Teammates,

I want to ensure that everyone is familiar with our 40th Chief of Staff of the Army’s focus on creating cohesive teams across the force. “This is My Squad” is a call to action for all of us to build cohesive teams by getting to know one another, treating each other respectfully, and taking care of each other.

Building cohesive teams starts with you getting to know one another—understanding each other’s backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, life dreams, and life challenges. Once you know each other better, you are more prepared to care for one another.

Everyone in your squad should feel valued, understood, and included. Kindness, compassion, and encouragement should be the norm. When a teammate needs help or care, a cohesive squad rallies around their teammate to support, encourage, and assist them so that nobody faces life’s challenges alone.

Some behaviors and attitudes clearly break trust and must be eliminated from your squad. Sexual harassment demeans, devalues, and marginalizes your squad mates. Sexual assault is a crime that results in physical, emotional, and mental harm while destroying trust within the team.

Losing a teammate to suicide results in loss, sadness, and guilt. Preventing suicide is possible when we know our teammates well enough to notice when something is not right and then encouraging them to seek help. Preventing suicide requires compassion and courage to ask someone if they are okay—even when your concern might be unwarranted.

Racism similarly demeans, devalues, and marginalizes your squad mates. Extremism in any form leads to distrust, fear, and anger. These behaviors have no place in a cohesive team.

I believe we can build a climate where everyone feels like they are part of a squad rather than in a squad. I am committed to establishing a climate where we get to know one another, treat each other with respect, and unhesitatingly walk alongside those who need our encouragement and support. Together, we can build this climate. It starts with your actions within your squad and builds to the entire team and chain of command. We will support you with resources from Equal Opportunity, SHARP Office, Community Mental Health, the Chaplains, and the Inspector General. If there is an issue you cannot resolve, please make maximum use of these resources.

During our upcoming Honorable Living Day we will take another step towards eradicating racism with inclusive leadership. We will learn how racism affects our teammates, learn ways to get to know one another better, and talk about how we can make “our squad” a more cohesive team. I look forward to taking that next step with you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Darryl A. Williams
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
60th Superintendent