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**Descriptan Notes**

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>
Nov 12 1981	The Science Panel of the Agent Orange Working Group (AOWG) discusses and rejects a request to include civilians in studies of health effects of exposure to Agent Orange. (See entry for Sep 2 1983.)
Mar 2 1982	For the record of hearings held by the HHS Appropriations Subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, member Daniel K. Inouye asks CDC (Foegen) "To what extent will CDC look specifically at the impact to female veterans of 'Agent Orange'." CDC responds that "It is our understanding, from our work on the Agent Orange Working Group, that women serving were for the most part medical personnel. The numbers of other women were relatively small. Women, medical personnel, and others generally served in areas where there was little chance for exposure to Agent Orange. The protocol being developed by the Veterans Administration ... is now addressing this issue. If enough women are available, it would be reasonable to include them. If not, it would be reasonable to exclude their participation." [82-03-02-01F]
Aug 11 1982	U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye asks CDC and VA about inclusion of females in the CDC studies of health status of veterans. (Letter is in response to request from Ms. Lynda VanDevanter, Women's Director of Vietnam Veterans of America.) [82-08-11-01F]
Sep 1 1982	CDC (Foegen), responds to Sen. Inouye's Aug 11 letter by noting that the Science Panel of AOWG had "discussed this matter in detail" and decided, because of the small number of women who served in Vietnam and the likelihood that most were not exposed to Agent Orange, "any study of female veterans to answer the question [sic] would not be possible." [82-09-01-01F]
Nov 1982	A CDC/CEH task force, named to draft a protocol design for a study of Vietnam veterans' health, considers and rejects the concept of including females in the study, agreeing with the Science Panel of AOWG: too few women served in military situations comparable with men to provide meaningful study results; female veterans will be harder than men to locate; and the changes in sampling strategies necessary to include women could compromise the validity of the protocol. The CDC protocol designers concluded that, since no meaningful findings could result from including women in the investigation, a decision to include females could expose CDC to charges of sexual tokenism. The draft protocol (page 20) stated CDC's belief that "if females are to be studied, they should be studied in sufficient numbers to allow meaningful conclusions to be reached about them as a group." [AO Resources File]

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>
Nov 3 1982	VA (Nimmo) responds to Sen. Inouye's Aug 11 letter by citing CDC response and assuring that females are eligible for same benefits and privileges as men, including Agent Orange Registry examination, medical treatment, etc. [82-11-03-01F]
May 2 1983	During meeting with CDC/AOP (Erickson) re cohort selection, DoD/AAOTF agrees to produce list of Vietnam women veterans as a first step in checking women's locatability. [83-05-02-01F]
Jun 7 1983	CDC (Houk) replies to questions re study of female veterans raised by former army nurse Lily Jean Adams, citing "factors of sample size and locatability" as reasons why CDC protocol design scientists had decided not to include women in the study. [83-06-07-01F]
Jun 15 1983	In a letter to CDC/AOP, former Red Cross worker Linda J. Wilson, states that 627 women worked with the Red Cross in Vietnam from 1965-72, and offers names and addresses of 330. [83-06-15-01F]
Jul 1983	The Office of Technology Assessment of the U.S. Congress, in its review of the CDC protocol for study of Vietnam veterans' health (inclusive of language precluding female participants [page 20]), calls the protocol a "well constructed plan ... a superior product," and cites CDC's thoroughness and openness to advice and criticism. [AO Resources File]
Sep 2 1983	CDC (Foegen) responds to an Aug 22 letter from Sen. Inouye on behalf of Ms. Joan Maiman requesting that civilians be included in the Agent Orange study, citing minutes of the November 12, 1981 (note year) meeting of the Science Panel of AWOG. During that meeting, at the request of HHS Secretary Schweiker and AWOG Chairman Stockdale, the Science Panel considered the suggestion and "after considerable discussion ... concluded that it would be best not to involve [civilians] in specific studies that are presently proposed or underway." [83-09-02-01F]
Sep 12 1983	Sen. Inouye asks CDC (Foegen) for clarification of the "scientific opinion ... that CDC is unable to focus specifically on the unique stresses of female veterans." (The Inouye letter implies that the Foegen letter dated Sep 2 contains this language. The letter located, and summarized next above, does not.) [83-09-02-01F]
Sep 14 1983	The Veterans Administration Advisory Committee on Women Veterans holds its initial meeting, Sept 14-16. [83-09-14-01F]

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>
Sep 29 1983	CDC (Foege) informs Sen. Inouye that CDC has "a pilot study underway ... to determine whether or not we can find these [8000] female Vietnam veterans." Letter cautions that passage of time and name changes may make locating these veterans difficult, and that CDC will propose that a study <u>not</u> be done unless a "sufficient proportion" of women veterans can be located. [83-09-29-01F]
Oct 24 1983	CDC (Erickson) writes Vietnam Veterans of America (VanDevanter) to correct apparent mistaken impression that CDC is considering inclusion of females in the study of male veterans, and agrees to entertain VVA offer to help locate female Vietnam veterans if AAOTF test fails to reach a 70 percent success rate. [83-10-24-01F]
Feb 8 1984	U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur and 88 Congressional colleagues write CDC (Mason) to express "deep concern" that females are not included in the veterans health status studies. They urge undertaking a " <u>prompt</u> " epidemiological study on female Vietnam veterans and a birth defect study "with women Vietnam veterans". [84-02-08-01F]
Feb 16 1984	U.S. Senator Lawton Chiles writes CDC (Foege) voicing concern that females are excluded from CDC study, noting that lack of sufficient women is "not a legitimate reason" not to include them. Letter suggests that women who served in Vietnam as civilians might be included in a study. Same letter to VA (Walters). [84-02-16-01F]
Feb 27 1984	In a Summary Status Report prepared for the House Veterans Affairs Committee, CDC (Mason) refers to its investigation of the feasibility of conducting a separate study of female veterans, saying that "we hope to resolve the various scientific issues within the next two months." [84-02-27-01F]
Mar 13 1984	CDC/AOP Senior Statistician (McGee) determines that review of a sample of 2500 military records stored in St. Louis would yield "a good estimate" of the number of women who served in Vietnam, and a "crude estimate" of the proportion of nurses. [84-03-13-01F]
Mar 20 1984	CDC (Mason) responds to Rep. Kaptur and Sen. Chiles citing CDC conclusion "that if a study of women were to be done, that study should be designed so that it would allow meaningful conclusions ..." Letter reports that tests have shown that women can be located, with IRS cooperation, even after changing their names, and states that CDC is conducting a feasibility assessment for such a study. Legislative mandate to study only military veterans is cited. Letters close with assurance that "if determination is made that a study can be conducted in such a way as to assess accurately and honestly the health status of women who served in Vietnam, we will promptly advise Dr. Brandt and Secretary Heckler." [84-03-20-01F]

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>
Apr May, and Jun 1984	U.S. Senators Cranston, Evans, and Simpson, and U.S. Representative Gunderson write CDC (Mason) urging study of the health status of female veterans. (CDC responses similar to that shown above [Mar 20].) <p style="text-align: right;">[84-04-00-01F]</p>
Apr 11 1984	Three CDC staff members (headed by McGee) examine the records of a sample group of 58 Army veterans believed to be women. Nineteen of the sample were found to be males whose given names (Cris, Renee, etc.) had been mistaken for female. Many of the remaining 39 proved to be women who had either been discharged during basic training or were reservists who had been on active duty for only brief periods. <p style="text-align: right;">[84-04-11-01F]</p>
Apr 22 1984	Using search parameters reflecting the result of the earlier examination of 58 records, a team of nine CDC/AOP and one DoD/ESG staff members travel to St. Louis to abstract 3500 veterans' records, believed to be those of women. The project required two weeks. <p style="text-align: right;">[Travel Files]</p>
May 2 1984	By letter (Kafriksen to Christian), CDC/AOP asks DoD/ESG for lists of female veterans which ESG has prepared. <p style="text-align: right;">[84-05-02-01F]</p>
May 3 1984	Rep. Marcy Kaptur and two colleagues write CDC (Mason) urging action on a decision to conduct a study of female veterans, pointing out that the CDC Summary Status Report prepared for the House Veterans Affairs Committee in February had promised resolution of "the various scientific issues ... within the next two months." <p style="text-align: right;">[84-05-03-01F]</p>
May 14 1984	The VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans meets, May 14-15.
Jun 1 1984	CDC (Mason) responds to Rep. Kaptur's May 3 letter, citing some results from just-concluded review of 3500 records: 1,578 were believed to be those of qualified women. (Others found to be men or women with inappropriate lengths of service.) Letter states that CDC has begun design of a study focuses on the health of women veterans ... so that CDC will be prepared to act expeditiously if such a study is determined feasible." <p style="text-align: right;">[84-06-01-01F]</p>
Jun 13 1984	CDD/AOP (Layde) reports to CEH (Houk) that an epidemiologic study of the health of female Vietnam veterans, similar to the Vietnam Experience component of CDC's study of male veterans, appears to be operationally and scientifically feasible. A draft outline for such a study, forwarded to Dr. Houk for review, indicates the comparison of the health of the approximate 7,000 female Vietnam veterans to that of a sample of 11,000 women veterans who served elsewhere, would allow the study to have similar statistical power to the Vietnam Experience component of the male study. <p style="text-align: right;">[84-06-13-01F]</p>

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>
Jun 21 1984	CDC (Mason) submits Summary of Proposal for a Study of Female Vietnam Veterans to HHS/PHS (Brandt). [84-06-21-01F]
Jun 25 1984	HHS (Brandt) forwards CDC proposal to Science Panel of AOWG (Keller), requesting that the panel meet with CDC (Houk and coworkers) for discussion preliminary to next meeting of entire AOWG. [84-06-25-01F]
Jun 25 1984	(Date approximate.) CEH/AOP completes a "draft protocol outline" for the female study. [84-06-25-02F]
Jul 18 1984	During update briefings with representatives of major veterans service organizations and staff members of Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees, CDD/AOP (Wiesner and Layde) respond to questions about a study of female veterans' health by saying that CDC had completed the feasibility assessment of a separate study, and recommended to the Agent Orange Working Group that it consider the proposal. [84-07-18-01F]
Jul 19 1984	CDC (Houk, Kafrissen, LeVois, and McGee) deliver the CDC Protocol Outline to the Science Panel, AOWG.
Jul 26 1984	In a letter to Senator Cranston, VA Administrator Walters transmits the first report of the Veterans Administration Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. The report states that the VA Advisory Committee of Women Veterans concludes that a study of female Vietnam veterans and Agent Orange is "clearly indicated and needs to be done without further delay," and recommends conduct of such a study. [84-07-26-01F]
Jul 26 1984	CDC (Mason) responds to a letter referred by U.S. Senator William Proxmire requesting the Senator's assistance in insuring that women veterans are included in the Agent Orange study. The response points out that the CDC feasibility assessment is under review by AOWG. [84-07-26-02F]
Aug 9 1984	CDC (Mason) is directed (via memo from Brandt) to arrange meeting with VA to discuss possible overlaps in proposed CDC study and another study of female veterans health proposed to be implemented by VA. [84-08-09-01F]
Aug 20 1984	CDC (Dr. Kafrissen) meets with the VA (Dr. Shepard, et al.) in response to Brandt memo of Aug 9. VA is unable at this time, for reasons of confidentiality, to discuss details of its proposed study. Draft copy. [84-08-20-01F]

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>
Aug 29 1984	CDC (Mason) reports to Dr. Brandt on meeting between CDC (Kafriksen) and VA (Shepard et al.) concerning possible areas of overlap in proposed studies of the health of female veterans. Memo is in response to Dr. Brandt's request 8-9-84, controlled correspondence ID#D18759. [84-08-29-01F]
Sep 13 1984	Dr. Keller, Chairman, Science Panel, AOWG, writes a memo to Dr. Brandt stating that the Science Panel wishes two issues to be carefully considered before proceeding further with development of the study: 1) "the great potential for confounding exposures both during and after Vietnam to teratogenic agents other than herbicides and their contaminants," and 2) "what a study of female veterans will contribute in the way of scientific information which is not already being obtained from the ongoing male studies." [84-09-13-01F]
Sep 18 1984	In letter to CDC (Mason), Sen. Alan Cranston urges research re female veterans be addressed "soon," and asks status of CDC's plans to undertake such a study. [84-09-18-01F]
Sep 19 1984	Drs. Layde and Kafriksen prepare memo to the record on the scientific issues relevant to an epidemiologic study of the health of female Vietnam veterans. [84-09-19-01F]
Nov 13 1984	CDC (Dr. Mason) responds to Dr. Brandt in answer to AOWG Science Panel's critique of the protocol outline for a study of female Vietnam veterans. Dr. Mason states that CDC is neutral on doing the study, but if a decision is made to proceed, expresses confidence that "we can do a valid study, acceptable to the veterans groups, if we are provided the necessary resources." [84-11-13-01F]
Nov 1984	Common Cause Magazine publishes an article, "A Vietnam Aftermath, The Untold Story of Women and Agent Orange". [84-11-00-01F]
Nov 20 1984	Senator Proxmire's staff calls to inquire on the status of a study of female veterans after reading the recent Common Cause article on the subject. [84-11-20-01F]
Nov 26 1984	Wendy Wendler (Health Services Consultant), who claims to be an Agent Orange victim in Korea in 1967-68, writes of her concerns about female victims in letters to CDC (Diefenbach) and MHS (Ms. Shirley Barth). [84-11-26-01F]

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>
Dec 4 1984	At the AOWG meeting Dr. Brandt requests that CDC and AOWG Science Panel discuss what additional information the Science Panel would need to assess the scientific utility of a study of female Vietnam veterans. [see 84-12- <sup>20</sup> <del>24</del> -01F]
Dec 20 1984	Memo to AOWG Science Panel (Keller) from CDC (Houk) states CDC's belief that the study described in the protocol outline is appropriate but if the Science Panel provides a list of specific hypotheses that will address the health concerns of female Vietnam veterans, resources will be requested to develop a protocol to study these hypotheses. [84-12-20-01F]
Dec 27 1984	CDC (Mason) responds to Sen. Proxmire's inquiry about the study of female Vietnam veterans, stating that there is no formal scientific protocol or budget proposal yet; the draft protocol outline for an epidemiologic study has been submitted to AOWG which is currently reviewing it. [84-12-27-01F]
Feb 22 1985	In a memo to Drs. Houk, Wiesner, and Layde, Dr. Kafrisen reports that the AOWG Science panel discussion of female veteran studies led to no recommendation except the need for further discussion. [85-02-22-01F]