



Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services Articles of Interest: 5-11 March 2016

DACOWITS IN THE NEWS

1. 2016 DACOWITS Committee Members Announced

(8 Mar) DoD Press Release

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2. Retired Female Four-Star Appointed to Defense Advisory Committee

(8 Mar) DoD News, By Defense Media Activity

For the first time, a female four-star general was appointed to serve on the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, according to a DoD news release issued today.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

3. Army increases visibility of female recruiters; seeks more for the job

(6 Mar) Army Times, By Kyle Jahner

The Army will continue its push for more female recruiters, but this summer it will also work to leverage the ones it already has.

4. Army recruiter charged with sending explicit pic to teen

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Police say a New Jersey-based recruiter sent an image of his [genitals] to a 17-year-old girl via the media-sharing application Snapchat late last year, then took apart and threw away his cellphone in an attempt to destroy the evidence.

5. Women's History Month Webcast Focuses on Mentorship

(10 Mar) DoD News, By Shannon Collins

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management hosted a mentoring webcast today in recognition of Women's History Month, focusing on how mentorship affects ability to meet the mission.

EMPLOYMENT & INTEGRATION

6. Other services could overhaul the tape test. Why not the Air Force?

(6 Mar) Air Force Times, By Oriana Pawlyk

The Air Force is standing firmly behind their tape test, even as airmen for years have complained about its effectiveness and the other services are reviewing the controversial test.

7. Sailors Face More Lenient Body Fat Rules

(6 Mar) Associated Press, By Julie Watson

The Navy is giving another chance to thousands of sailors who otherwise would be kicked out for repeatedly failing their physical fitness tests because they exceeded body fat limits.

8. The Pentagon Is Finally Designing Combat Gear for Women

(8 Mar) War is Boring, By Joseph Jaafari

As women begin to serve in all combat roles across every branch of the military, the Pentagon is making new efforts to ensure that their troops' fertility — and prospect of having kids — is intact, something former service members weren't afforded.

9. Women leaders drive change in the defense industry

(8 Mar) Bloomberg Government, By Robert Levinson

While many Americans focus on former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's attempt to shatter the world's highest glass ceiling by becoming the first woman U.S. president, other women have already broken into what have long been seen as the ultimate boys' clubs: the military and defense industries.

10. Navy's new body fat rules start now with spring PFA

(9 Mar) Navy Times, By Meghann Myers

Now that it's time for the spring PFA, commands will be putting new rules announced last year into effect — eased body fat rules, but fewer allowed failures before a sailor is booted out. It also means random body fat checks that can land a sailor onto the mandatory PT squad.

11. Lone female competitor embodies Warrior Ethos at 364th ESC BWC

(9 Mar) DVIDS, By Capt. Nicole Abeyta

Instead of seeing the extremely physically challenging event and her gender an obstacle, [Sp. Christine] Holzwarth said she saw the Best Warrior Competition as an opportunity to showcase her Army training and her ability to adapt and learn.

12. 1st women could start Navy SEAL training in August

(10 Mar) The San Diego Union-Tribune, By Jeanette Steele

Pentagon details how combat jobs will open to women, including Marines as early as April

13. DoD Gives Final Go-Ahead to Open All Military Jobs to Women

(10 Mar) DoD News, By Karen Parrish

After “exceptionally thorough work” by all of the services, the U.S. military is authorized to begin integrating women across all occupations and specialties immediately, according to a Defense Department statement released today.

14. Statement from Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook on Secretary Carter's Approval of Women in Service Review Implementation Plans

(10 Mar) DoD Press Release

Three months after his historic decision to open all combat positions to women, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter today formally approved the final implementation plans prepared by the military services and U.S. Special Operations Command. This action allows them to carry out their plans to fully integrate women throughout the armed forces.

15. Moving Out on Women-in-Service

(10 Mar) Medium, By Secretary of Defense Ash Carter

How and why the U.S. military is now opening up the last combat positions to women

16. Air Force: 'No quotas' as last combat jobs opened to women

(10 Mar) Air Force Times, By Stephen Losey

The first female Tactical Air Control Party airman could potentially be trained and assigned to an operational unit this year, the Air Force said in its formal plan for integrating women into the last six male-only combat jobs.

17. Army's 1st female grunts, tankers should arrive at their units in 2017

(10 Mar) Army Times, By Michelle Tan

The Army will start training women for combat arms jobs later this year, but the first group of female infantry, armor or special operations soldiers are not expected to arrive at their units until 2017 at the earliest.

18. How big is opposition to women in combat units among Marines? This report explains.

(10 Mar) The Washington Post, By Dan Lamothe

A survey of nearly 54,000 members of the Marine Corps found that two out of three male Marines and one out of three female Marines were opposed to opening all combat jobs to women, underscoring the depth of opposition the service faces as it is required to begin fully integrating them this year.

19. Marines gear up to train more women now that all combat jobs open

(10 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Jeff Schogol

The Marine Corps is getting ready for a potential surge of women in recruit training and military occupational specialties schools now that the service's gender integration plan has been approved, Marine Corps Times has learned.

WELL-BEING & TREATMENT

20. Military Update: Force of the Future might survive attack on its architect

(6 Mar) *The Gazette*, By Tom Philpott

Legislation is sought to allow 14 days of paternity leave and to expand adoption leave, too. Child care service hours are to be available at least 14 hours a day. Installations must have rooms for nursing service members. The services also are to begin to pay for egg and sperm freezing for active-duty service members to protect their reproductive options in case of injury.

21. Veterans suicide: 'We must and will do more,' VA says

(9 Mar) *Navy Times*, By Patricia Kime

Veterans Affairs Department officials said Tuesday they will make several changes to the department's suicide prevention programs as part of ongoing efforts to reverse the tide of suicides among military veterans.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH / WOMEN VETERANS

22. Former Marine muscles her way to \$10K on 'Broken Skull Challenge'

(5 Mar) *Marine Corps Times*, By Kevin Lilley

Reality-show winner, CrossFit instructor weighs in on fitness plans, pullups (she can do 20-plus), and more

23. Carter Salutes Women's Contributions on International Women's Day

(8 Mar) *DoD News*, *Defense Media Agency*

The Defense Department "must continue to be open and inclusive as we strive to bring in America's best talent, including from our extraordinary community of women, who make up more than 50 percent of the American population," Defense Secretary Ash Carter said today in his written message in observance of International Women's Day.

24. WASP Pursued Love of Flying, Fought for Women Vets' Recognition

(9 Mar) *DoD News*, By Shannon Collins

Women have been graduating from the Air Force Academy since 1980, and flying in combat missions since Operation Desert Storm, but before them were the World War II Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASPs.

1. 2016 DACOWITS Committee Members Announced

(8 Mar) *DoD Press Release*

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Operations

Release No: NR-073-16

March 8, 2016

The Department of Defense announced today the induction of three new members to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

DACOWITS, established during the Korean War in 1951 by Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall, is an independent advisory committee that provides the department with advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces.

Previously comprised of 17 members, the DACOWITS charter authorizes a total of 20 committee members.

The incoming members are as follows:

Retired Marine Corps Colonel John Boggs, Phoenix, Arizona

Retired Air Force Major General Sharon Dunbar, Alexandria, Virginia

Retired Air Force General Janet Wolfenbarger, Dayton, Ohio

DACOWITS members include prominent civilian women and men representing a distribution of demography, academia, industry,

public service and other professions. Selection is on the basis of experience in the military or with women's-related workforce issues.

Members are selected for a four-year term, without compensation, to perform a variety of duties including visiting military installations each year, conducting a review and evaluation of current research on military women, and developing an annual report with recommendations on these issues for service leadership and the secretary of defense.

More information about DACOWITS can be found at <http://dacowits.defense.gov/>.

<http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/685624/2016-dacowits-committee-members-announced?source=GovDelivery>

2. Retired Female Four-Star Appointed to Defense Advisory Committee

(8 Mar) DoD News, By Defense Media Activity

For the first time, a female four-star general was appointed to serve on the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, according to a DoD news release issued today.

Retired Air Force Gen. Janet C. Wolfenbarger was among three new Secretary of Defense military appointees who joined DACOWITS today during a swearing-in ceremony held at a DACOWITS quarterly business meeting. Also sworn in were retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Sharon K. G. Dunbar and retired Marine Corps Col. John T. Boggs.

DACOWITS was established in 1951 and is composed of civilian women and men who are appointed by the defense secretary, the release said. The committee provides advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the recruitment, retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the armed forces.

DACOWITS recommendations have been instrumental in effecting change to laws and policies pertaining to military women.

Wolfenbarger served 35 years in the Air Force. She received her commission in 1980 and was among the first class of women graduates from the U.S. Air Force Academy. She began her career in acquisition as an engineer at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, and held a variety of leadership assignments throughout her career, culminating as the commander, Air Force Materiel Command. She was the Air Force's first female four-star general.

"It is truly an honor to be selected to serve on this important committee. I retired last July after serving for 35 years in the United States Air Force. I am thrilled to be afforded the opportunity to continue to serve my nation in this new capacity," Wolfenbarger said.

Other Appointees

Dunbar was commissioned in 1982 upon graduation from the U.S. Air Force Academy. She has served in a variety of acquisition, political-military and personnel positions. Prior to her retirement in 2014, Dunbar was dual-hatted as commander of the Air Force District of Washington and the 320th Air Expeditionary Wing, headquartered at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. She is currently the vice president of human resources for a global aerospace and defense company.

As a Marine Corps infantry officer, Boggs has been privileged to command at every level of his military career. He has served in advisory positions on high-level national government staffs and advised general officers and political appointees. Prior to his retirement in 2008, he served as chief of staff of the National Defense University and managed the planning and implementation of daily operations at the world's largest defense university system and leading institution for producing strategic leaders. He is the founder of a leadership and strategy development business.

"It is an honor to be selected to serve on the committee," Boggs said.

Highly qualified candidates are selected to serve as DACOWITS committee members on the basis of their experience with the military and with women's workforce issues. The committee provides an annual report to the Secretary of Defense with recommendations based on information gathered through installation visits, business meetings, relevant reports and survey data, and input from individual service members.

<http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/688086/retired-female-four-star-appointed-to-defense-advisory-committee?source=GovDelivery>

3. Army increases visibility of female recruiters; seeks more for the job

(6 Mar) Army Times, By Kyle Jahner

The Army will continue its push for more female recruiters, but this summer it will also work to leverage the ones it already has.

Brig. Gen. Donna Martin, deputy commander of recruiting, said Army Recruiting Command will launch a project to ensure a team of female recruiters attends major gatherings and recruiting events.

"We are going to have a group of female recruiters go to recruiting events, augmenting recruiters already there," Martin told Army Times. "They'll be speaking to women to debunk the myths about serving in the military as a woman."

Events could include, for example, such things as college fairs and high school career days. Recruiting command will work to put together a group of five to six female recruiters from the area of the event to ensure women in attendance have someone who can tell them about life in the Army as a woman.

The move comes at a time when the Army is opening all jobs, including direct ground combat, to women. Currently women make up 17 percent of the force. As an improving economy makes it more difficult to recruit young people who meet the Army's requirements, women represent a largely under-tapped resource.

The Army believes female recruiters can provide tailored, credible insights to potential female recruits, not to mention an ability to relate to the mothers of all recruits. But female recruiters comprise just 8.6 percent of the Army's 8,800 recruiters, compared to 14 percent of enlisted soldiers as a whole.

"We are working toward increasing the percent of female recruiters by one percent each year," Martin said.

"Some women don't think they can have an attractive lifestyle," she said. "We want to show that is not true, that they can have an attractive lifestyle, they can get married, they can have children, and basic training is not as hard as they think it is. [Female recruiters can] give them info on what it's like to be a woman and currently serve in the military."

Defense Secretary Ash Carter addressed one of those issues in late January when he announced a force-wide policy of 12 weeks of maternity leave. That doubled the leave the Army had offered, though the Navy and Marine Corps had upped leave from six to 18 weeks the year before, and had to reduce the benefit.

Martin notes that recruiting is competing with other Army fields, such as drill sergeants and Advanced Individual Training instructors, for the limited supply of women. There are no bonuses or tangible incentives to specifically attract female recruiters, but Martin said the experience offers plenty of rewards of its own, including the ability to help "the youth of America" and "make dreams come true."

"We change lives every single day. There's a story every day out of recruiting command about how we've changed the life of a young man or woman. It can be a very rewarding experience," Martin said.

Since the Pentagon's decision to open 220,000 jobs to women force-wide this year, allowing them to take direct ground combat roles, there hasn't been a rush among women to join combat arms, Martin said. But she doesn't think that's the point. To her it's about giving women choices and changing the military mindset about gender vs. capabilities.

She tried to illustrate that point in a recent conversation with mostly male recruiters, she said.

"I asked them how many have daughters. ... How many of you tell your daughters they can't do anything?" Martin said. "To a person in that room, they kind of went, 'huh.' That's how I want them to think about the integration of women. How do you want your daughters to be brought up? How do you want your wives to be treated?"

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2016/03/06/army-increases-visibility-female-recruiters-seeks-more-job/81151414/>

4. Army recruiter charged with sending explicit pic to teen

(7 Mar) Army Times, By Kevin Lilley

Police say a New Jersey-based recruiter sent an image of his penis to a 17-year-old girl via the media-sharing application Snapchat late last year, then took apart and threw away his cellphone in an attempt to destroy the evidence.

Staff Sgt. Michael McCullough, 29, who has served as a recruiter for three years and had been working out of the Newton recruiting center near Picatinny Arsenal, faces three charges related to endangering a child's welfare, obscenity and evidence tampering, said Greg Mueller, Sussex County's first assistant prosecutor. McCullough, who lives on-post at the arsenal, received a summons related to those charges Feb. 25 from the Sparta Police Department; his command became aware of the allegations the day before and reassigned him to company headquarters immediately, a spokeswoman from Army Recruiting Command said Wednesday.

"I think the facts are not altogether clear yet," said Thomas Roughneen, McCullough's lawyer who formerly served with the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps. He said Thursday that questions remain about whether the alleged victim may have misrepresented her age to his client, or whether she was 18 at the time of the alleged incident.

Roughneen also said that McCullough's phone is in possession of law enforcement and there "was no destruction of the phone itself." The complaint, a copy of which was provided to Army Times by the prosecutor's office, charges McCullough with "deleting information from a cell phone, disassembling it, and throwing it in the garbage."

Local law enforcement is investigating whether any prospective recruits or other individuals received similar messages, Mueller said. Army Criminal Investigation Command is assisting with that investigation, he said, as well as conducting its own.

Recruiting Command "takes any allegations very seriously and ensures individuals under investigation are not on recruiting duty while an investigation is ongoing," spokeswoman Kelli Bland said Wednesday via email. "Recruiters are the face of the Army, and we expect them to serve honorably while representing the force."

The name of the girl and that of the school she attends have not been released, but a statement from the school published by local media states that school officials became aware of "inappropriate" contact between a recruiter and a student, and "the issue was forwarded to the Sparta Police and from there to the Sussex County Prosecutor's Office."

Army officials, including those in leadership positions within Army Recruiting Command, "have contacted the individual and her family to offer their assistance and support," Bland said.

The Snapchat photo- and video-sharing application deletes shared material from the receiver's phone after a pre-set time, but the data can be saved through various methods, including screen shots.

McCullough was released without bond and was scheduled to appear in court Wednesday, but the hearing was delayed because of a previous Army-ordered medical appointment, Roughneen said. No new date has been scheduled.

"From what I know of Staff Sgt. McCullough, he has had an extremely impressive career, and what he may or may not have done, I hope will be given due consideration in light of his really stellar 13 or so years serving as a recruiter and as a deployed soldier," Roughneen said.

McCullough deployed for a year to Iraq and Kuwait while with the Germany-based 47th Support Battalion, 1st Armored Division, wrapping up his tour in November 2006. He also deployed to Egypt from February 2012 to February 2013, Army records show, serving with 1st Army Support Battalion. Those deployments have "severely affected" the soldier and his family, said Roughneen, who did not elaborate.

McCullough entered service in 2004 and has earned two Army Commendation Medals and five Army Achievement Medals among other decorations, according to personnel records.

The obscenity and endangerment charges are third-degree offenses in New Jersey and carry sentences of up to five years in jail, with the evidence-tampering charge, a fourth-degree offense, potentially adding 18 months. However, sentences in both crime degrees fall under the "presumption of non-imprisonment," [according to the state's sentencing guidelines](#), reserving jail time in such instances

primarily for repeat offenders and those judged to be dangerous to others.

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/crime/2016/03/07/nj-recruiter-charged-sending-explicit-pic-teen-michael-mccullough-army/81265952/>

5. Women's History Month Webcast Focuses on Mentorship

(10 Mar) DoD News, By Shannon Collins

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management hosted a mentoring webcast today in recognition of Women's History Month, focusing on how mentorship affects ability to meet the mission.

Rebekah McCloud, director of student development and enrollment services at the University of Central Florida, spoke about five key aspects about mentoring women: employee retention; leadership development; organizational learning; growing the talent pool, especially in cybersecurity and science, technology, engineering and math education; and increasing diversity.

McCloud said research reveals that a low number of women work in upper management and executive positions, that there therefore is a low number of women role models, that there are differences in the way men and women are mentors, and that women tend to undervalue their achievements and experiences.

Employee Retention

"Mentoring programs have reported a significant improvement in employee retention," McCloud said. "Having someone to walk with you, to walk side by side with you, it's important."

She said mentors can help employees think through their job responsibilities, find ways to use their skills and talents, and help employees plan, develop and manage their careers.

Employees can feel valued when the organization values mentoring, she said, and employee recognition programs can show that commitment. She also suggested that salary decisions, raises or increases or bonuses be based on mentoring or other kinds of coaching and activities.

"If you get recognized for mentoring someone, that says your organization values you, and it values mentoring," McCloud said. "It also can be a part of your performance appraisal, the things you get evaluated on. It may not be a part of your job description, but somebody says, 'These are valuable, value-added assets to our company. We value the things we pay for. We put our money where our mouth is, and we pay for it. We value it.'"

McCloud said mentoring could also be part of the process as new employees enter the organization.

"Think about how people get a mentor," she said. "Is somebody 'voluntold' they had to do it, or is it someone who volunteers to become a mentor? There's a big difference. That tells how much you value it. Mentorship also impacts leadership development."

Leadership Development

Most organizations have all the leaders they need within the organization already, McCloud said. "These employees with deep experience are in a unique position to develop mentors," she said. "We need to utilize them."

These people can help with the development of leadership competencies, she said, adding that they may not always be in the top positions -- they may be the secretaries or the "gatekeepers."

Mentors can help employees improve their job performance, McCloud said. "People lose their jobs because they don't perform well," she added. "It is my contention that people don't start off as bad employees. We all want to do a good job. A mentor can help you out. A mentor is a person who can say, 'Let me talk to you about that performance' and 'Let me talk to you about that decision.' Let me help you frame the conversation you're going to have with this employee.'"

McCloud said organizations should focus on developing and advancing middle-management women to upper-level positions and should develop a mentoring culture that embeds mentoring throughout the organization and in everything they do.

Organizational Learning

Organizational learning is a key indicator of success, McCloud said. "Veteran employees can help organizations preserve knowledge and transfer it to younger employees," she explained. "Organizations need succession plans for all positions, especially those occupied by veteran employees and those who are poised to retire."

McCloud said energy is necessary when mentoring young employees, because "they come in with a lot of energy and excitement and a lot of ideas." But "reverse mentoring" also should be part of the equation, she added.

“Reverse mentoring is when young folks mentor the novice,” she said. “We can learn across the multigenerational mentoring grade; you can learn young from old. Mentors can shorten the time between an employee being newly qualified or fully qualified.”

For example, she said, younger employees have helped her with the advanced technology and social media platforms. To get the younger employees fully qualified, she said, everyone should consider some level of mentoring to help them.

“You want those people to become fully qualified. They are newly qualified, especially folks right out of college, but you know they have potential,” McCloud said. “You have to have some mentoring to make that happen. It’s empowering. It’s frustrating, but it’s necessary in an organization. Mentors can provide career guidance to the less-experienced but high-potential employees, and mentors can bridge the skills gap.”

Growing Talent Pool

“Women are often underutilized,” McCloud said. “We are growing in numbers in the workforce, but when there are jobs to be done, when we think they are important, women are overlooked and underutilized. Women have so many talents, and sometimes we don’t speak up for ourselves. Sometimes we don’t let people know we have talents. Mentoring can grow women.”

She said visibility is the key. “It’s not who you know but who knows you,” McCloud said, repeating it for emphasis. “When people start thinking about who to involve in a team, do they know you? Do they know your work, your accomplishments?”

As mentees grow, they become mentors themselves and pay it forward over and over, she said. “You never lose your flame by lighting another one,” she added.

McCloud noted that few women work in the STEM areas. “Those women really need support,” she said. “If you are mentoring women in those areas, think about what extra support you can give employees in those areas. Reach out and make connections. It may not necessarily be within your department, within your division or within the government. It may be elsewhere. But make those connections to support those women. Think about mentoring like any other business decision.”

Diversity

“Diversity is something we must do in organizations,” McCloud said. “Diversity will help your organization in so many ways. People who are not people of color get just as much out of diversity as people of color do. Diversity includes all of us.”

She said inclusivity means looking around and seeing who is missing from the table and making sure there is room for them at the table. McCloud also said grassroots efforts are great, but only if diversity starts top-down and from the bottom-up. “The top has to buy into diversity as an initiative and be involved in mentoring,” she added.

Mentoring should be fostered and cultivated, McCloud told the webcast audience. “Go out and start reading, be a part of a formal initiative,” she said. “Get started with mentoring.”

<http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/690754/womens-history-month-webcast-focuses-on-mentorship?source=GovDelivery>

6. Other services could overhaul the tape test. Why not the Air Force?

(6 Mar) Air Force Times, By Oriana Pawlyk

The Air Force is standing firmly behind their tape test, even as airmen for years have complained about its effectiveness and the other services are reviewing the controversial test.

“The Air Force continually evaluates all of our programs for improvement, but at this time we have no plans to adjust our fitness assessment,” Air Force spokeswoman Rose Richeson told Air Force Times on Thursday.

The test — 1.5-mile run, situps, pushups, and waist circumference — last saw a change three years ago when the Air Force implemented the body mass index and body fat tests as an alternative to the tape test. The waist maximums remain 39 inches for men and 35.5 inches for women.

“We feel our Air Force is healthier and more fit to fight than we were before, with 96.1 percent of airmen passing the test in 2014 which is up significantly from the 2010 pass rate of 87.6 percent,” Richeson said. The numbers for 2015 were not immediately available, she said.

The Air Force adopted abdominal circumference measurement after the Defense Department approved the practice in 2009. In May, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh reiterated the service would not be making anymore changes to the PT test over the tape

measurement issue.

"We looked at this from every angle possible; we talked to everybody who wanted to throw out an opinion — people who were critical of the test, people who were supportive of the test — and I'll tell you this, I got to the bottom line of: Abdominal circumference is not a reason to change the test," Welsh said during a virtual conference.

[Since October 2013](#), airmen who fail the abdominal circumference portion of the PT test have had the option of undergoing a Body Mass Index screen if they score 75 out of 80 points on the rest of the test. If they don't meet BMI standards, they can have their percentage of body fat calculated.

Unlike the Air Force, the Marine Corps and Army are considering major overhauls to their physical training criteria.

Marines should get answers this summer after the Marine Corps commandant ordered a full review in November of the service's fitness standards. Everything is on the table for the Corps, from exercise events and scoring tables to class cut-offs. The service conducts two fitness tests a year, one for physical health, the other for combat readiness. The Marines' tape test — measured for both waist and neck — also hangs in the balance.

"Nobody likes to get taped or all that stuff, so what are we going to do? Is the test right? Should we do something else?" Gen. Robert Neller [recently told Marine Corps Times](#).

Soldiers can't help but gripe about the same.

"I'm going to be honest with you, I get that [issue brought up to me] everywhere I go," Sergeant Major of the Army Dan Dailey [told Army Times in February](#). Daily has ordered a second review, even after the service reassessed their PT test in 2011.

"Generally, it seems like it's a very good tool, but we'll look at it," he said of the tape test, which also measures neck and abdominal circumference in the Army.

The Navy as of Jan. 1 implemented their latest waist measurement, which echoes the [Air Force guideline of 39/35.5 waist measurement](#) for men or women. If sailors bust their tape, a waist and neck measurement will be taken for men, and waist, neck and hips will be taken for women with a resulting body fat measurement.

Yet the Navy is looking to identify more improvements to training, mainly a [job-related PT test](#).

The Air Force, Richeson said, has additional physical training for combat airmen which for years has been standard for any airman entering the battlefield.

As for tape, airmen can count on it being around for a while.

"Air Force research has identified [abdominal circumference] as being directly linked with both current and future health risks," Richeson said.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2016/03/06/other-services-could-overhaul-tape-test-why-not-air-force/81162032/>

7. Sailors Face More Lenient Body Fat Rules

(6 Mar) Associated Press, By Julie Watson

The Navy is giving another chance to thousands of sailors who otherwise would be kicked out for repeatedly failing their physical fitness tests because they exceeded body fat limits.

The service branch loosened its body fat restrictions in January and is allowing those who failed their exams three or more times to get one more opportunity to be tested this spring under the more lenient guidelines. The Navy said it has been losing too many talented sailors. Some were resorting to liposuction, diet pills and other measures to save their careers.

The Navy allowed about 2,400 sailors who passed a preliminary test under the new rules to stay in, reducing the number of failures on their records from three to one, said Navy spokesman, Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen. In the past, three failures were grounds for being

kicked out. The sailors will be measured again this spring and allowed only two failures now instead of three.

The changes are the latest by the military looking to improve its abilities to recruit and retain talented people as it builds up its cyber-warfare strategy and faces competition from a rebounding economy.

A 2014 Pentagon study found that roughly two-thirds of Americans would not qualify to enlist in the armed services as a result of health problems, obesity and the failure to complete a high school education.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus said the service is not lowering standards but rather adjusting to reality: People today, in general, are bigger but not necessarily fat. The Navy is also considering larger uniforms sizes for the first time in two decades.

"It's far more realistic," Mabus said of the new body fat standard. "We were kicking more people out of the Navy for failing that, than for drugs."

The number of sailors booted from the Navy annually because they did not meet physical standards has more than doubled from 694 in 2011 to 1,536 in 2014.

The changes come amid debate over whether the physical requirements demanded of service members across the board are still relevant or should be adjusted according to the job so the armed forces can maintain the pool of talent it needs for today's high-tech warfare.

There's been talk in the Army of easing up on strict body fat requirements for its cyber-warriors, for example.

All branches are reviewing their job standards to modernize their forces and prepare for the opening of combat posts to women.

From drone operators to cyber-warfare officers, "there are a number of officers in jobs where it is really obvious why it would not make whole lot of difference what their weight is, other than to the extent that the culture in the military disrespects it and therefore, they can't lead," said former Army officer James Joyner, who teaches at the Marine Corps University.

He believes the military must change.

"It's absurd the percentage of high school teenagers who are considered to be too fat to join the military," Joyner said. "Maybe there are two problems: One, obesity, and the other that the standards are out of date and not relevant."

Some 34,000 sailors, or roughly 10 percent of the force, have failed the physical requirements at least once since 2011, mostly because of body fat, Christensen said.

The Navy's old policy allowed for 22 percent body fat for males ages 17-39, and 33 percent body fat for females ages 17-39. Sailors age 40 and older were allotted one additional percentage point or 23 percent for males and 34 percent for women over 40.

The new limits fall in line with the Department of Defense standards and allow sailors to pass with a maximum 26 percent of body fat for men and 36 percent for women.

Service members have long complained that the Defense Department's method of estimating body fat punishes bulkier, muscular builds.

Plastic surgeons in communities near bases have said up to a third of their business comes from service members seeking liposuction to pass the exam.

The traditional, so-called "tape test" relies on measurements of the neck and waist to calculate one's body fat percentage. Fitness experts have questioned its accuracy.

The Air Force in 2013 started allowing airmen who fail the tape test but pass physical fitness exams to be measured using the Body Mass Index, which is a chart based on an individual's weight and height. The Navy adopted similar rules, expanded gym hours and provides fitness help to post-partum sailors.

Petty Officer Lentoyi White, 26, feared for her career, after failing twice.

"I am very grateful for a second chance with this new policy," said the single mother of a 5-year-old girl.

White, based in Coronado, California, uses a calorie-tracking app and does 30 minutes of cardio a day.

She has gone from 212 pounds to 188 and is confident she'll pass this spring.

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_MILITARY_BODY_FAT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

8. The Pentagon Is Finally Designing Combat Gear for Women

(8 Mar) War is Boring, By Joseph Jaafari

As women begin to serve in all combat roles across every branch of the military, the Pentagon is making new efforts to ensure that their troops' fertility — and prospect of having kids — is intact, something former service members weren't afforded.

Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter announced in January that the Pentagon would start a pilot program this spring that will bank troops' sperm and eggs before deployment, but the effort goes beyond cryogenic freezing. There's also a less high-tech solution: making sure protective gear worn in the field protects women's reproductive organs and is comfortable enough to wear without limiting their movement.

For close to a decade, the armor issued to women deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq had been primarily designed with men in mind. Their vests didn't fit to their curves, items carried on the torso were shifted to the shoulders because of their size, and groin protectors were more to protect outside organs such as testicles and the penis than ovaries, which sit higher in the abdomen.

"Sometimes change is too slow, especially in areas as critical as body armor for our deploying troops."

"My entire lower pelvis was exposed," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Elana Duffy, who served from 2003 to 2013 in intelligence. Even though she wasn't in a combat position, her job required her to be on the front lines to interview insurgents. "If the gear was truly meant to protect my reproductive organs, I wouldn't have been able to bend over."

There have been over 53,000 injuries due to explosives in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, according to the Department of Defense Trauma Registry. Many of them come back with genital injuries that have left them infertile or having to use artificial insemination or *in vitro* fertilization to have children.

"The gear was designed for firefights, not explosions," Duffy said.



In 2011, the gear protecting the genitals [evolved](#) to its current two-tiered system, including a Kevlar-woven boxer and two Kevlar plates. But many still don't wear the gear, according to multiple interviews. Some even said they didn't know anyone who wore it.

"I know a lot of times when it comes to new gear it's a culture change where soldiers aren't used to this equipment," said Lt. Col. Kathy M. Brown, product manager for soldier protective equipment for the Program Executive Office Soldier. "Sometimes, it comes from an educational perspective, where we have to make sure they know what they're wearing and why they're wearing it. That helps them receive the equipment better."

Marines and soldiers interviewed said the armor just got in the way and wasn't comfortable, and there wasn't a large push by officers to wear it.

In response to complaints about the gear's comfort, PEO Soldier is now testing the efficacy of a new pelvic protection system, a set of shortened chaps made with Kevlar, that increased protection to the abdomen, the inner thigh, buttocks, and outer genitals.

Brown said soldiers testing the gear at Fort Lewis outside of Tacoma, Washington "highly rated" the gear and its comfort.

"The soldiers really were able to compare this favorably to the legacy system," she said.

But there is a sea of red-tape that has to be accomplished before the new gear is used, [making it available in 2019](#).

"Sometimes change is too slow, especially in areas as critical as body armor for our deploying troops," said Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.), a former Army pilot and one of the first women to suffer a double leg amputation after her helicopter was hit with a rocket-propelled grenade in 2004. "Undoubtedly some of it could be cultural, but I think it's mostly bureaucratic. It just takes a long time from when a requirement is first identified to when something can be fielded."

In the interim, the Pentagon will test a pilot program in October this year that will freeze troops' eggs and sperm in the event of an injury that renders them infertile.

The program was initially suggested to help in recruitment, but a spokesperson for the Department of Defense said that keeping

women in the military was a key factor in deciding the program's effectiveness.

"The pilot is designed as a two-year trial, with an option to renew it up to five times based on the impacts, efficiency, and effectiveness of the program on women's retention," said the spokesperson, adding that the department has budgeted \$150 million for the program. "We do believe... that this new benefit will have positive effects on women's retention, over time."



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Up until now, service women going for deployment were told that they could freeze their eggs, but it wouldn't be covered under the military health care system, Tricare. The costs range from a couple thousand to tens of thousands of dollars depending on how many samples are taken.

"Because the [Military Health System] will not pay for gamete collection and storage, the Soldier will be responsible for all costs associated with these services," read an Army memo dated Jan. 21, seven days before Carter's announcement of the pilot program. A spokesperson for Department of Defense said the Pentagon will announce more details on the program this spring.

<http://warisboring.com/articles/the-pentagon-is-finally-designing-combat-gear-for-women/>

9. Women leaders drive change in the defense industry

(8 Mar) Bloomberg Government, By Robert Levinson

While many Americans focus on former Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton](#)'s attempt to shatter the world's highest glass ceiling by becoming the first woman U.S. president, other women have already broken into what have long been seen as the ultimate boys' clubs: the military and defense industries.

The nation's three top weapons makers are now headed by women, after [Boeing Co.](#)'s announcement that as of March 1, [Leanne Caret](#) would be CEO of the aerospace giant's Defense, Space, & Security business.

Caret joins [Marillyn Hewson](#), who became CEO of [Lockheed Martin Corp.](#), the world's largest weapons maker, on Jan. 1, 2013, and [Phebe Novakovic](#), who assumed leadership at No. 2 weapons maker [General Dynamics Corp.](#) on the same day. The three women-led companies sold \$60.3 billion to the Defense Department (DOD) in fiscal 2015, including F-35 jets; Virginia-class submarines; rockets to launch satellites into space; and tens of billions of dollars in information technology (IT) and support services.

Collectively, Lockheed, General Dynamics and Boeing received about one-fifth of the DOD's \$280.3 billion contracting obligations in fiscal 2015.

According to [Katherine Kidder](#), the Bacevich Fellow at the [Center for New American Security](#) (CNAS) and one of the [authors](#) of "Battlefields and Boardrooms: Women's Leadership in the Military and the Private Sector," we shouldn't be surprised.

In a telephone interview with Bloomberg Government on March 2, Kidder said her research shows women are underrepresented at the senior levels in Fortune 500 companies, but are in the top ranks in the defense industry. Typically, it takes 30 to 35 years to become a CEO, she said, and today's women leaders are products of their large entry into the workforce that began in the 1970s.

Hence, the well of qualified women executives is deep. Todd Blecher, the spokesman for Boeing Defense, Space and Security e-mailed Bloomberg Government that Caret was head of defense services and support before ascending to her current job, and that Shelly Lavender is now president of Boeing military aircraft programs.

Additionally a half dozen other women head major divisions of the company. Hewson and Caret have decades of service in their companies and Novakovic spent a career in government with the CIA, the Pentagon and the White House before going to General Dynamics in 2001.

Another woman who ascended to the top of the defense industry ranks, [Linda Hudson](#), former CEO of [BAE Systems Inc.](#), spent years at BAE and previously at General Dynamics.

Women are also doing well at smaller defense contractors.

According to a the Small Business Administration [news release](#), “In FY15, 5.05 percent or \$17.8 billion of all federal small business eligible contracting dollars were awarded to WOSBs, the first time this specific benchmark has ever been reached.” An WOSB is a Woman-Owned Small Business.

While much progress has been made there is still some distance to go. A Commerce Department [report](#) commissioned by the SBA found “that the odds of winning a contract for Woman-Owned Businesses (WOBs) are estimated to be roughly 21 percent lower relative to the odds of winning contracts by otherwise similar firms that were not identified as WOBS.”

Where the Stars Fall

And it's not just the private sector: The face of the U.S. military is changing too.

Admiral [Michelle Howard](#) became the 38th vice chief of Naval Operations, the sea service's No. 2 and a four-star rank, on July 1, 2014. Like her industry counterparts, Howard has decades of service. She graduated the Naval Academy in 1982 and in March 1999 become the first black woman to command a U.S. Navy ship, the USS Rushmore.

In a telephone interview with Howard on March 4, she told Bloomberg Government that similar to the defense industry, the women in leadership positions today are products of decisions made 25 years ago, when the number of women in the military was rather small.

Several barriers to women fell while she moved up the ranks. The ban on women on Navy ships was lifted while she was a midshipman at the Naval Academy, and she was able to transfer from support ships to combat ships when that ban was lifted in the 1990s.

Howard said that number of women in senior leadership positions in the Army and Marine Corps will lag behind the Air Force and Navy, due to the former ban on women in direct ground combat positions, which is the most common avenue for senior leadership in those services.

That ban has just been [lifted](#), but it will take years to prime women with direct ground combat leadership experience, such as infantry battalion command, to take on more senior leadership roles.

The admiral said she is surprised that many in the public don't realize how many opportunities there are for women in the military and she's excited that young women coming up behind her won't have limits on potential advancement.

Air Force General [Lori Robinson](#), commander of Pacific Air Forces, has also achieved four-star rank. Robinson is [rumored](#) to be the next commander of [U.S. Northern Command](#), which is in charge of the military component of homeland defense. Her selection would make her the first woman to lead one of the nation's nine [combatant commands](#). Combatant commanders, who control forces in their geographic or functional area of responsibility, can be officers from any service. They report directly to the secretary of Defense and the president rather than any service chief of staff.

With legal barriers to in combat forces now eliminated, more women with many stars on their shoulders are likely in the near future.

Many contentious issues affecting women in the civilian workplace — such the availability of quality, low-cost child care, family and medical leave and pay equity — have largely been resolved in the military by law and policy.

Yet sexual assault and sexual harassment remain a significant challenge for the nation's armed forces.

In fiscal 2014, the high level of assault reporting seen during fiscal 2013 was sustained, according to DOD's [annual report](#).

Continued aggressive efforts by leaders are needed to address these issues. Going forward, many of those leaders could be women.

Once the military decides — or is forced by Congress and the president — to take on these types of issues, it can often do so swiftly and effectively. As with racial integration, and that of gay and lesbian service members after the end of the “don't ask, don't tell” era, the military can adapt relatively quickly to societal changes and maintain their focus on their primary mission — defending the nation.

<http://about.bgov.com/blog/women-leaders-drive-change-in-the-defense-industry/>

10. Navy's new body fat rules start now with spring PFA

(9 Mar) Navy Times, By Meghann Myers

Birds are chirping, temperatures are rising, and it's that time of year again — physical fitness assessment time.

Now that it's time for the spring PFA, commands will be putting new rules announced last year into effect — eased body fat rules, but fewer allowed failures before a sailor is booted out. It also means random body fat checks that can land a sailor onto the mandatory PT squad.

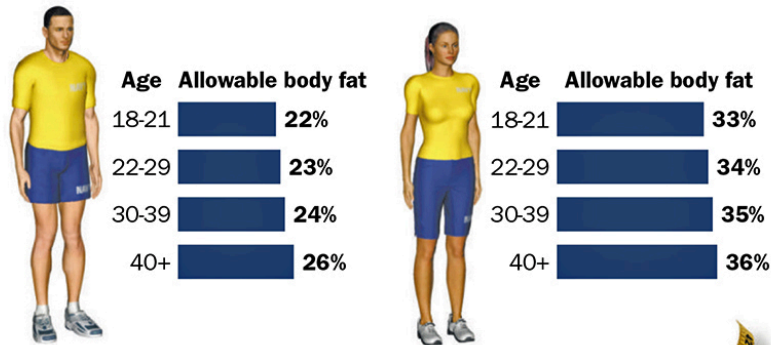
"The sailors were basically given a chance in Cycle 2015-2 to reset and become aware," the new head of the 21st Century Sailor office told Navy Times. "And those that had not previously been allowed to take the physical readiness test were then given an opportunity to do so."

This cycle will bring new body composition assessment standards, but also command spot-checks and a new scoring for the physical readiness test, as laid out in NAVADMIN 061/16 released Wednesday.

"This will be different levels — high, medium, low — within a category, which will give an opportunity for sailors to see how close they are to moving up a level," said Rear Adm. Ann Burkhardt in an interview.

New body fat standards

The Navy has introduced new standards for the Body Composition Assessment (BCA) based on a graduating scale that increases with age. The following percentages are the maximum allowable body fat for different age ranges.



3-step BCA

Step 1: Get your height measured, then step onto the scale. Your height and weight will be compared to the maximum weight allowed, based upon sex.
■ If you're under the weight: You pass the BCA
■ If no: Proceed to step 2

SOURCE: CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL

Step 2: Do you meet the abdominal circumference measurement of less than or equal to 39.0 inches for males or 35.5 inches for females?
■ If yes: You pass the BCA
■ If no: Proceed to step 3

Step 3: A body circumference measurement will be applied to determine body fat percentage. Do you meet the DoD maximum allowable body fat limit of less than or equal to 26% for males or 36% for females?
■ If yes: You pass the BCA. But, if over the allowable body fat percentage (chart above) you will be enrolled in Fitness Enhancement Program.
■ If no: You fail the PFA and will be enrolled in the FEP.

JOHN BRETSCHNEIDER/STAFF

For sailors who are within a few curl-ups or a few seconds of an excellent or outstanding grade, she added, that can be motivating.

Sailors can also expect random BCA check-ups between formal tests, at their commanding officers' discretion.

Spot-check fails will not count toward the new two-in-three-years failure limit, but they will require enrollment in the Fitness Enhancement Program, with mandatory workouts as well as weigh-ins every 30 days until they're back within standards.

As of Jan. 1, sailors who bust the Navy's existing height-and-weight chart will be measured at the waist, where they can be up to 39 inches for men and 35.5 for women.

If they're over that standards, it's back to the old waist-neck measurement for men and waist-neck-hip tape test for women.

The new maximum body-fat standards:

- Men, ages 18 to 21, 22 percent
- Men, ages 22 to 29, 23 percent
- Men, ages 30 to 39, 24 percent
- Men, 40 and older, 26 percent
- Women, ages 18 to 21, 33 percent
- Women, ages 22 to 29, 34 percent
- Women, ages 30 to 39, 35 percent

- Women, 40 and older, 36 percent

"If the sailor fails the BCA, they'll have to be evaluated by a medical provider, enrolled in FEP and given nutritional counseling," Burkhardt said.

For a failure to count toward administrative separation, a sailor has to bust the Defense Department body fat standard, which can go up to 36 percent for women and 26 percent for men, depending on height.

The 21st Century Sailor Office doesn't have the numbers on how many people were able to reset their failures to one or save themselves from administrative separation last year, Burkhardt said, but she anticipates there will be a shift in this next cycle.

"Sailors should be more aware of where they are," she said. "It'll really show itself in Cycle 2016-1."

Now they'll have looser body fat standards, but will also get to take the PRT whether they pass the BCA or not. And they'll get enrolled in FEP earlier if they're having a problem.

Next up for Navy Personnel Command is to rethink the PRT, but Burkhardt said those discussions are in the very early stages.

"I think the conversation has been started, from occupational to new ways to do physical readiness testing, but we haven't reached any conclusions yet," she said. "Those working groups are still in those discussions, and we're involving the fleet and [the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery]."

Correction: A previous version of this article incorrectly stated the new standard for separations due to PFA failures. Sailors will be automatically separated after two failures over a three-year period.

<http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/2016/03/09/navys-new-body-fat-rules-start-now-spring-pfa/81493416/>

11. Lone female competitor embodies Warrior Ethos at 364th ESC BWC

(9 Mar) DVIDS, By Capt. Nicole Abeyta

It was a calm and damp morning at Joint Base Lewis-McChord when the 364th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Best Warrior Competition started for its half dozen competitors March 2. The Soldiers came to JBLM from as near as Marysville, Washington, and as far away as Montana where the ESC has a large subordinate unit headquartered.

One of those Soldiers, Spc. Christine Holzwarth of Billings, Mont., was the sole female Soldier in the competition. Holzwarth advanced from the 652nd Regional Support Group's competition held earlier this year in Helena, Montana.

During the BWC, Soldiers are assessed on their performance in several warrior events and the breadth and depth of their knowledge on various military topics. The competition helps instill personal courage, self-confidence and self-discipline in Soldiers while promoting physical and mental resilience that carries over to other military pursuits.

Instead of seeing the extremely physically challenging event and her gender an obstacle, Holzwarth said she saw the Best Warrior Competition as an opportunity to showcase her Army training and her ability to adapt and learn.

"This is my first competition and I'm excited and a bit nervous," she said as she waited for her turn on the rifle range.

Holzwarth displayed great courage and a competitive spirit as she pushed through each event, including combatives where she showcased her level one skills. Combatives trains Soldiers to defend and protect themselves in hand-to-hand combat. The training builds confidence and physical strength so that a Soldier can intuitively react to an opponent in a bare-handed battle.

Holzwarth and the other competitors didn't go through the competition alone. Each Soldier must have a sponsor who is responsible for preparing and encouraging their Soldier through the event. She said her two sponsors, Staff Sgt. Dustin Miller and Sgt. 1st Class Klodes Rookstool helped prepare her for the competition during their personal time outside of the Army Reserve mostly. Her preparation included learning to disassemble and reassemble weapons, road marching over several miles and developing quick responses to senior enlisted Soldiers' interview questions.

Army Reserve Soldiers regularly do a good job managing the time spent between their military and civilian work requirements. Often,

their dual careers accentuate each other but aren't always similar. When Holzwarth isn't training or working as an Army Reserve Soldier, she works at Pace Analytical as a lab technician testing water and soil samples. She works in the Army Reserve as an Information Technology Specialist. Holzwarth first became interested in joining the Reserve three months after her brother enlisted in the Active Duty Army she said.

"I didn't know much about computers before joining the Army which is why I picked 25B," she said. "I like being able to fix things and be independent."

After only a few years in the Army Reserve, Holzwarth has advice to all junior enlisted Soldiers. "Accept the challenge. Jump at the chance to do something new and different," she said. "Get out there and compete in any opportunity like the Best Warrior Competition," she added.

Her short-term goals in the Army Reserve include gaining IT CompTIA certifications, earning a second military occupational specialty and becoming a non-commissioned officer. One of her long-term goals include learning more about becoming a commissioned officer after gaining additional enlisted experience. She also said she will continue to use her GI Bill to pay for an associate's degree in computer systems technology at Montana State University and eventually earn a graduate degree in forensic science.

Although, Holzwarth did not advance to the next level during the competition, she said she won't let that stop her from competing next year nor deter her from her overall mission as a Citizen-Soldier.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/191754/lone-female-competitor-embodies-warrior-ethos-364th-esc-bwc#.VuM-NDZf1Cw>

12. 1st women could start Navy SEAL training in August

(10 Mar) The San Diego Union-Tribune, By Jeanette Steele

The first female Navy SEAL candidates could arrive at pre-training as early as mid-May, and the Marines will start sending women ground combat candidates to boot camp as soon as April, according to time lines released Thursday by the Defense Department.

That would mean the first women could start the infamously tough SEAL training course in Coronado in late August — potentially being assigned to SEAL teams as early as October 2017, if they make the cut.

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter's office said he has approved implementation plans by each of America's armed services to allow women in nearly 220,000 previously closed combat jobs.

It's a move building since 2013, when then-Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced that he would lift the ban on women in combat. Many observers see it as an acknowledgment that women have proven themselves in the line of fire during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

"Having reviewed their exceptionally thorough work, I am pleased all of the services developed plans that will effectively carry out this change and make us even better in the future," Carter said in a statement.

A Marine Corps spokesman said recruiters are poised to offer ground combat contracts to potential female recruits as soon as they get the signal from Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller.

"They are ready," said Capt. Philip Kulczewski, a Marine Corps headquarters spokesman.

Women who want to seek ground combat jobs will have to pass the same rigorous initial strength test taken by men, including three pull-ups, among other things. Females who don't want to become infantry Marines aren't required to do pull-ups at present.

Pull-ups, a classic test of upper-body strength, have been considered a stumbling block for women. Critics of the current system have said the military has done women a disservice by setting a lower bar for them.

Lt. Col. Kate Germano is one of those.

Germano is the former commander of the 4th Recruit Training Battalion at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., the sole training unit for women recruits in the Marine Corps. She was removed for being "hostile," but her supporters said she was targeted for pushing tough reforms to hold women recruits to higher standards.

"I think the biggest takeaway that I have for the plan is that it doesn't address the overall quality issues we have with female recruits right out the gate," Germano said.

It would make more sense to hold all recruits, men and women, to the more rigorous standards regardless of their assignment, she said. The plan “only increases the standards for women who self-identify for ground combat.”

On the other hand, former Marine Capt. Jacquie Atkinson said she sees the single standard for men and women headed to combat arms positions as an important step forward.

“It’s important for leaders to not give the impression that anyone gets a free ride,” she said.

When she led a combat engineering unit, she was one of the few women around, and in some instances, the only woman some of her colleagues ever served with, let alone reported to.

“I had a very good experience there and I upheld the standards. I was stronger in some cases and I ran faster than some men,” said Atkinson, who is now running for Congress as a Republican in San Diego’s 52nd District.

As women start entering Marine infantry units, the goal will be to assign two or more junior enlisted females to the same unit. If that’s not possible because of low numbers, a single woman will still be assigned, because at least two female leaders are expected to be present in a unit before her arrival.

On the Marine officer side, women who want to lead infantry units will have to pass the Infantry Officer Course. In the three years the Marine Corps spent evaluating women in infantry roles, female hopefuls struggled to succeed in the grueling 10-week curriculum, which includes long hikes and an obstacle course.

An official comment released on Thursday said, “As a result of our research, the Marine Corps instituted clearly defined gender neutral, operationally relevant, individual performance standards across the spectrum of Marine training.”

The U.S. Army has a significant chunk of the jobs that will now open to women.

The Army’s plan shows it initiating gender-neutral training this month and starting to assign women to operational units next February.

The first applications from female Navy officers who want to join the nation’s 2,750 elite SEALs were due March 4. Officials at Coronado’s Naval Special Warfare Command said Thursday they won’t comment on the gender of applicants.

A SEAL spokesman said the dates mentioned in the plan simply reflect the first opportunities open to female candidates.

“It would be premature to speculate as to when the first women would be available for SEAL or SWCC (special warfare combatant-craft crewmen) training, or when the first female SEALs would receive their Trident pins,” Cmdr. Jason Salata said.

“Any expansion of the force will be a deliberate process; it will not take hours, days or weeks, but months and potentially years.”

In the broad public debate surrounding females entering the last bastions of all-male combat, common questions include how units will accommodate women in what is generally a no-privacy, cheek-to-jowl atmosphere in the field.

The Naval Special Warfare Command plan includes details on how to handle that.

During initial training, SEAL officials plan to house female SEAL candidates on a separate floor or wing most of the time and add extra security cameras. The Navy will also build separate bathrooms at San Clemente Island, where special warfare sailors do advanced maneuvers. Total cost: \$275,000.

A memo from Rear Adm. Brian Losey, the top SEAL commander, said that history has shown that quotas don’t work and won’t be attempted and that physical standards will remain neutral as to gender.

The current average physical screening test score for enlisted SEAL applicants is 18 pull-ups, 82 sit-ups and 87 push-ups, each in two minutes.

An estimated 65 percent of male officer candidates survive the 21-week SEAL training course known as Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL, or BUD/S, and go on to graduate.

A much lower percentage of male enlisted candidates — 28 percent — make the cut.

The full SEAL training pipeline — from pre-BUD/S preparation classes to post-BUD/S advanced courses — is 63 weeks.

<http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/2016/mar/10/defense-releases-plans-women-seals-marines/>

13. DoD Gives Final Go-Ahead to Open All Military Jobs to Women

(10 Mar) DoD News, By Karen Parrish

After “exceptionally thorough work” by all of the services, the U.S. military is authorized to begin integrating women across all occupations and specialties immediately, according to a Defense Department statement released today.

Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook briefed reporters on Defense Secretary Ash Carter’s decision and the accompanying statement.

Carter “formally approved the final implementation plans prepared by the military services and U.S. Special Operations Command to integrate women into all combat roles,” Cook said.

Managing Change ‘The Right Way’

In the statement, Carter said the department must handle the change “the right way, because the combat effectiveness of the world’s finest fighting force is paramount.”

Cook noted that Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force Gen. Paul J. Selva co-chaired an implementation group tasked with a detailed review of the plans.

The review was the culmination of years of studies and reports going back to 2011, when then-Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta ordered an examination of all laws and policies governing the assignment of women in the armed forces.

Carter’s seven “guiding principles” for integration shaped the implementation group’s review of the services and Socom’s final plans: transparent standards, population size, physical demands and physiological differences, conduct and culture, talent management, operating abroad, and assessment and adjustment.

Not ‘The Way We’ve Always Done’ Things

Carter wrote a Medium post published today detailing his views on the implementation plans. It can be read [here](#).

In the post, the secretary gave some behind-the-scenes details on what the studies and reviews turned up.

“We found over the last few years that in some cases we were doing things because that’s the way we’ve always done them,” Carter wrote. For example, he said, the 35-pound weight carried by marchers in their rucksacks during the Army’s Expert Infantry Badge qualification was based on a World War II-era airborne study.

“It was the minimum weight required to prevent the rucksack from getting tangled in a jumper’s static line, and had nothing to do with the equipment required for paratroopers to fight with once they landed -- let alone the modern equipment that infantry soldiers need to carry today,” Carter noted.

The study and work that has gone into opening all military jobs to women “drove us to take a closer look at our training, too,” the secretary wrote.

Equal Opportunity, Merit-Based Advancement

Carter wrote that the department’s performance standards are now informed by real-world operational requirements and the experiences gained in Iraq and Afghanistan. “As a result, our military will be even better at finding and training not only the most-qualified women, but also the most-qualified men, for all military specialties,” he wrote.

Carter has said throughout his tenure that the integration process will mean equal opportunity for, not equal participation by, women service members.

“Integration provides equal opportunity for men and women who can perform the tasks required; it does not guarantee women will be promoted at any specific number or at any set rate, as adherence to a merit-based system must continue to be paramount,” the secretary wrote.

Carter noted, “We have to remember that it takes decades to grow a general or flag officer, so it will take time to see these results.”

<http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/690381/dod-gives-final-go-ahead-to-open-all-military-jobs-to-women?source=GovDelivery>

14. Statement from Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook on Secretary Carter’s Approval of Women in Service Review Implementation Plans

(10 Mar) DoD Press Release

Three months after his historic decision to open all combat positions to women, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter today formally approved the final implementation plans prepared by the military services and U.S. Special Operations Command. This action allows them to carry out their plans to fully integrate women throughout the armed forces.

“When I announced my decision back in December to open all career fields to qualified women, I emphasized that the implementation of this change must be handled the right way, because the combat effectiveness of the world’s finest fighting force is paramount,” said Secretary Carter. “Having reviewed their exceptionally thorough work, I am pleased all of the services developed plans that will effectively carry out this change and make us even better in the future.”

Secretary Carter has detailed his views on the implementation plans in a Medium post published today that can be [read here](#).

Before the secretary’s approval, the Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Paul Selva co-chaired an implementation group that reviewed each of the plans in detail. They determined that all the plans adequately addressed Secretary Carter’s seven guiding principles: transparent standards, population size, physical demands and physiological differences, conduct and culture, talent management, operating abroad, and assessment and adjustment.

The military services and USSOCOM can now execute their plans to open all previously-closed positions, occupations, specialties, career fields, and branches to women right away.

Links to Secretary Carter’s memo and implementation plans:

[Secretary Carter Memo](#)

[Army](#)

[Navy](#)

[Air Force](#)

[Marines](#)

[SOCOM](#)

<http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/690086/statement-from-pentagon-press-secretary-peter-cook-on-secretary-carters-approva?source=GovDelivery>

15. Moving Out on Women-in-Service

(10 Mar) Medium, By Secretary of Defense Ash Carter

Three months ago, I announced that the Department of Defense would be opening all remaining combat positions to women. As I said at the time, to succeed in our mission of national defense, we cannot afford to cut ourselves off from half the country’s talents and skills. We have to take full advantage of every individual who can meet our standards.

At every stage in this process, I have emphasized that the implementation of this change must be handled the right way, because the combat effectiveness of the world’s finest fighting force is paramount. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dunford and I agree that implementation should be done in a combined manner, by all the military services working together. And to make sure we did this right, I asked the military services to incorporate seven guiding principles—transparent standards, population size, talent management, physical demands and physiological differences, operating abroad, conduct and culture, and assessment and adjustment—into their implementation plans.

Over the last three months, each of the military services and U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) have put a great deal of thought and effort into their plans to incorporate these guidelines. Having reviewed and approved their exceptionally thorough work, today I'm pleased to announce that each of them will be moving forward by the end of this month. While I encourage our men and women serving in uniform to read the implementation plans, which are publicly available from the [Army](#), [Navy](#), [Marine Corps](#), [Air Force](#), and [SOCOM](#), I'd like to provide a few key examples that illustrate how we will proceed in a deliberate and methodical manner that will make our force stronger.

Transparent Standards: My first and foremost guiding principle was that the services would need to continue to apply transparent and objective standards for all career fields to ensure leaders assign tasks, jobs, and career fields throughout the force based on ability, not gender. In this respect, the services have been able to leverage the great amounts of data they gathered over three years' worth of studies to make their standards up to date and operationally relevant. We found over the last few years that in some cases we were doing things because that's the way we've always done them. For example, previously one of the tasks to earn the Army's Expert Infantry Badge required soldiers to move 12 miles in three hours with a 35-pound rucksack, but it turns out that the rucksack weight was based on a World War II-era airborne study. It was the minimum weight required to prevent the ruck sack from getting tangled in a jumper's static line, and had nothing to do with the equipment required for paratroopers to fight with once they landed—let alone the modern equipment that infantry soldiers need to carry today. This process drove us to take a closer look at our training, too, and going forward, we will be using standards informed by today's real-world operational requirements, informed by experiences gained over the last decade and a half of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result, our military will be even better at finding and training not only the most qualified women, but also the most qualified men, for all military specialties.

Population Size: Second, the fact that we're holding everyone to the same high standards may mean that in some cases, equal opportunity may not always equate to equal participation. Here, we'll incorporate lessons we've learned in the past, like how the Navy has integrated women onto surface ships and more recently, submarines. The Army and the Marine Corps will integrate women officers and senior enlisted into previously-closed units before integrating junior enlisted women, and where they can, they'll assign more than just one woman into a unit at a time. This will help ensure that women officers play a key leadership role, set the right example, and enhance teamwork wherever possible.

Talent Management: Third is talent management—integration provides equal opportunity for men and women who can perform the tasks required; it does not guarantee women will be promoted at any specific number or at any set rate, as adherence to a merit-based system must continue to be paramount. This has been a particular focus area for all the military services, and they'll be paying extra attention to it as they pursue implementation, mindful that it will require sustained effort at all levels of leadership to ensure that when someone gets ahead or moves up a rank, they earned it. We have to remember that it takes decades to grow a general or flag officer, so it will take time to see these results.

Physical Demands and Physiological Differences: Fourth is the fact that, on average, there tend to be physical and other physiological differences between men and women. Accordingly, all the services have looked closely at ways to mitigate the potential for higher injury rates among women, and they've come up with creative methods to address this. For example, the Army intends to give all new recruits what they call an occupational physical assessment test, the results of which will help better match the recruits with jobs they either are, or with training could be, physically capable of doing. Likewise, the Marine Corps plans to use the extra time provided by their delayed entry program so that women who are interested in enlisting in ground combat arms can better prepare themselves for the physical demands of the job they want to serve in. And as we gain new insights as more women integrate into previously-closed positions, all the services will leverage that information to develop new approaches to reduce the potential for higher injury rates. All of this will help maximize effectiveness in the fight and increase readiness.

Operating Abroad: Fifth, while we know the United States is a nation committed to using our entire population to the fullest—as are some of our closest friends and allies who have already achieved full gender integration—we also know that not all nations share this perspective. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines have long dealt with this reality, notably over the last 15 years in Iraq and Afghanistan, and because of this, the military services have many lessons to draw on when it comes to operating in areas where there is cultural resistance to working with women. This is an area where we will always have to be vigilant, and the services are prepared to do so going forward across the force.

Conduct and Culture: Sixth, we must address attitudes toward team performance through education and training, including making clear that sexual assault or harassment, hazing, and unprofessional behaviors are never acceptable, and that everyone must be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. Our core beliefs in good order, discipline, leadership, and accountability are foundational to our success in integration. The services will be using new educational resources to train everyone up and down the ranks to prepare for

the integration of women, from the newest recruits to four-star admirals and generals. While each service is different and will do this in their own way, I know that all of them will continue to hold our people to the highest standards of honor and trust we associate with the profession of arms.

Assessment and Adjustment: Seventh, it is absolutely critical—and a core tenet of DoD’s character as a learning organization—that we embark on integration with a commitment to the monitoring, assessment, and in-stride adjustment that enables sustainable success. Every service is deeply committed to this. One example I want to highlight is U.S. Special Operations Command, which will continually measure and track a variety of categories for its personnel—including physical performance, injury rates, health, promotion, qualifications, and retention—to assess how integrating women into special operations forces can be further improved over time.

As I said in December, it’s important to keep all of this in perspective. Since then, we’ve already seen some changes—women service members have started to volunteer for ground combat roles, and the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps are all beginning to step up their recruitment efforts. But even as we proceed with implementation going forward, it won’t all happen overnight, and while at the end of the day this will make us a better and stronger force, there will still be problems to fix and challenges to overcome. We shouldn’t diminish that. At the same time, we should also remember that the military has long prided itself on being a meritocracy, where those who serve are judged not based on who they are or where they come from, but rather what they have to offer to help defend this country. That’s why we have the finest fighting force the world has ever known. And it’s one other way we will strive to ensure that the force of the future remains so, long into the future. Today, we take yet another step toward that continued excellence.

<https://medium.com/@SecDef/moving-out-on-women-in-service-b3f3c0d12bf2#.6srv958w6>

16. Air Force: 'No quotas' as last combat jobs opened to women

(10 Mar) Air Force Times, By Stephen Losey

The first female Tactical Air Control Party airman could potentially be trained and assigned to an operational unit this year, the Air Force said in its formal plan for integrating women into the last six male-only combat jobs.

But it could take years before the other five previously male-only combat jobs could begin fielding women, the Air Force said in its women in combat integration plan, which the Pentagon released Thursday.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter on Dec. 3 announced his decision to open to women all restricted jobs across the military, including six Air Force specialty codes covering 4,099 positions: 13C special tactics officers, 13D combat rescue officers, 1C2XX combat controllers, 1C4XX Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) airmen, 1T2XX pararescuemen, and 1W0X2 special operations weather enlisted airmen.

Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James on Dec. 29 submitted her service's implementation plan to Carter. And in it, the Air Force expressed its determination to follow through on opening all jobs to women.

"The success of gender integration will take time and requires a focus on standards, policy, education and engaged leadership at all levels across the total force," the plan said.

The plan said women will be assigned to these jobs in accordance with the Air Force's standard assignment process, but that female TACPs could be assigned to units in calendar year 2016. The other battlefield jobs take two or more years to train for, meaning it will take longer for women to be assigned there.

And the Air Force insisted its standards will not slip as it integrates the last six jobs.

"There will be no quotas, critical mass or special preferences based on gender," the plan said. "The Air Force has not changed, raised or lowered standards as part of opening up our battlefield airmen career fields to women. The mental and physical standards in place prior to opening to women will be the exact same standards in place and in use after we open the career fields to women. Any airman or recruit wishing to enter these [battlefield airman] career fields (regardless of gender) will be accessed and qualified using the currently validated standards."

The Air Force last year developed gender-neutral occupational standards for these battlefield jobs, and linked those standards to specific tasks airmen would be expected to be able to do in combat, such as climbing a rope ladder in full gear or carrying a wounded

comrade across the battlefield.

The plan spells out several tactics the Air Force plans to use to ease the integration of women into these jobs. For example, other services have had success by having senior female service members present when junior female service members enter a unit. And when possible, the plan said, the Air Force wants to have a combination of senior female airmen with junior female airmen during technical training — although the Air Force said it won't delay junior women's training if no senior women are available.

But the plan identifies several potential bumps, both major and bureaucratic, that will need to be overcome.

For example, Army and Marine Corps studies have found that women are injured more frequently than men when engaged in ground combat training, the plan said — especially in "load-bearing" jobs. The Air Force said it must learn from the Army and Marine Corps' experience and adopt methods to prevent such injuries while not compromising the training or the operational mission.

To cut down on such injuries, the plan suggested training and operational units have on-site physical therapy and individualized athletic training, which could increase airmen's resiliency.

"Preventive medicine assets are key to the data collection of injuries and illnesses and analysis of this data to develop operationally relevant preventive strategies to reduce occurrences" of injuries, the plan said.

Integrating women into these male-only jobs will also present a cultural shift, the plan said. And any concerns about the loss of combat effectiveness can be addressed by strong leadership and adherence to the newly-developed gender-neutral standards, the Air Force said.

"Sexual assault or harassment, hazing, and unprofessional behaviors are never acceptable," the plan said. "Our core beliefs in good order, discipline, leadership and accountability are foundational to our success in gender integration."

But at the same time, the plan said, some allies may be culturally opposed to working with women and gender integration can complicate cooperation with those partners. The military has dealt with these issues in Iraq and Afghanistan, the plan said, and the Air Force should learn from those lessons when integrating combat units.

Recruiting is another area that could prove to be difficult.

"Recruiting will be a challenge since there will be tremendous competition for the limited cohort of qualified volunteers amongst the services and other government or private agencies," the plan said. "In addition, the reserve component is faced with unique restrictions based on need to recruit locally, further reducing the pool of qualified members to fill unit vacancies."

The Air Force also said it would start advertising and recruiting women into these newly-opened battlefield airmen jobs Jan. 4, and update officer and enlisted classification guides to reflect they are now open to women. And the Air Force will use its Physical Ability Stamina Test to see whether potential recruits can make it into the battlefield airmen career fields.

New female recruits with no prior service who hope to join a combat career field must go through the Air Force Special Operations/Combat Support Candidate Development Support Services — also known as the "Scout/Recruit/Develop" program — before entering basic military and technical training. Female air liaison officers are already going through TACP training without any problems, the Air Force said. New recruits joining the other battlefield jobs can begin going through Scout/Recruit/Develop program as early as July 1.

The Air Force said the July 1 date will mean more non-commissioned officers will have a chance to enter the training pipeline with junior enlisted airmen, which it hopes will ease concerns about gender integration. It will also allow more time for the training program to prepare for gender integration, and allow women more time to prepare for training.

Air Force career field managers, leaders and recruiters are also going to start to look for current airmen, and former airmen with prior service, both male and female, who are interested in serving in one of these newly-opened combat jobs, the plan said. Anyone who is interested in cross-training into those jobs will be contacted and provided information on potential career paths and how retraining would work.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2016/03/10/air-force-women-combat-jobs/81594274/>

17. Army's 1st female grunts, tankers should arrive at their units in 2017

(10 Mar) Army Times, By Michelle Tan

The Army will start training women for combat arms jobs later this year, but the first group of female infantry, armor or special operations soldiers are not expected to arrive at their units until 2017 at the earliest.

The service will start bringing in female leaders from West Point, ROTC and Officer Candidate School this summer as the class of 2016 graduates, according to the Army's implementation plan released Thursday. The first enlisted recruits are expected to start training in the fall.

"An incremental and phased approach by leaders and soldiers who understand and enforce gender-neutral standards will ensure successful integration of women across the breadth and depth of our formations," Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley said in a [statement](#).

Details of the [Army's plan](#) to integrate women into its combat arms military occupational specialties, which were previously open only to men, were released Thursday after being approved by Defense Secretary Ash Carter.

The Army is taking a "leader first" approach, with plans to put in place officers before assigning new enlisted soldiers to operational units.

Carter on Dec. 3 announced his decision to lift all gender-based restrictions on military service. The move paved the way for women to serve in the previously all-male infantry, armor and Special Forces fields and opened nearly 220,000 jobs across the military.

"We're not going to turn our back on 50 percent of the population," Acting Army Secretary Patrick Murphy said in a statement. "We are opening up every occupation to women. I think that's pretty historic."

The Army has already opened more than 95,000 positions and nine occupations to women, including [combat engineer](#) (12B) and [cannon crewmember](#) (13B), with these moves occurring between May 2012 and October 2015. In 2015, three soldiers became the first women to complete Ranger School; the school has since been opened to all soldiers regardless of gender.

The Army's approach is "deliberate, methodical," said Lt. Col. Jerry Pionk, an Army spokesman.

The gender integration plan is split into four phases:

Set conditions for the Army.

This phase is well underway now and includes training and educating leaders and updating personnel policies. It also includes establishing the new Occupational Physical Assessment Test, or OPAT.

Initiate Gender Neutral Training.

This phase is expected to start April 1. It includes implementing the OPAT, enlisting female recruits for One Station Unit Training assignments, and putting into place policy procedures for 2016 cadets who want to branch into infantry or armor. The goal for enlisted training is to train female soldiers in groups of two or more.

The OPAT is a new test that's expected to be rolled out in June.

"Think of OPAT as the ASVAB for physical skills," Pionk said.

The four-event OPAT will include a standing long jump, a dead lift, an aerobic interval run and a "seated power throw," a gauge of upper-body strength that represents loading ammunition.

The test is meant to measure the physical ability of a new recruit or cadet just as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery measures their mental ability.

A new recruit will need to score well enough on the OPAT to be placed into a particular MOS, Pionk said.

Assignment to Operational Units.

The first female infantry or armor soldiers aren't expected to be assigned to their operational units until spring 2017 because of the time it'll take for them to complete the required training – whether it's One Station Unit Training or the Infantry Basic Officer Leaders Course. The intent is for female officers to arrive at the units first, followed shortly after by enlisted soldiers.

Sustain and Optimize.

During this final phase, the combat MOSs should be running like any other specialty in the Army.

Pionk said the Army expects to reach that phase in late 2017 or even 2018.

As the Army moves forward, it is “not expecting or anticipating a high propensity or demand” from females – officers or enlisted – who will want to join the infantry, armor or special operations specialties, Pionk said.

“Low propensity won't stop us, but we won't force the numbers, either,” he said. “It's going to take time, so we're not setting any quotas one way or another.”

The Army also had not finalized how it might re-class soldiers already in the Army who want to join the infantry or armor, Pionk said.

In general, enlisted soldiers who want to re-class must look at the latest in/out calls, a career planning tool that reflects the latest manning requirements and needs.

However, if the Army were to seek soldiers who want to re-class, he or she would have to attend and complete the requirements of the schools that generate that MOS, Pionk said. So, for example, a female noncommissioned officer who makes the switch from military police to infantry is going to have to complete the required advanced NCO schools for the infantry.

The same would apply to officers thinking about transferring to a new branch, Pionk said.

“This is a historic moment,” he said. “We finally have full equality in the Department of Defense, and there's not a single opportunity in the Department of Defense that women can't do. All of this, we hope, will make a much readier force in the future, and we're doing everything to ensure that it's done.”

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2016/03/10/armys-1st-female-grunts-tankers-should-arrive-their-units-2017/81608514/>

18. How big is opposition to women in combat units among Marines? This report explains.

(10 Mar) The Washington Post, By Dan Lamothe

A survey of nearly 54,000 members of the Marine Corps found that two out of three male Marines and one out of three female Marines were opposed to opening all combat jobs to women, underscoring the depth of opposition the service faces as it is required to begin fully integrating them this year.

The survey was carried out in 2012 by the think tank CNA, but the results were withheld from the public as the Defense Department announced in January 2013 that it would open all combat jobs following a lengthy research period that ended last fall. Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter made the change official in December, giving the services until this spring to begin fully integrating women.

The survey results, released to The Washington Post through the Freedom of Information Act, were not among the dozens of documents detailing the Defense Department's research on the subject that were released by the Pentagon following Carter's announcement in December. They are outlined in a 338-page report titled “Assessing the Implications of Possible Changes to Women in Service Restrictions,” and may in part explain why the Marine Corps was the only service to petition Carter to keep some of its combat jobs closed, including infantryman and reconnaissance man.

“Overall, we found that, among male respondents, those in the officer ranks from second lieutenant (O-1) through colonel (O-6) and

those in the enlisted pay grades of corporal (E-4) and sergeant (E-5) were consistently the most opposed to prospective policy changes,” the report said.

Among women, officers who obtained the rank of at least major were the most likely to be in favor of opening all combat jobs to women. About 53 percent of them signaled support. About 51 percent of lower-ranking officers said there were in favor of women serving in combat arms jobs, but the number dipped to about 41 percent of female corporals and sergeants and about 37.5 percent of enlisted staff noncommissioned officers.

Opposition was stiffest among Marines who have served in the all-male infantry, which regularly performs long combat patrols on foot while carrying up to 100 pounds of weapons, equipment and armor. The study found that 76.5 percent of Marines who served in an infantry unit were opposed to opening ground combat jobs to women. Opposition to opening all combat jobs to women was still significant among male Marines who did not serve in ground combat assignments, with 22.4 percent in favor of including women and 56.4 percent opposed.

The survey also highlighted a variety of cultural issues. Nearly 90 percent of male Marines said they were concerned about intimate relationships between Marines in the same combat unit becoming a problem, and more than 80 percent said they were concerned about false sexual assault allegations, fraternization and women receiving preferential treatment.

The top concerns listed by female Marines were enemy forces targeting them as potential prisoners of war, the risk of sexual assault or harassment and intimate relationships becoming a problem. More than 70 percent of female Marines who took the survey cited each of those as an issue.

The survey was requested by Marine Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, a career infantry officer who was then the assistance commandant of the Marine Corps. Dunford went on to become the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan and then commandant of the Marine Corps. He became chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff last fall. Many of the same issues were raised in the results of a survey carried out among elite members of U.S. Special Operations Command, including Navy SEALs, Army Green Berets and Special Operations Marines, released in December.

It is not believed that any comparable survey of Marines has been carried out since 2012.

A Defense Department spokeswoman, Marine Lt. Col. Gabrielle Hermes, said the study was not released with other research in December because the Pentagon focused on publishing online all studies commissioned as a result of then-Defense Secretary Leon Panetta rescinding the rule banning women from all ground combat assignments in January 2013. The Marine Corps survey was mandated by the 2011 National Defense Authorization Act, which directed reviews of the old policy, and “informed earlier decisions,” Hermes said.

Last fall, Marine officials said that an extensive research project carried out involving about 300 male Marines and 100 female Marines found that combat units integrated with female Marines typically did not move as quickly or shoot as accurately. Women also were more than twice as likely to suffer injuries as a result of carrying heavy combat loads, the study found.

But the study was criticized by advocates of gender integration, including Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, who said the Marines erred in focusing on what the average woman could do in combat, rather than elite performers. Mabus has continued to trade barbs on the issue, [including with some senators during a Senate Armed Services Committee](#) hearing last month.

Some critics also have said that the Marine Corps is due for a culture change. Among them are Lt. Col. Kate Germano, who was [relieved of command at Parris Island, S.C.](#), after pushing her staff to demand the same effort from male and female recruits. She has argued repeatedly in recent months that the service does not hold women to the same standards.

The new Marine commandant, Gen. Robert B. Neller, has promised the service will carry out the changes and fully integrate.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/03/10/survey-details-depth-of-opposition-in-marine-corps-to-allowing-women-in-combat-jobs/>

19. Marines gear up to train more women now that all combat jobs open

(10 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Jeff Schogol

The Marine Corps is getting ready for a potential surge of women in recruit training and military occupational specialties schools now

that the service's [gender integration plan](#) has been approved, Marine Corps Times has learned.

The Defense Department announced Thursday that Defense Secretary Ash Carter had formally approved the military services' plans to allow women to serve in MOSs that had been restricted to men only.

Commandant Gen. Robert Neller has ordered Marine Corps Combat Development Command to ensure that all formal learning centers have the facilities to accommodate student populations and staff members of up to 15 percent women, according to the Marine Corps' plan.

The 15 percent figure is not meant to be a limit or quota on how many women can train for the newly opened MOSs, Marine Corps times has learned. Rather, it is intended to make sure the service is prepared to house, equip and train as many female Marines as possible.

Marine Corps Recruiting Command expects to begin contracting women for previously closed MOSs on or about April 1, said MCRC spokesman Jim Edwards.

The gender integration plan calls for all ground combat arms units at the battalion level to have at least two female officers or staff noncommissioned officers from the Marine Corps or Navy at least 90 days before junior enlisted female Marines arrive.

"Female leaders' principal role is to serve in their PMOSs [primary MOSs] in ground combat arms units," according to the plan. "Their presence is also intended to help acculturate and socialize previously all-male units to working with female Marines. Finally, their presence will also create mentorship opportunities with female (and male) Marines."

Eventually, the Marine Corps expects to have enough female enlisted leaders and officers serving in ground combat units that this requirement will no longer be necessary, according to the plan.

Just like their male counterparts, female Marines will be assigned forcewide to ground combat arms units based on the needs of the Marine Corps, the plan says.

"As a result of our research, the Marine Corps instituted clearly defined gender neutral, operationally relevant, individual performance standards across the spectrum of Marine training and military occupation system (MOS) designation, which facilitates the matching of Marines to jobs for which they are best qualified," said Marine Corps spokesman Capt. Philip Kulczewski.

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2016/03/10/marines-preparing-train-more-women-now-all-combat-jobs-open/81599400/>

20. Military Update: Force of the Future might survive attack on its architect

(6 Mar) The Gazette, By Tom Philpott

The irony of the blistering attack the Department of Defense's top personnel official endured at his confirmation hearing to become undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness is that many of his ideas might survive the likely demise of his nomination, a Pentagon official suggested.

Even as Republicans on the Senate Armed Services Committee pilloried Brad R. Carson, accusing him of exceeding his authority and ignoring the committee and its oversight responsibilities, no senator vigorously attacked or threatened to roll back individual Force of the Future initiatives that Defense Secretary Ash Carter has implemented in the past year.

That was seen as a favorable sign as Carter prepares to announce a third and final package of initiatives for reforming the military personnel system. Those ideas include developing more convenient on- and offramps to military service and modification or repeal of the up-or-out promotion system for officers.

The first batch of Force of the Future initiatives unveiled in November were no-cost or low-cost steps the department vowed to take to smarter manage the force and use more modern tools to attract, nurture and assign military and civilian workers.

The second tranche of initiatives announced in February came with a cost estimated at \$385 million over the next five years. The services are to grant up to 12 weeks of maternity leave. Legislation is sought to allow 14 days of paternity leave and to expand adoption leave, too. Child care service hours are to be available at least 14 hours a day. Installations must have rooms for nursing service members. The services also are to begin to pay for egg and sperm freezing for active-duty service members to protect their

reproductive options in case of injury.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., committee chairman, told Carson the Force of the Future effort "has been an outrageous waste of official time and resources during a period of severe fiscal constraints. It illustrates the worst aspects of a bloated and inefficient defense organization."

But McCain seemed angrier over two other issues: Carson's failure to brief the committee on these ideas and his decisions as acting undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. McCain said that violated the Federal Vacancies Reform Act.

Carson was undersecretary of the Army until last spring, when he was appointed to serve as acting undersecretary of defense. His title was lowered in November to acting principal deputy undersecretary after McCain wrote to President Barack Obama saying Carson was violating the law.

Carson said that at the time of his appointment, "the orthodox interpretation of the vacancies act was such that there was no legal question at all."

After McCain sent his letter, Carson explained, he was asked to resign as acting undersecretary of defense, "which I did, and became the acting principal deputy. And every act I have taken since then is consistent with the role of the acting principal deputy," he said.

In no way, he added, did "I presume confirmation" to that post.

"I disagree," McCain said. Carson, he said, not only violated the law before November, he likely continued to do so as acting principal deputy.

"I'm not convinced that your initial Vacancies Act violation is remedied by moving to another acting position in which you exercise all the authority and powers of the original vacant position," McCain said.

Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., suggested Carson's confirmation was at risk as a result of complaints from employees that he had created a hostile work environment in the office of undersecretary. Inhofe gave no details.

"I would strenuously object to this characterization. I have never heard that allegation," Carson said.

At Inhofe's urging, Carson promised to conduct a command climate assessment. Inhofe said he would delay a vote on the nomination until it's done. By one estimate, the assessment could take up to six months. Regardless of outcome, it likely won't result in Carson's confirmation.

McCain and Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., also grilled Carson on his relations with senior military, saying he frustrated uniformed leaders by not involving them more deeply in developing Force of the Future initiatives.

"They were very engaged in it, I can assure you," he said.

Carson saw his authority narrowed a day after his contentious confirmation hearing. The department recognized weeks earlier that Carson's window to serve as acting principal deputy undersecretary would hit its statutory limit of 210 days Feb. 27.

On Feb. 26, Carter signed a memorandum to Carson, explaining that he could continue to serve as senior adviser to the undersecretary for personnel and readiness. He no longer is acting principal deputy, but he can sign documents "as performing the duties" of that post.

Carson, however, can't perform "statutory" responsibilities of the positions he once filled.

Given a "coincidental lapse of statutory authority," the memo was required "to ensure clear continuity of leadership" in the office of undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said Matthew Allen, a spokesman for the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

<http://gazette.com/military-update-force-of-the-future-might-survive-attack-on-its-architect/article/1571575>

21. Veterans suicide: 'We must and will do more,' VA says

(9 Mar) Navy Times, By Patricia Kime

Veterans Affairs Department officials said Tuesday they will make several changes to the department's suicide prevention programs as part of ongoing efforts to reverse the tide of suicides among military veterans.

Following recommendations made by veterans advocates and suicide prevention groups at a veterans suicide summit in Washington in February, VA officials said they will improve mental health services to include providing same-day evaluations and access to care for veterans who need immediate help.

According to a press release on the changes, the VA also will establish three regional telehealth hubs focused on mental health

treatment and provide additional resources to the VA suicide prevention program office.

VA also will launch several suicide studies, including research on the impact of deployment and combat exposure on Afghanistan and Iraq veterans and a study using suicide and suicide attempt data to prevent deaths and develop early interventions.

VA Undersecretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin called suicide prevention a "shared responsibility" between VA and communities.

"We all have an obligation to help veterans suffering from the invisible wounds of military service that lead them to think suicide is their only option," Shulkin said. "We must and will do more."

Under the new initiatives, the Veterans Health Administration also will work to ensure that opioid overdose antidotes like naloxone and flumazenil are available throughout VA hospitals and clinics.

Wisconsin Democrat Sen. Tammy Baldwin has been pressing for this change since a constituent, former Marine Jason Simcakoski, died of an accidental overdose at the Tomah VA Medical Center in 2014.

During a Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing last Thursday, Baldwin said staff at the hospital needed to obtain the antidote from a nearby urgent care clinic because the crash cart on Simcakoski's hall did not carry it.

According to Baldwin, the medication arrived in Simcakoski's room "some 33 minutes later after he was found unresponsive."

Shulkin said VA prescribed 18,000 prescriptions for naloxone and is working to distribute "these kits out to community partners and in various areas."

The VA in 2012 estimated that 22 veterans die each day by suicide, but the number is an extrapolation derived from 1999-2011 data from 21 states, and the VA and advocacy groups say it should be interpreted with caution.

VA is in the process of working with states and the CDC to obtain concrete data by midyear on the extent of the issue.

During the Washington summit, advocates made a number of recommendations to address veterans suicide, to include designating a single organization to lead prevention efforts, changing privacy laws to allow doctors to discuss patient's mental state with family members and ensuring veterans easily transition from Defense Department to VA medical care.

Jackie Maffucci, the director of research for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America who spoke at the summit, called the VA's new prevention steps "bold" and said the VA deserves praise for taking action.

"IAVA is gratified the VA has moved swiftly to follow our recommendation to elevate the suicide prevention office. Elevating this office to the level of the secretary and building a line-itemed budget to support [its mission] will be critical to ensuring its ability to meet it," Maffucci said.

The latest announcement follows a series of changes at VA to address veterans suicide. In addition to hosting the February summit, VA also shifted oversight of its suicide hotline to a manager with a proven track record for improving call centers and has been upgrading the Veterans Crisis Line's technology and staffing to better serve veterans.

The Veterans Crisis Line had been under fire since a VA Office of Inspector General investigation found that some veterans' calls went to voice mail in 2014 while other veterans were placed on hold.

<http://www.navytimes.com/story/veterans/2016/03/09/veterans-suicide-we-must-and-do-more-va-says/81535264/>

22. Former Marine muscles her way to \$10K on 'Broken Skull Challenge'

(5 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Kevin Lilley

How does an athlete train to compete in a grappling match, a yoke-carrying race and an obstacle course that features everything from rope swings to cargo netting to log-hauling to modified monkey bars, all in the same contest?

CrossFit, it turns out. And five years in the Marine Corps doesn't hurt.

Former Sgt. Candice Wagner did all of the above and more last summer during a taping of "Steve Austin's Broken Skull Challenge," a reality TV show on CMT hosted by the retired WWE Hall of Fame wrestler that's in the middle of its third season. Wagner outlasted seven other women with military experience, then conquered the show's 10-obstacle "Skullbuster" course in record time to take home \$10,000. The episode aired Feb. 28.

An instructor and co-owner with [CrossFit Iron Horse](#) in Fort Worth, Texas, Wagner wrapped up her Marine Corps service in 2010. She worked on C-130s as a flight equipment technician and was a martial-arts instructor for her last two years in uniform.

Despite that training, and a love of fitness that started before entering service, Wagner's prime takeaway from her time in the Corps was the fitness system that has since exploded.

"I kind of found CrossFit, and I just wanted to open my own gym," she told Marine Corps Times. "I think it's the best training out there for general preparedness."

"General" was an understatement for Wagner's tasks during the TV taping. No stranger to cameras seeing her sweat — she's appeared on ESPN2 in the CrossFit Games and on the NBC Sports Network as part of the National Pro Grid League — the CMT show offered a brand-new vibe, including the constant encouragement and commentary from Austin.

Wagner wasn't much of a wrestling fan growing up, but said the host was more of "a teddy bear" than a Texas rattlesnake.

"He kind of went out of his way to talk to us," the 31-year-old said. "He wasn't just going through the motions with the production. He really made an effort. I thought that was really nice."

Wagner defeated her first-round foe in a grappling contest, with the winner being the first to remove a Velcro strap from each of her opponent's ankles. She won a second-round race where both contestants shouldered yokes that were weighed down by metal chains, then reached the Skullbuster by dragging a stone the size of a truck tire over a series of ramps before pushing her final opponent out of a sand pit.

Not diverse enough? The Skullbuster included a quarter-mile run carrying what looked like a tree trunk, a cargo-net climb, rope swing, Z-shaped monkey bars and other obstacles. It ended with a rope climb, but not before a trek up a steep hill ... and a slide down the other side.

"I told myself when I went into it, 'There's 10 grand on the line. ... I'm going to throw my body down that hill,' " Wagner said, "And the safest way to do that was to do a little, almost a sliding-into-home-base thing. That's what I told myself I was going to do and I did it, and I got a big strawberry on my backside to prove it."

Austin praised her sliding technique, as well as what he called "powerful-ass legs." Some Marines eyeing upcoming fitness tests may be more interested in her powerful-ass arms — Wagner said she can do 20 or 21 straight pullups (50 or so with a "kip"), and believes it's time the exercise becomes gender-nonspecific.

"I think it's the Marine Corps — they have to be able to do pullups," she said. "And if they can't do pullups, they shouldn't be in the Marine Corps. And I know that's really harsh to say, but they need to prepare for life. And if they're in combat, especially now that they've changed some things, they have to be able to hold their own and help others as well, and part of that is having that upper body strength, the ability to do that.

"They should never lower the standard just to make sure people reach it. They need to keep the standards high and have people work for it."

Wagner didn't offer any super-secret workouts to boost pullup numbers and kept her advice simple: "It's just like anything else: If you want to get better at running, you run. If you want to get better at pullups, you've got to do pullups. ... There's a bunch of different modifications to work up to that, but they've just got to do them."

The episode is available [here](#), though a valid cable-provider account is required.

23. Carter Salutes Women's Contributions on International Women's Day

(8 Mar) DoD News, Defense Media Agency

The Defense Department "must continue to be open and inclusive as we strive to bring in America's best talent, including from our extraordinary community of women, who make up more than 50 percent of the American population," Defense Secretary Ash Carter said today in his written message in observance of International Women's Day.

"Today is International Women's Day, a moment to celebrate the contributions and achievements of women around the world from our past and present," Carter wrote. "From Margaret Corbin's heroism during the American Revolution, to the first Navy WAVES during World War II, to the first women soldiers who graduated from the elite Army Ranger School last year, women have been serving, fighting, and contributing to the security and prosperity of our great nation since its founding, and continue to do so today."

For the nation to succeed in its national defense mission, it cannot afford to cut itself off from half the country's talents and skills, Carter wrote.

"We have to take full advantage of every individual who can meet our high standards," the defense secretary continued.

Opening All Military Occupations to Women

"That's why I recently announced that DoD is opening all military occupations and positions to women," he wrote. "Going forward, this will enable our military to better harness the skills and perspectives that talented women have to offer."

The department has made other important strides to empower women around the globe, Carter wrote.

"Through the implementation of the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, DoD is supporting programs aimed at advancing women's inclusion in peace building and conflict prevention processes, and addressing the impact of violence and conflict on women and girls," he wrote. "Through courses and seminars hosted by DoD's regional centers and geographic combatant commands, we encourage our friends and allies to expand the recruitment and retention of women in their security sectors and the incorporation of gender perspectives into their peace and security policy.

"Also, in training partner militaries in peacekeeping operations," Carter continued, "our forces help equip them to better prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence."

Today and every day, "let us pledge to continue our work to advance the status of women and girls worldwide and to build the future strength of the finest fighting force the world has ever seen by harnessing the talents, skills, and perspectives of 100 percent of America's population," he concluded.

<http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/688410/carter-salutes-womens-contributions-on-international-womens-day?source=GovDelivery>

24. WASP Pursued Love of Flying, Fought for Women Vets' Recognition

(9 Mar) DoD News, By Shannon Collins

Women have been graduating from the Air Force Academy since 1980, and flying in combat missions since Operation Desert Storm, but before them were the World War II Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASPs.

Bernice "Bee" Haydu, from Montclair, New Jersey, not only served as a WASP, but was president of the WASP organization in the 1970s and fought for them to be recognized as veterans. Now, the 95-year-old veteran speaks at military events and Boys and Girls Clubs events throughout the country.

Her brother, Lloyd Falk, who served during World War II in the Army Air Force in the United States, England and France, said he's proud of his sister.

"When I learned my sister was learning to fly military aircraft, I was really amazed and proud of her," he said. "But I was not totally surprised because she was always an innovator and in the vanguard of breaking away from stereotypical 'women's work.'"

Falk was a meteorologist who prepared weather forecasts for Army Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's staff and was involved in the weather forecast for the D-Day invasion of France. "My wife, Eleanor, and I especially admired her tenacity and ability in leading the group to their goal of procuring military status," he said.

How it All Began

Born Dec. 15, 1920, Haydu said she had the advantage of growing up in a family where women enjoyed the freedom to work and help earn money for their families.

“They were independent and wanted to succeed,” she said. “They were not constrained by the Victorian idea that women shouldn’t work outside the home or that some occupations were available only to men.”

Haydu worked as a secretary after graduating high school. She wanted to go to college, but the family didn’t have enough money to send both her and her brother to school. She said she told herself, “Stop feeling sorry for yourself and do something about it.” So she started taking night courses in aviation. “This began my long love affair with flying,” she said.

She went to Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, on weekends and trained on a Taylorcraft with a propeller you had to pull through by hand to get it started. She earned her nickname “Bee” because she “flew like a bumble bee.”

“I don’t know if this was a compliment but I’ll take it,” Haydu said with a smile. Her first solo flight was Aug. 1, 1943.

When she read in the newspaper that they were recruiting for the WASP program, Haydu and her friends took their log books and credentials to interview and were accepted.

“We knew the program was experimental,” she said. “They didn’t know whether women could handle the large military aircraft and whether they could adapt to military life. They said, ‘You’re going to get paid by civil service and if it’s successful, you will be taken into the Army Air Corps and have all of the benefits that service can render.’ Well, the program was deemed successful.”

Basic, Advanced Training

Haydu and five of her friends paid for their train ride down to Sweetwater, Texas, to basic training at Avenger Field for the seven months of WASP training. She was 23 years old. The qualifications were to have at least 35 hours of flying hours, be age 18 to 35, be at least 5 feet, 4 inches tall and pass the Army Air Corps physical. A written exam was added later.

Six women were assigned per bay in the barracks, and two bays each shared one shower, one sink and one toilet. Each woman was issued men’s coveralls, which they nicknamed “zoot suits.” Flying in an open cockpit aircraft in the winter, they wore heavy flying suits, goggles, a helmet, gloves and a parachute.

Haydu said basic training was “tough.” A typical day consisted of flying, ground school, calisthenics and marching, she said.

The usual method of training was to start in a primary trainer, then go to a basic trainer and finally go to an advanced trainer. “They wanted to experiment with the women to see if they could eliminate one of the phases of training, so we went from the Stearman, which is an open cockpit biplane, in primary [training], and after about 60 to 70 hours of that, we went directly into the advanced, which was the AT-6 [Texan] -- that’s 650 horsepower compared to 220 horsepower,” she said.

The experiment was successful, Haydu said, and the male cadets adopted the same program.

Haydu graduated basic training March 11, 1944. She had to pass civilian and Army check rides in each of her training phases. She saw many of her friends wash out along the way, but she stayed determined.

Haydu advanced to instrument flight training in the Link trainer. She learned radio communication procedures and Morse code. She graduated advanced training Sept. 8, 1944, and went to her first active duty assignment at Pecos Air Force Base, Pecos, Texas, Sept. 24, 1944.

Active Duty

Haydu was assigned to work as an engineering test pilot and a utility pilot.

“If an engine was overhauled and needed to be flown in a certain manner for a certain number of hours before it went into regular service, I would do that,” she said. “If personnel had to be flown somewhere in the United States, I flew them wherever they had to go.”

She said the WASPs “flew every aircraft manufactured for World War II,” and one of the WASPs flew a prototype jet, so “we just did everything the men did.”

She flew the 225-horsepower Bobcat, variously designated as the UC-78 and AT-17, at Pecos and was looking forward to flying B-25 Mitchell bombers in January 1945, but the WASPs were disbanded.

Disbanded

“It came as a blow,” she said. “Army Air Force General Henry ‘Hap’ Arnold went before Congress and said, ‘The experiment is over. It was successful. I would like these women to be taken into the Army Air Corps.’ Army General George Marshal went to General Arnold and said, ‘I need 3,000 men for the infantry.’ General Arnold said, ‘Alright, I can spare the next group going into cadet

training.’ The next group going into cadet training was very upset and went before Congress, did a huge lobbying job and managed to have the WASP bill defeated. This is why we were disbanded Dec. 20, 1944, with no rank and no benefits whatsoever for our service. This was just devastating to us.”

A Lifetime of Flight

Since she knew the WASPs were going to be disbanded, Haydu started looking for a job in the aviation field as early as October. She even went to Los Angeles and crashed four movie studios and two movie sets, trying to get them to do a movie or television show on the WASP program.

“I started writing to companies and airlines, trying to get a job as a pilot and I never heard ‘no’ said in so many different ways,” she said. “I finally realized if I was going to stay in flying and make a living at it, I’d have to do it myself.”

Haydu went home to New Jersey, got her instructor’s rating and did freelance flight instruction. She wanted to continue flying and in 1945, learned that the government was distributing surplus training aircraft around the U.S. and selling them to the general public at greatly reduced prices. These had to be delivered from Air Force bases to dealers.

Haydu learned who the dealers were and contacted them, offering her services as a ferry pilot. She also was a flight instructor and since manufacturers were now producing aircraft for private use, she contacted Cessna and Aeronca to see if they wanted her ferrying services. One Cessna distributor liked her so much, he offered her a dealership with a commission, and she bought her first plane. She sold 20 airplanes in one fiscal year. She also became a part owner in a flight school, where many of the students were World War II veterans.

During this time, she met her husband, Joseph Haydu, who had been an Army Air Force flight instructor during World War II for almost four years. They went on to have three children, Joseph, Steven and Diana, and four grandchildren.

Fight for Recognition

In 1969, Haydu went with her family to visit the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. She wanted to show her family information about the WASPs and was upset when she didn’t see anything on display about the program. Haydu contacted Paul Garber, the historian, and donated her dress uniform, which is still there on display. She sent out a call to her fellow WASPs, who also donated memorabilia to the museum.

The WASPs met over the years for reunions and in 1972, Air Force Col. Bruce Arnold, son of “Hap” Arnold, made the promise to the WASPs that he would try to help them attain the status of veterans. In 1975, Haydu was elected president of the WASP organization, the Order of Fifinella.

Fifinella is the good luck lady gremlin designed by Walt Disney to fly with the WASP in World War II, she said. “After we disbanded, we adopted her name for our organization,” Haydu explained.

It was during her two terms as president, from 1975-1978, that the WASPs made the first concerted effort to gain recognition as veterans from Congress. Senator Barry Goldwater, a pilot with the Air Transportation Command during World War II, introduced the bill March 1975, to the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. It passed the Senate and went before the House of Representatives Sept. 14, 1976, but didn’t pass because at that time it was opposed by the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Haydu said.

Haydu wrote on behalf of the WASPs that “these women served in a military capacity, wore uniforms, were subject to military discipline and courtesy, flew every military airplane manufactured for World War II and served their country replacing men pilots for active duty overseas. They also risked their lives daily, and 38 of these women died in the service of their country.

“The WASP who lived on Army Air Force bases were paid less than flying Army Air Force officers and were not allowed military funerals or insurance or any other benefits given men who served,” she continued. “Needed now, not posthumously, is militarization that would give them the recognition they so justly deserve. The 850 remaining who are in need of veterans’ benefits should be given them through the militarization process.”

Haydu estimates there are fewer than 100 veteran WASPs alive today.

She said the WASPs lobbied and used publicity but it was thanks to the efforts of Bruce Arnold that they finally had the bill passed. On Nov. 23, 1977, President Jimmy Carter signed Public Law 95-202, Section 401, giving the WASPs veteran status.

In 1984, the WASPs received World War II Victory Medals and for those who had served one year, they received the American Theater Campaign medal.

According to Haydu, Nancy Parrish, daughter of WASP Deanie Parrish and founder of Wings Across America, contacted Air Force Maj. Nicole Malachowski, the first female Thunderbird pilot, for help in getting Congress to honor the accomplishments of the WASPs. In January of 2009, she drafted a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the WASPs, the highest honor awarded to a

civilian by the U.S. Congress, and it was introduced and unanimously passed in May 2009. President Barack Obama signed a Senate bill into law providing the Congressional Gold Medal to the WASPs. Many of the women pilots, accompanied by Air Force women currently serving, accepted these medals at a ceremony at the White House March 10, 2010.

Haydu said she was tremendously proud and happy they finally received their recognition. She was participating in an All Women's Classic Air Race when she got the call about the Congressional Gold Medal.

"En route, we were fueling in Macon, Georgia, when Nancy Parrish called my cell phone asking if I could be in the Oval Office of the White House by 4 p.m. the next day to witness the President sign a bill awarding WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal," Haydu said. "We returned our race plane to Keystone Heights, Florida, where fortunately, Christy Smith had left her plane. We then flew to her home, and I purchased a commercial airline ticket for D.C. for the next morning. I made it.

"We entered the White House by a western entrance and were escorted to the Roosevelt Room, adjacent to the Oval Office," she continued. "When it was our turn, the door opened and much to my surprise, we were greeted by President Obama, who had something complimentary to say to each of us. We stood behind his desk and chair to witness the signing. The desk is the same one that had been used by President Kennedy."

Haydu added, "As President Obama approached, I had the pleasure of pulling out his chair for him. He used four pens to sign and gave each of the three WASPs one. He said, 'Every American should be grateful for their service, and I am honored to sign this bill to finally give them some of the hard-earned recognition they deserve.' We visited for about 10 minutes. He was a very gracious gentleman."

Family of Fliers

When Haydu wasn't fighting for WASP rights, she was sharing her love of flying with her children. She and her husband purchased a restored PT-17 Stearman and they would take their family for rides around the country and would attend and fly at airshows. They also bought a Link trainer and put it on the back porch.

Haydu said she made sure all her children received flying lessons, and they would take turns flying in the Link trainer like it was a toy.

"They grew up with it, and we saw to it that all of them had lessons. My middle son loved it but then he got married and had children. It's expensive, but I know he's going to go back to it one day. He really loved flying," she said.

Over the years, the family bought different aircraft and flew in different airshows. Haydu entered her first airplane race in May 1965, the Angel Derby. She came in second in her class. She then flew in two Powder Puff Derby races and other races along the way.

Crash

The scariest and luckiest day of Haydu's life was in August 1971, when she and her husband flew to an air show in Ottawa, Canada. They met a friend Ken Henders, who was there in a World War II-era Fairchild PT-26.

She flew with him when he was doing a fly-by for the audience. He was supposed to fly straight and level. He had pulled up, dissipating speed and then without warning, started into a roll within 300 to 400 feet above the ground. They were in a partial bank. Coming down, they hit telephone poles and finally landed in a newly plowed field.

She blacked out and when she came to, she undid her seatbelt and opened the hatch. Both ran from the plane. She had a broken arm and needed 25 stitches but she was OK.

Sharing Her Story

Haydu said she enjoys talking to current women service members and to children who could potentially join the military in the future.

"I admire the women who fly today. The navigation has changed so much," she said. "There have been huge improvements. All women crews are just fantastic. They do every job, from the loadmaster to the navigator to the pilot, to every job that there is to be done in the aircraft. It just proves that an airplane knows no sex. It doesn't know whether a man or a woman is flying it."

Haydu recommends the military.

"The best training you can get in anything, not just flying, is given by the military," she said. "They have absolutely the best training. It's strict but it's good."

Haydu said children write to her and tell her she inspires them. She said speaking to the children gives her life purpose.

"It kind of gives me a mission in life," she said, her eyes watering. "Some like to be a mechanic, some like to be the pilot. They're just wonderful youngsters."

Haydu said she stresses equality during her speeches.

“It’s not what sex you are,” Haydu said. It’s what you can do, and if you can be successful at something that should be all that should matter. You should pursue whatever it is you want, and you should not allow people to say, ‘Oh, you can’t do that.’ Just do the best you can and I hope you can make it.”

<http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/689318/wasp-pursued-love-of-flying-fought-for-women-vets-recognition?source=GovDelivery>