

## Message to the Force regarding the Fort Hood Independent Review

By Ryan D. McCarthy, Gen. James C. McConville, Michael A. Grinston 09 December 2020



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*Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy, Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. James C. McConville, and Sergeant Major of the Army Michael A. Grinston issue a message to the Force regarding the Fort Hood Independent Review.*

The challenges at Fort Hood, Texas, have initiated a detailed investigation into the sexual harassment, sexual assault, violent crimes, and other corrosives that exist in our ranks. The findings of this investigation have been reviewed, and on 8 December, the Secretary of the Army directed the relief or suspension of several leaders at every echelon from squad through brigade, division, corps, and installation.

Leaders at every echelon play a role in driving culture. We are gravely disappointed when instances of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and discrimination occur. We are even more disturbed when these instances are not addressed swiftly with respect, trust, and discipline. We do not expect perfection, but we do expect leaders to take ownership with aggressive and consistent action to take care of their people. Whether we are in combat or at home station, we will never leave a fallen comrade, and we work hard to take care of each other.

Respect, trust, and discipline are the foundation of unit cohesion and readiness. Leaders have the responsibility to build and maintain that

foundation. They must drive a culture of prevention before, intervention during, and compassion and human decency in the face of a catastrophic event.

Unfortunately, the issues at Fort Hood exist at other installations. You may have experienced or know someone who experienced sexual harassment or sexual assault. We will not tolerate these behaviors. We need your help to ensure we hold leaders accountable for their unit culture and their care for each Soldier. Our previous efforts are not working. We need creative solutions to get after these leadership issues.

Our responsibility is to ensure you have the right leadership, policies, and resources so you can thrive in trained, disciplined, and fit, cohesive teams. To do that, we formed the People First Task Force to identify initiatives to address our most significant challenges. We already elevated People to the Army's number one priority, reduced requirements to allow leaders to take care of Soldiers, committed more funding towards quality of life, changed the missing Soldier policy, and deployed more military law enforcement to Fort Hood, Texas. We will continue to make the right changes for our People.

We know we must strive to earn the trust of our Soldiers and the American people every day. We also know that many leaders are eager to do the right thing. Compliance is a job, but commitment is a profession. We ask each of you to recommit yourself to your teammates, your mission, and our Army. We reaffirm our commitment to you.

Ryan D. McCarthy, Secretary of the Army

Gen. James C. McConville, Chief of Staff of the Army

Michael A. Grinston, Sergeant Major of the Army