess of \$141.2 million in their Race Relations Training Program for Fiscal Years 1973 through 1975 and will have expended another \$5.1 million by the end of Fiscal Year 1976.

2. Response: Approximately 9% (\$165 million) of the \$192 million costed to the program represents salaries of trainees/students receiving RR&EO training. This is a sunk cost and should not be an issue. RR&EO training falls well within the scope of the Army's individual/unit training program.

c.

1. GAO Finding: "...although RRT has aided in promoting human relations in the sense that it has increased awareness

and understanding, and improved perceptions, it has not been effective in changing behavior."

2. Response: Expand finding to reflect the following: Race relations training alone cannot and is not intended to change behavior. Training is only one component of the Army's effort to change behavior detrimental to equal opportunity for all its members. The equal opportunity component of the Army's program which includes affirmative action plans (AAP's) as well as education and training provide the means by which the Army promotes attitudes and develops behavior supportive of the Army's objectives.

d.

1. GAO Finding: "As such, the study (HRE evaluation, 1976) was not designed to nor does it directly measure effectiveness of the program in changing awareness, attitudes, or behavior."

2. Response: The report misstates the expected outcome of the AF study of HRE effectiveness. The study was designed to measure effectiveness in terms of awareness, attitudes, and behavior. A pretested/validated instrument was administered to an AF-wide sample of 17,000 military and 5,000 civilians. This broad sampling provided both an excellent assessment of current awareness and attitudes, and a bench mark for future survey results to be matched against. Subsequent survey efforts will, of course, provide further assessment tools in this important area.

e.

GAO Finding: "Both Army and Air Force personnel expressed similar opinions about various program aspects including:

--need for command support*

--increased awareness and understanding, positive attitude change and improved communication

--RRT has some effect or impact but results can't be measured.

--course should contain more on human relations.**

2. Responses:

*This was only identified as a problem by Army personnel. Command support for HRE is strong in the Air Force.

**Thrust of Air Force HRE Program was changed from race relations to human relations in November 1974.

f.

1. GAO Finding: "...neither the Air Force or Army has developed a formal scientific method for evaluating program effectiveness.

2. Response: Add the following comments: "An ongoing Human Relations Research Program (Evaluation of the Army's Race Relations Education/Training Program) will be completed in FY 77. This program is designed to develop a method for scientifically evaluating equal opportunity education and

of DA Affirmative Actions Plan in August 1975, management assessment information systems have been developed by functional managers which allow assessment of equal opportunity progress in such areas as promotions, MOS distribution, individual training, military justice, etc. In fact, the Army's first annual assessment report has recently been published reflecting significant progress in all areas of equal opportunity and treatment."

The Air Force also has an evaluation process built into its AAP's. In addition a survey and evaluation of the present program will be completed in July 1977. Recommend that this portion of the report be revised to reflect current program status. The Office of the Secretary of Defense will insure that the Air Force and Army continue with their research efforts in this area.

g.

1. GAO Finding: "...from the DRRI on down, this choice of educational objectives over training objectives appears to have occurred partly by default rather than design."

2. Response: The choice was by design and not default and based on an exhaustive six month study by the Inter-Service Task Force on Education in Race Relations. In July 1970, beginning with the Report of the Task Force and continuing through today, the program objective of the DoD Race Relations Education Program has been to foster understanding between

the majority and minority ethnic groups with a resultant improvement in racial attitudes, behavior and beliefs. The training approach aimed solely at changing behavior by instructing in correct behavior and ordering such behavior was considered by the Task Force and discarded since it felt that the first step in obtaining a change in racially oriented unacceptable behavior was to change racial attitudes rather than attempting behavioral change which seriously conflicted with opposing attitudes. The ultimate objective of this program has always been to cause a change for the better of the value system by which the individual judges racial issues. The individuals are provided all of the intrinsic racial ingredients and the logic to manipulate them; left to analyze their beliefs and modify them. Hopefully, the modified beliefs will result in the more desirable attitude and acceptable behavior.

h.

1. GAO Finding: "While black people are by far the largest minority group and are, therefore, discriminated against more frequently, it is unfortunate from a tactical standpoint (at least) that other minorities, and most recently women as well, are mentioned only in passing, leaving the impression that Race Relations (or Human Relations)

training is intended primarily to benefit blacks."

2. Response: this finding is now incorrect. The present DRRI curriculum includes the following subject hour breakout:

Black Studies	24 Hours
Latino Studies	21 Hours
American Indian Studies	7 Hours
Asian American Studies	8 Hours
Anti-Semitism	4.5 Hours
Sexism	10 Hours

i.

1. Consultant Recommendations:

(1) GAO Recommendation: "...Convene a top-level policymaking conference to determine the goals and specific objectives of race (or human) relations training. Criteria for course design and program evaluation should be among the specific outcomes of such a conference."

Response: An OSD top level policymaking body (Race Relations Education Board) is in being. Also, an OSD Inter-Service Task Force is currently reviewing race relations training conducted by the Services and Defense Race Relations Institute.

(2) GAO Recommendation: "...The Army and Air Force should avail themselves of the necessary social science

resources. The following specifics should be addressed:

In sound training programs, there must be measurable training objectives. The content and training procedures must be clearly and measurably related to those objectives. No other content or procedure is admissible."

Response: The need for more concise training programs has existed for some time for the Army. In August 1975, the Training and Doctrine Command published DA Pamphlet 350-30, Instructional Systems Design (ISD) Model which prescribed how instruction would be designed for all Service schools. The ISD directed that all training must be measurable and must specify what the individual should be able to do and at what performance level. All tests must be performance oriented as much as possible. New training modules for Equal Opportunity have been prepared in accordance with the ISD Model and are due to the field on 1 January 1977. Unit training objectives contained in Revised Army Regulation (AR) 600-21, and a research program to develop an Army Human Relations Training Model are all designed to achieve these goals. The aforementioned projects are scheduled for implementation/completion during FY 77. Phase III of the Air Force HRE Program, which was implemented in September 1976, does contain measurable objectives.

(3) GAO Recommendation: "This training must be job relevant, since the military is not in the business of general public education for its own sake. The objectives laid out must, therefore, be directly related to efficient performance of military jobs. In the present context, this implies a focus on reducing the occurrence of race (and sex) discriminatory events which produce obstacles to such performance."

Response: Race relations training, individual and unit, is job relevant. For the Army, the objective of individual and unit race relations training is the identification and elimination of discriminatory practices which adversely impact on the combat effectiveness of units and their ability to accomplish their missions during times of peace as well as war. For the Air Force, the Phase III program is specifically oriented toward job relevance. Seminars examine how discrimination (real or perceived) in the work unit can effect job performance. Also, participants are provided with a clearer understanding of affirmative actions which can be taken to reduce discrimination. The major thrust of current and future programs is to tailor training to address not only the overall racial environment, but the local climate which impacts on unit effectiveness.

(4) GAO Recommendation: "Courses should directly address the existence of race (sex) discrimination in context of the tasks performed on-base, and the military's need to eliminate

these events. There should be no question about the course's relevance to the jobs of trainees and command expectancies about training performance.

Response: See preceding response.

(5) GAO Recommendation:

"Trainees should then be given a set of change tools and a strategy for discrimination reduction which allows for variation in theme (by location, job function, etc.), amenable to independent measurement."

Response: For the Air Force, Phase III HRE provides participants with some tools to identify situations in which discrimination exists or is perceived to exist. The curriculum includes practical exercises in examining options to reduce the level of real or perceived discrimination. Participants also learn how objectives in the recently revised Affirmative Actions Plan are quantified to measure progress. Also, a supervisor's affirmative actions checklist is provided as a means of making independent assessments of the progress being made in the work unit. For the Army, current training identified situations in which discrimination, real or imagined, can be perceived and provides recommended methods of handling such situations. The new training concept, scheduled for implementation 1 January 1977, will provide improvement in this area.

(6) GAO Recommendation :

"More research should be done in areas pertaining to minorities other than black in order to provide more or additional coverage of issues which would be of interest and benefit all groups attending the training."

Response: Recommend this comment be deleted. In the Air Force, treatment of minorities other than blacks varied from program to program in Phase I. However, the standardized Phase II and Phase III HRE curricula have provided coverage on minority groups other than Blacks and women. Actions ongoing in the Army to increase coverage of women and minorities other than Black include research projects which are designed to develop an instrument and methods for diagnosing potential problems relevant to race, ethnicity and sexism. Projects will be completed 4th Quarter, FY 77. The Army has also recently completed gathering data on other minorities' content and now has more definitive data on other minorities and women. This data now makes it possible for the Army to appreciably address institutional treatment of these groups.

(7) GAO Recommendation :

"There should be clearly defined guidelines outlining what should be done to accomplish the stated goals."

Response: Recommend this comment be deleted. For the Air Force, Phase III HRE curriculum provides clearly defined guidelines. In the Army, revised AR 600-21 and new training direction

clearly articulate the goals and objectives of the training program and focus on results through flexibility of training to meet local unit needs.

j.

1. GAO Conclusion: "Turnover of program personnel was also recognized as one of the major problems affecting the program. Instructor turnover affects program continuity and can create staff vacancies which may affect morale. In addition, there is a stigma attached to individuals associated with the program which makes it undesirable for a career-minded officer."

2. Response: In the Air Force, much emphasis has been placed on assigning quality officers and airmen as human relations instructors. In the case of officers, human relations instructor duty is considered to be primarily a career broadening experience. Assignment in this field, usually for three to four years, may be in and of itself career enhancing. Officers enter as assignment availables, rated supplement selectees, volunteers from other resources and are commander recommended. Currently, all officers becoming Human Relations Instructors must be volunteers. We believe that placing non-volunteers in this program may do more harm than good. Officers leave the career field for varying reasons, such as: to return to a former career field; upon completion of a rated supplement assignment; by application for special duty assignment; upon

release for career development jobs; to enter professional military education; due to removal for unsatisfactory performance; or to retire or separate.

The human relations instructor career field for airmen is also selectively manned with volunteers. Stringent quality standards must be met before a member is permitted to retrain into the career field. However, even with these high selection standards, experience has proven that due to the highly visible, pressure filled environment human relations instructors work in, some individuals seem to "burn out." A recent policy change now permits airmen assigned in Social Actions to request a voluntary exit out of the career field after completing three years of duty in the specialty. In the Army, personnel turbulence in the RR&EO Program is on par with that in other fields. Personnel assigned to RR&EO duties are selected and assigned by HQDA and receive stabilized tours commensurate with Army CONUS/oversea requirements. While some officers may perceive a "stigma attached to individuals associated with the program", there is no evidence with respect to career progression to support this perception. During the past two years, the promotion rate of senior enlisted RR&EO personnel has exceeded that of personnel in other Military Occupational Specialties.

k.

1. GAO Recommendation: "...Clear directives regarding command

responsibilities should be delineated and monitoring and evaluation of race relations programs should be strengthened."

2. Response: Clear directives regarding command responsibilities in the Air Force are outlined in AFR 30-2, which has recently been published and disseminated after complete revision. Further, they are continually working to strengthen their efforts to monitor and evaluate the program. In the Army, actions to define command responsibility for race relations programs and strengthen monitoring and evaluation procedures are ongoing. These include:

(a) Consolidating three separate regulations and numerous messages into one regulation for the purpose of clarifying policies and program objectives and delineating command responsibility for program implementation and assessment.

(b) Developing new training modules which facilitate command and chain of command involvement in RR&EO training and evaluation.

(c) Promoting through the Army Race Relations Research Program, the development of methods and techniques for evaluating and assessing program effectiveness.

1.

1. GAO Recommendation: "...Race Relations program provide career enhancing incentives for its instructors and administrators. Serious thought should be given to the Army's plan

or consideration of making the position of race relations instructors a regular duty rather than a voluntary assignment."

2. Response: See response to j. above.

Also within the Army, RR&EO positions are identified in authorization documents and RR&EO skills incorporated into officer and enlisted personnel management specialties. As such, RR&EO personnel receive high quality training and have the same career-enhancing opportunities as personnel assigned to other specialties. In order to broaden their experiences within other areas of their primary specialties, officers are not given repetitive RR&EO assignments. To improve quality and enhance career progression, student selection criteria for DRRI has been upgraded for officers and enlisted personnel slated for assignment to RR&EO positions.

m.

1. GAO Recommendation: "In view of the need for a more broadened effort in the race relations area, we endorse our consultant's recommendations to the Secretary of Defense requiring that:

--an assessment of the nature, situational variation, and frequency on-the-job race (and sex) discrimination in the Services be conducted to produce the specific training objectives

of the training element of the Race Relations (or Human Relations) program.

--Additional strategies, beyond training, be devised so as to reduce the potency of organizational (structural) racism and sexism. These would include reviews of recruiting, job classification, advancement, and career management, followed by systematic revisions which would effectively eliminate de facto discrimination.

In addition, we recommend that:

--Affirmative actions as spelled out in the agency's plan should be enhanced to effectively deal with local issues and job-related problems and should be made a focal point of discussion in the race relations training seminars."

2. Response: The subject report suggests that "training alone is not sufficient." The GAO investigators did not take an in-depth look at related equal opportunity programs within the Air Force and Army.

This report continually describes race/human relations education (HRE) as a program designed to "change behavior." At the same time the report talks about the need for a systematic, major intervention program which incorporates all variables impacting on racial discrimination. The investigator failed to see the Air Force and Army effort as a program designed to accomplish exactly that. HRE has never been

evidenced as the cure-all for discrimination or a behavioral change agent, but rather as a vital element in a total systems approach which includes equal opportunity programs, affirmative actions, personnel plans, regulations, manuals, IG inspections, etc. The investigators stress an "analysis which precludes racism in recruitment, career paths, policy determination," etc.,. All this is being accomplished through the personnel management objectives. The investigators discuss the need for a "sincere attempt to institutionalize the RR/EO program through effective implementation of a relevant affirmative action plan." This need has been and is being accomplished with quantified Affirmative Actions Plans.

GAO Note: Comments have been deleted which relate to matters which were discussed in the draft report but which were omitted in the final report.

Results of GAO's Reassessment of Army and Air
Force Race Relations Training

February 2, 1978

Our recent assessment of the race relations training given by the Army and Air Force was based upon discussions and an examination of current curricula, Affirmative Action Plans, manuals, and regulations. In this work, we found the following information.

(1) Representatives of the Department of Defense (DOD), Army, and Air Force said their current race relations training has led to a decrease in discrimination complaints and racial incidents at their military installations. This improved climate has led to a reduced emphasis on Army's equal opportunity program. Although race relations education is still provided as part of basic training and is given again later in the enlistment period, it is not now offered in individual Army units unless the racial unrest at a particular installation warrants such training. Unit race relations training is, however, still required by current Army regulations.

(2) Both Services have now instituted programs to perform periodic qualitative evaluations. Army's study of its current race relations training is being prepared and will not be complete until Spring of 1978. In early 1977, the Air Force completed a 90-day evaluation of its current training program, a project which included analysis of over 6,000 course critiques and comments of

wing and base commanders representing over 125 bases. The evaluation led to changes in the curriculum of Air Force's race relations training (now called human relations education).

(3) Current training curricula help to identify discriminatory behavior and to provide methods of handling such situations.

(4) The revised race relations training currently in use, both individual and unit, is job-relevant. Army's objective of both individual and unit race relations training is the identification and elimination of discriminatory practices which adversely impact on the combat effectiveness of units and their ability to accomplish their missions during times of peace as well as war. Training curriculum focuses on individual and group discriminatory situations and recommends strategies for dealing with such situations. Training is directed toward resolving problems at the local level and within the Army as a whole. The Air Force also advised us that its human relations education is now job-relevant. Seminars examine how discrimination (real or perceived) in the work unit can affect job performance. Also, participants are provided a clear understanding of affirmative actions which can be taken to deal with discrimination. The major thrust of current and future programs is to tailor training to address not only the overall racial environment, but also elements in the local

climate which impact on unit effectiveness.

(5) The Services' training curricula no longer focus exclusively on white-black discrimination. DOD said that the present curriculum of Defense Race Relations Institute (which educates the Services' race relations trainers) deals with race, ethnicity, and sexism. In addition, the curricula of both Army and Air Force contain blocks of training on racial, ethnic, and sexist discriminatory behavior. The course title has changed from "Race Relations Training" to "Human Relations Education" in the Air Force, and "Equal Opportunity Program" in the Army.

(6) Army stated that its training personnel receive high-quality training and have the same career-enhancing opportunities as do personnel assigned to other specialties. Trainees are evaluated every 2 to 3 years to determine whether they are being promoted as quickly as their peers in other fields--a test of quality and competent job performance. For Air Force officers, a human relations instructor's duty is considered to be primarily a career-enhancing experience. For enlisted men, Air Force advised us that the human relations instructor's career field is selectively manned, and that stringent quality standards must be met before a member

is permitted to retrain into the human relations career field.

(7) DOD said that a sufficiently high degree of command support is present in both Services. The Services' EEO regulations and their training documents assign specific command responsibility for EEO programs and EEO matters.

(8) The Services said that basic qualifications of trainers still vary. They emphasize, however, that to prepare to teach, all prospective trainers must attend the intensive training given by the Defense Race Relations Institute. Further, for the individual training given by the Air Force and Army the curricula are uniform Service-wide, and are strictly adhered to, Service-wide.

(9) Both Services said their training programs now have clearly-articulated goals and provide guidelines for reaching these goals.