

NORWAY

1 NATIONAL REPORT 2006

1.1 Introduction

Women in the Norwegian Armed Forces have a long history of service. They have had access to military posts since 1938. During World War II they served in all arms and services, both in officer and enlisted ranks. A political decision in 1947 reduced women's service to civilian posts only. Due to increased demand for personnel, women were allowed to serve as reservists on a voluntary basis in 1959.

Women were given non-combat military appointments and functions between 1977 and 1984, following a resolution passed by the Norwegian Parliament. In 1985, the Parliament decided that the equal opportunities act should also apply to the military. Consequently women were allowed in all combat functions. In recent years there has been a huge focus upon increasing the number of women in Service. Women serve on a voluntary basis, yet they have the same obligations as men to serve in the event of mobilisation.

This report concentrates on changes that have occurred since the NATO annual meeting in 2005.

1.2 Policies

The past year has seen an increase in the will to recruit women to a career in the armed Forces. The Minister of Defence in cooperation with the Chief of Defence has set a target number of 15% females serving in the armed forces by the end of 2008. In order to achieve this goal the organisation must work as a whole in a focused and methodical manner. The Staff at the Ministry of Defence are in the process of creating a unified forum across the board in which all levels of the Armed Forces can discuss, and agree upon actions that will help achieve the goal of 15% females. At present, 2006 the percentage of females serving is 6.6%.

The Norwegian government has, in accordance with the UN resolution nr 1325, increased focus on raising awareness about gender issues, including Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). To ensure successful implementation of increased gender awareness in the Norwegian armed forces, both nationally and whilst deployed, there has been issued a plan of action with guidelines, pinpointing tasks that need to be fulfilled.

A directive, outlining the basic requirements for a family welfare policy, was issued by the Norwegian Chief of Defence at the turn of the year. This document illustrates the minimum amount of support the Norwegian Armed Forces are required to provide to the families of military personnel. Establishing a compatible family policy is crucial in achieving this goal. Both Army and Navy have already established family web sites, in order to provide the families with information on ongoing missions, as well as welfare information.

Furthermore the Norwegian Government has issued a plan of action to prevent human trafficking.

1.3 Organisation

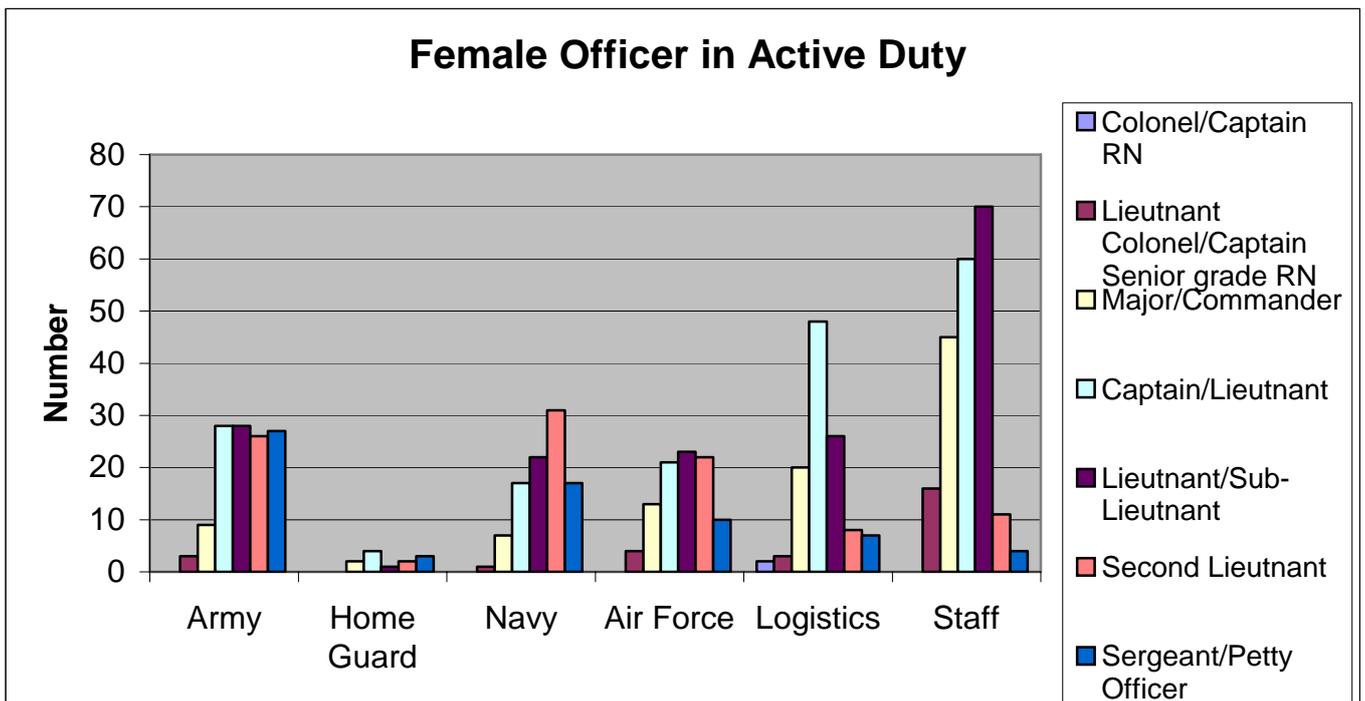
Current numbers of total force by service is 9746 officers (March 2006), and of these 688 are female.

Total number of serving women in each service:

- Army 132
- Navy 115
- Air force 83
- Home Guard 13
- Logistics 111
- Staff 234

The diagram shows the break down of rank by service in the Army, Air Force, Navy and Home Guard.

Graph 1 Number of female officers in services and rank



Graph 2 Percentage of female officers in total for each rank

Rank	Number of female
General/Admiral	0
General Major/Rear Admiral	0
General Lieutenant/Vice-Admiral	0
Brigadier/Commodore	1 *
Colonel/Captain RN	2
Lieutenant Colonel/Commander Senior Grade RN	27
Major/ Commander RN	96
Captain/ Lieutenant Commander RN	178
Lieutenant/	170
Second Lieutenant/Sub Lieutenant RN	100
Sergeant/Petty Officer	68
Grenadier	46
	688

* Norway has one female flag officer in the Ministry of Defence

1.4 Employment

In January 2005 a new law concerning the employment of military personnel was introduced. The Norwegian officers have earlier had protection against notice, except in cases of permanent illness or gross misbehaviour. This new law alters the rights of Norwegian military personnel considerably and was therefore disputed, and now there is a proposal to reverse it. The proposal will be decided upon by the Norwegian Parliament this year.

The new law also depicts the introduction of a new category of Officers, unit officers (similar to warrant officers) as well as providing guidelines for postings to international operations. This has resulted in a revision of the Military Personnel administrative guidelines. These new guidelines were approved in august 2005, but will be undergoing further revision. The intention is to attain a personnel policy that is in tune with today's social conventions and incorporate the alterations brought on by the new law. This revision maintains a strong focus on achieving a higher percentage of women in the Forces.

1.5 Recruitment

In order to increase the number of women undertaking national conscription, it has been decided, at a political level, to give all women between the ages of 18 – 20 the option of attending national conscription selection. Females born in the year 1989 have by March this year received an invitation to attend national conscription selection.

The aim is to recruit them to military service and further to motivate them to choose a career as unit officers or as students in our military academies.

This year, for the first time, the Navy arranged an all-girl military recruitment-camp, to give the prospective recruits a taste of what the Navy has to offer. The camp took place in March and was a huge success.

Affirmative action /recruitment campaigns that have been undertaken to encourage the recruitment of women:

- More female recruitment officers
- At Exhibitions: Always ensure that a female recruitment officer is present
- Streamlining adverts specifically towards women
- Getting our own articles and extras, featuring women and military education, published in popular womens magazines.
- Marketing research directed towards revealing what interests young people and especially women, and also what their attitude towards the Armed Forces is.
- Telemarketing
- Inviting more women to attend "Military camp"
- Invitations to special activities – competitions on the www.mil.no
- Visits to Folk schools, (girls) especially branches who have outdoor-life programs
- National conscripts as market specialists – 2 female graduates undertaking military service
- Event messages/updates sent by e-mail and SMS

1.6 Training

In 2005 the Army Officer Candidate School admitted 17 female students out of total of 40. All 17 are still students at the school.

The Armed Forces military academies now have a total of 10,4 % female students.

The Joint selection policy issued in 2005, which states that the Armed Forces carry out all selection to Officer Candidate School, Military Academies/Bachelor of Military science and Master degree program, in a joint selection program, is effectuated, with positive results.

The resent reorganization of the Armed Forces has brought on a demand for other qualities and competence. For one we recognize that there is a need to increase competence-levels in relation to cultural, religious and gender awareness.

1.7 Deployments

Norwegian servicewomen have been, and will continue to be deployed in international operations. They have served in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balcans and the Middle East, as well as in the Mediterranean and the English Channel.

The new law concerning military personnel states that officers can be given orders to serve in international operations. This constitutes a major change from the earlier practice in which Norwegian officers volunteered to serve in international operations. We do not know the consequences, if any, this change may have in regards to the recruitment and retaining women in the armed forces.

1.8 Career Development

The Norwegian Defence Leadership Institute has started a test program for regional groups of female officers. The purpose of the program is to coach and support women to further their personal

development, gain personal growth and establish female networks. This initiative complements already established mentoring programs, which are intended to motivate women to keep building their career in the Armed Forces.

The Army has started its first mentor program, in which 2 of the 10 students are female.

The Air force introduced their mentor program in 2001, so far 8 women have completed the course.

A total of 172 female officers throughout the Armed Forces have attended mentoring programs.

1.9 Special Interest Items/Events

We have had a major restructuring of our officer-candidate education programs. Several of our Officers Candidate Schools have been terminated and the education moved to the Brigade units. The candidates are recruited from the conscripts. This represents a challenge to the goal of attaining sufficient female representation.

1.10 Conclusion

The past year has seen an increase in the will to recruit women to a career in the armed Forces. The Minister of Defence, in cooperation with the Chief of Defence, has set a target number of 7% females serving in the Armed Forces by the end of 2005.

By the end of 2008 the goal is to attain 15 %. This goal appears to be major challenge, since the female percentage has been steady around 6.3% to 6.7% for the past years.

Today there are still 6,6 % women in the Armed Forces.

The ongoing changes in organization and mission for the Armed Forces give us opportunities to meet this challenge. A new law concerning military personnel and the ongoing revision of personnel policy guidelines, including family policy, will hopefully contribute to emphasizing the importance of gender equality and diversity as a key to success.

After the change of Minister of Defence last autumn we have seen signs of increased focus on the importance of culture and gender issues, as well as a change of attitude towards arranging for women in service and to retain and recruit women in service.