

The Pennsylvania National Guard SAPR Times

SHARP in the News

Air Force General Convicted of Sexual Misconduct Allowed to Retire as a Colonel
 Maj. Gen. William Cooley, the first General Officer to face a court martial in the Air Force's history, will retire as a Colonel this week.

By Matt White, Retrieved June 6, 2023



Image by Dayton Daily News

The first and only general in the history of the Air Force to face a court-martial will retire as a colonel. The final outcome of the case that saw Maj. Gen. William Cooley convicted of sexually assaulting his brother's wife.

A military judge found Cooley guilty of abusive sexual contact for forcing a kiss on his sister-in-law in a car on Aug. 12, 2018. The two had been at a family cookout at the woman's home in Albuquerque, New Mexico she was driving Cooley back to his quarters nearby. The same military judge did not convict him on charges of groping the woman.

Cooley's permanent reduction in rank is a more severe

punishment than was handed down at his trial and was decided on by Secretary of the Air Force, Frank Kendall, officials with the Air Force Materiel Command said in a statement. Air Force judge Col. Christina M. Jimenez sentenced Cooley in April 2022, with a reprimand and a forfeiture of pay of about \$50,000.

"Maj. Gen. William T. Cooley will retire at the rank of colonel, effective June 1, 2023, following an officer grade determination by the Secretary of the Air Force," the statement said. "The Department of the Air Force expects its leaders to embody our **Core Values**, and holds them accountable if they fall short of expectations."

At trial, witnesses including the accuser said Cooley was visiting his brother and his wife in Albuquerque while on a business trip and was drinking at their home during a cookout. At the end of the evening, the woman offered to drive him to his quarters. Cooley, she said on trial, began kissing her in the car, which she resisted, and used vulgar language to describe his sexual interest in her.

"Bill Cooley's attack on me was like an F5 tornado coming into my house, without my knowledge without my consent, ruining everything in its path," she said, according to the Journal-News, a local newspaper based in Butler County, Ohio.

The woman did not report Cooley until December of that year, but eventually came forward, she said at trial, because her job involves advising companies on reporting assaults. She said on the stand that she "felt like a fraud" for letting Cooley get away with that behavior.

Cooley was the first General Officer to face a court martial in the Air Force's history. His rank presented some unique stumbling blocks, particularly in jury selection. By rule, a court martial jury must be made up of officers of higher rank than the accused which in Cooley's case would have meant a panel of Three and Four-Star Generals. In the end, Jimenez, the military judge, decided she would decide the verdict.

By retiring, Cooley will be eligible for a lifetime pension, deeply discounted health care plans for himself and his immediate family and several other retirement benefits. His reduced retirement rank may cost Cooley significantly. Military pensions are calculated with a wide range of variables, but under the most straightforward retirement rules listed on the military's retirement benefits website.

As a Two-star general, Cooley commanded the Air Force Research Laboratory, a weapons and technology lab.

Edited by Freda Rushing



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RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Mr. Pete Mielo PA NG Northeast Region SARC



Provide a little background about yourself and your career path to becoming a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC).

- Native of Scranton, PA over 30 years of service.
- I have a B.S. in Human Services/Counseling, have always been a strong supporter of SHARP and SAPR programs throughout my leadership and staff positions and jumped at the opportunity to serve in a full-time capacity supporting the PANG SAPR Program as the Northeast Region SARC.

Personal thoughts when it comes to Sexual Assault Prevention? While it is unfortunate that our program is needed, the need absolutely exists. We all took an oath to protect against all enemies, foreign and domestic; this is a domestic enemy we face within our ranks. We all need to work together to prevent as much as possible, and support as much as possible when there are occurrences of harassment and/or assault. **What is the most challenging aspect of the job?** There is so much to learn, without a doubt, but the biggest task is building and sustaining a culture of prevention and gaining that trust from Servicemembers that they will be supported if they are a victim. **What do you do in your spare time/Self-Care?** I have been a CrossFit disciple since 2007 (you'd think I'd be better at it!) It has truly gotten me through some of the most stressful and difficult times in my life. I absolutely believe it allowed me to stay in decent condition during my battle with cancer last year and recover as well as I did. **Why did you decide to become a Victim Advocate?** I chose to become a SARC because the need for more support exists and I feel I can make a difference in the lives of our PANG Servicemembers with my years of experience in various positions. **What is the most**

rewarding aspect of the position you have experienced so far? So far, the most rewarding aspect of the position is seeing the level of commitment and care from the other full-time SAPR Staff and the Collateral Duty SARCs and Victim Advocates that support the program. **What suggestions would you give to others wanting to become Victim Advocate?** I tell them I see the potential in them and the care they have for their fellow Servicemembers, and even if they are not sure they would be good at it, they should give it a shot; they may surprise themselves. **Contact:** peter.a.mielo.mil@army.mil; 717-821-3324.

PA NG Sexual Assault Hotline: 866-922-6275



DoD SAFE Help

Want to receive the monthly PA NG SAPR Newsletter!
Email charity.harmon2.civ@army.mil

Promoting Excellence in Prevention Award

The DoD uses the Promoting Excellence in Prevention Award to recognize a group or an individual (military or civilian) from each Military Service/Component who contributed or developed an idea, concept, methodology, or approach to positively impact the sexual assault prevention efforts on an installation, deployed environment, or in a reserve component. This award recognizes individuals or groups whose work has been noteworthy and demonstrates outstanding service in support of Service Members. Policies, programs, or practices at any level of the organization are eligible activities. Award recipients and their contributions are published to enhance opportunities to further SAPRO's mission to promote military readiness by eliminating sexual assault and ensuring excellence in prevention efforts.

CONGRATULATIONS SFC COURTNEY HORNBERGER



SEXUAL VIOLENCE SUPPORT & EXPERIENCES STUDY (SVSES)

What is the SVSES?

The SVSES will allow the DoD to learn directly from Service members about their experiences with sexual violence, and, sexual assault. The surveys are completely confidential and ask questions about Service Member satisfaction with support services, aspects of the military justice process, and questions about Service member health, well-being, and career progression.

Who Can Participate?

The SVSES is open to all members of the Active and Reserve components who have experienced sexual assault in the military. Service members can join the study at any time.

Why Should I Take the Survey?

Data from the SVSES will provide DoD policy offices and Service branch leaders with information about the impact of sexual assault on Service members and inform ways to improve Sexual Assault Prevention and Response programs and policies.

JKO SVSES Training: For the Sexual Violence Support Experience training is required for SARCs, recommended for VAs

Course Number: SAPRO-SVSES01; **Course Title:** Sexual Violence Support Experience Survey (SVSES) Training for SARCs (15 mins)

Course Link: https://jkodirect.jten.mil/html/COL.xhtml?course_prefix=SAPRO&course_number=SVSES01