

## UNITED STATES - NATIONAL REPORT

This report provides an overview of the United States' policies and programs relating to women in the military.

**Organization.** The US military is organized into five branches of service – the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. The regular and reserve forces of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps are organized under civilian Secretaries of Defense. The Coast Guard is organized under the Department of Homeland Security, but in times of National emergencies or war, it is directed by the President, is placed under the operational control of the Navy.

### **Strength.**

Today, more than 333K women serve in the US Armed Forces (Active, Guard and Reserve) around the world.

|                     | <b>ACTIVE</b>  | <b>RESERVE</b> | <b>GUARD</b>  | <b>TOTAL</b>   |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>ARMY</b>         | <b>71,338</b>  | <b>37,429</b>  | <b>42,382</b> | <b>151,149</b> |
| <b>NAVY</b>         | <b>53,701</b>  | <b>2,592</b>   |               | <b>56,293</b>  |
| <b>AIR FORCE</b>    | <b>71,524</b>  | <b>17,586</b>  | <b>18,778</b> | <b>107,888</b> |
| <b>MARINE CORPS</b> | <b>10,822</b>  | <b>1,911</b>   |               | <b>12,733</b>  |
| <b>COAST GUARD</b>  | <b>4,719</b>   | <b>1,134</b>   |               | <b>5,853</b>   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>212,104</b> | <b>60,652</b>  | <b>61,160</b> | <b>333,916</b> |

### **Policy.**

Policies related to the employment of women are based on the premise of "qualified." The last major change in US policy for women in the military occurred in 1994 when the Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 1994 repealed the last ban on women in combat ships. The only positions that remain closed today are those that involve direct ground combat or where the cost of appropriate berthing and privacy arrangements is prohibitive. Direct ground combat is defined as engaging an enemy on the ground with individual or crew served weapons, while exposed to hostile fire and in a high probability of direct physical contact with the hostile force's personnel.

### **Employment.**

During the past 10 years, the Department of Defense opened more than 260 combat positions previously closed to women. In 1994, almost half of all active female officers were in the health care field. In 2004, approximately 20% of

the health care field and there has been an increase in the share of women offic engineering and maintenance, tactical operations, supply and procurement a variety of other fields. Between 1995 and 2004, the number of enlisted wom tactical operations career fields nearly doubled while the supply and procure female population grew by 11%. Over 96% of the career fields and over 80% ( total jobs are open to women.



*A female Navy Search and Rescue Swimmer lifts "Oscar" out of the water during a man overboard drill aboard Safeguard-class rescue salvage ship*

| <b>CAREER FIELDS</b>    |              |             |                           |               |           |
|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|
|                         | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>OPEN</b> | <b>PARTIAL<br/>CLOSED</b> | <b>CLOSED</b> | <b>%O</b> |
| <b>ARMY</b>             | <b>83</b>    | <b>76</b>   | <b>0</b>                  | <b>7</b>      |           |
| <b>NAVY</b>             | <b>101</b>   | <b>96</b>   | <b>0</b>                  | <b>5</b>      |           |
| <b>AIR<br/>FORCE</b>    | <b>260</b>   | <b>256</b>  | <b>11</b>                 | <b>4</b>      |           |
| <b>MARINE<br/>CORPS</b> | <b>116</b>   | <b>107</b>  | <b>21</b>                 | <b>9</b>      |           |
| <b>COAST<br/>GUARD</b>  | <b>50</b>    | <b>50</b>   | <b>0</b>                  | <b>0</b>      |           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>610</b>   | <b>585</b>  | <b>32</b>                 | <b>25</b>     |           |

- **Functions/areas closed to women**

- **Special Operations Forces:** Rotary wing aviation units.
- **Army:** Battalion level or below units of Infantry, Armor, Field Artillery, Air Defense Artillery and Special Operations Forces or other units that collocate on a routine basis with the aforementioned units.
- **Navy:** Submarines and patrol craft (due to prohibitive habitability and modification costs); positions associated with SEALs and Marine Corps units that falls under direct ground combat exclusion or collocation exclusion.)
- **Air Force:** Tactical Air Command and Control, Pararescue (enlisted only), Combat Control (enlisted and officer)
- **Marine Corps:** Infantry, armor and field artillery.
- **Coast Guard:** None



*Female Master Sergeant gives instructions on maintenance procedures for .50 caliber machine gun at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.*

**Deployments.** Over 40,000 women are deployed in support of major military operations worldwide. Women's health issues continue to be a concern for deployed military women. In an effort to provide deployed women with greater access to gynecological care, the Navy Bureau of Medicine (BUMED) in coordination with nurse practitioners and gynecologists are testing a self-diagnosis and treatment package for minor gynecological disorders while deployed. Testing phase will conclude in December 2005. Having already received positive responses from the fleet, BUMED anticipates implementing the Women in the Military Self-Diagnosis Pack for all deploying women.

**Recruitment.** The Department's recruiting program is a key component of readiness. US law encourages recruiter access to high school students and pertinent student directory information for the purpose of recruiting. The Department of Defense benchmarks for recruit quality are at least 90% high school diploma graduates (HSDG). In 2004, the military services accessed 95% HSDG.

An aggressive recruiting program has enabled the US Forces to maintain a ready force. In 2004, the Services either met or surpassed their recruiting objectives. Over 1 million personnel were enlisted in to the Armed Forces. However, the Services are facing a difficult recruiting environment. Today's robust economy presents many challenges to recruitment and retention of the best and brightest.

The Department continues to develop incentive programs designed to attract quality recruits and meet recruiting challenges. Among them are increased college fund incentives, increased enlistment bonuses, and the development of college degree completion plans. The US Armed Forces have gender-neutral recruiting programs and financial incentives are available to both men and women.

**Retention Initiatives.** Because the US economy is strong, many career service members look to the private sector for job opportunities with higher pay and benefits packages. Several comprehensive compensation improvements were designed to retain high quality personnel and make military pay competitive with comparable private sector careers.

Another important retention factor is the tempo of the force. Surveys indicate a linkage between personnel tempo (PERSTEMPO) and decisions to leave the military. PERSTEMPO is defined as the time an individual spends away from his or her home station and is important in measuring force stability. Quality of Life initiatives continue to focus on enhancing predictability of duty schedules, distributing missions to the Force and protecting quality of life during the inter-deployment period. The Department remains committed to analyzing the pace of operations and individual tempo levels.

**Physical Fitness Standards.** Physical fitness requirements vary among the Services.

- **Army.** The Army's physical fitness standards apply to all soldiers in the Active Army (including the United States Army Reserve and Army National Guard) and encompasses all ages, ranks and genders. There are also standards for soldiers with limiting physical profiles who are required to participate in physical fitness training. The purpose is to ensure all soldiers maintain acceptable levels of fitness throughout their careers beginning with Initial Entry Training (IET).
- **Navy.** Physical readiness tests, with associated height/weight/body fat measurements, are conducted twice each fiscal year. The test is designed to measure flexibility, muscular endurance and aerobic capacity.
- **Air Force.** During initial entry processing, both men and women are required to pass a physical fitness test to measure cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance and mobility. The test consists of the 2-mile run, push-ups and sit-ups. The Air Force also has an annual requirement to test personnel for muscular strength by measuring push ups and sit ups within a 2 minute time limit, aerobic endurance timed at 1.5 mile run, height, weight, and body fat measurement.
- **Marine Corps.** The Physical Fitness Test is administered twice per calendar year. All Marines are provided time to train and are expected to maintain an adequate degree of physical fitness. The standard physical fitness test consists of three events that measure cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance and mobility. Male Marines perform "dead-hang" pull-ups, abdominal

crunches, and a 3.0-mile run. Female Marines complete the "flexed-arm" abdominal crunches, and a 3.0-mile run.

- **Coast Guard.** All members are required to pass a test of general fitness at initial entry processing. This test measures cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. Physical fitness requirements in the Coast Guard are directly linked to On-the-Job requirements. Coast Guard men and women who are rescue swimmers, small boat crew members, etc., comply with the specific physical standards set forth by their position.

### **Gender Integrated Training.**

The Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard conduct gender-integrated training in training units. The Marine Corps policy requires gender-separate training at the unit level with a gender-integrated follow-on program.

**Promotions.** US military women compete through the same promotion system as military men. Today, there are 47 female general and flag officers serving on active duty and 35 female general officers serving in the Guard and Reserves. In 1994 there were only twelve general or flag officers serving on active duty.

### **Education**

The US military education system expands the career life cycle for both women and men. Each Service provides initial entry-level training for officers and enlisted personnel. Courses are designed to be intellectually and physically challenging and to develop military skills specific to the occupational specialty of the individual.

There are four US Service academies – Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. These academies are designed to develop and prepare cadets and midshipmen for their role as military leaders. The Naval Academy also prepares midshipmen for careers as officers in the Marine Corps. Cadets and midshipmen complete four years of study leading to an undergraduate degree. In addition to general academics, moral and ethical development are fundamental elements of the academy experience. In 1994, 1659 women attended US Military Academies in preparation for careers as officers.



*Women (shown here at graduation ceremony) make up 30% of the Corps of Cadets at Coast Guard Academy. In 2004, 94% of female officers have a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to 90% male officers. 97% of enlisted women have a high school diploma or higher compared to 94% of enlisted men.*

The Department of Defense provides opportunities for continuing civilian education through off duty education programs. Programs include onsite education and distance education courses as well as CLEP and DANTES testing for College Credit on a variety of subjects providing worldwide access. In 2004 94% female officers have a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to 90% male officers. 97% of enlisted women have a high school diploma or higher compared to 94% of enlisted men.

**Career Development** The Services have formal and informal mentoring programs that aid in the development of junior officers and noncommissioned/petty officers. These programs are available to men and women. The Department of Defense partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs helps to ensure that career counseling and support for military personnel are available long after they leave active military service.

#### **First for Women in 2004 - 2005**

##### **Army**

- First woman to be promoted two grades to major general as chief of the Army Nurse Corp and as Commander Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii and Pacific Regional Medical Command.
- First female from the US Military Academy (West Point) Class of 1977 (second class that admitted women) to be promoted to the rank of Brigadier General.

##### **Navy**

- First four female commanding officers of combatants to win the Battle "E" award for excellence for overall readiness. Battle "E" winners are recognized as superior fleet performers in combat systems, engineering, operations, navigation and supply departments.
- First women nominated to command a Coastal Patrol Ship (pending Congressional approval).

### **Air Force**

- First female test pilot to assume command of a flight test squadron.
- First female fighter squadron commander.
- First female F-117A Nighthawk pilot.
- First active duty female to complete sharpshooter training.

### **Coast Guard**

- Appointed first female Dean of Academics to serve at any US Military Academy.
- First female executive officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Eagle, the only cutter in the US Armed Forces powered by sail.

**Conclusion.** The Department of Defense continues to review policies to ensure women are provided equal opportunities for career development. Regardless of gender, the best-qualified person can now fill more than 96% of the career fields in the US Armed Forces. US military women contribute to our Nation's security and help increase the flexibility of the military to maintain a high state of readiness.