# ELIMINATION OF THE 1994 DIRECT GROUND COMBAT DEFINITION AND ASSIGNMENT RULE

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# Agenda

- Background
- Policy
- Guiding Principles
- Implementation
- Congress
- Issues

# Background - Relevant Policy

- **Direct Ground Combat Definition & Assignment Rule (1994)**

1. **SecDef:** "…women shall be excluded from assignment to units below the brigade level whose ***primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground***…"

1. **Services: Option to restrict assignment of women:**
   - Where costs of appropriate ***berthing and privacy*** arrangements are prohibitive,
   - Where units and positions are doctrinally required to ***physically co-locate*** and remain with direct ground combat units that are closed to women,
   - Where units are engaged in ***long range reconnaissance*** operations and ***Special Operations*** Forces missions,
   - Where job related ***physical requirements*** would necessarily exclude the vast majority of women Service members.

# Elimination of the 1994 Policy

- As stated in the February 2012 Report to Congress, the Department of Defense is committed to removing as many barriers as possible
- On January 24, 2013, the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff eliminated the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Rule
- Currently closed units and positions will be opened consistent with the Chairman's guiding principles
- Integration will occur as expeditiously as possible, but not later than January 1, 2016; any exceptions must be personally approved by the Secretary of Defense

# Guiding Principles

- **To successfully integrate women into the remaining positions and units, we will:**
  - **Ensure the success of our Nation's warfighting forces by preserving unit readiness, cohesion, and morale**
  - **Ensure all Service men and women are given the opportunity to succeed and are setup for success with viable career paths**
  - **Retain the trust and confidence of the American people to defend this Nation by promoting policies that maintain the best quality and most qualified people**
  - **Validate occupational performance standards, both physical and mental, for all military occupational specialties**
  - **Ensure that a sufficient cadre of midgrade/senior women enlisted and officers are assigned to commands at the point of introduction to ensure success in the long run**

# Implementation

- Services will expand the number of units and women assigned to those units incrementally
- Navy will continue to assign women to afloat units as:
  - Changes for reasonable female privacy and berthing arrangements are completed
  - Female officer and enlisted leadership assignments can be implemented
  - Ships schedules permit
- Services will continue to develop occupational standards
  - In use NLT September 2015
- Services and SOCOM will assign women as standards and operational assessments are completed and cadre introduced. Studies must be complete by October 2015

# Implementation

- **Under Secretary of Defense (P&R)**
  - **Has delegated congressional notification**
  - **Directed that implementation plans explain <u>in detail</u> the way-forward for every closed occupational specialty, unit and position**
  - **Directed Military Departments to refrain from announcing prospective openings before Congressional notification**

# Implementation Timeline

- **May 15, 2013 – Services provide detailed implementation plans to the Secretary**
- **Summer 2013 – Department submits Report to Congress based upon information provided by the Services**
- **Continual notification to Congress of the Department's intention to open additional positions and units as Service assessments and standards are developed**
- **January 1, 2016 – All positions open to women, unless granted an exception to policy by the Secretary**

# Congressional Expectations

- Notice prior to public announcement
- Details regarding:
  - Each specific occupation
  - Analysis used to justify opening positions
  - Physical standards
  - Health and hygiene issues

# Congressional Concerns

- Development of cadres
  - What is the right mix for each unit?
  - What size?
- Development of gender-neutral standards
- Costs
  - Facilities modifications / studies of integration and long-term health impacts

# Issues

- Sequestration and a continuing resolution have potential to:
  - Delay development and validation of gender-neutral standards
  - Delay facilities modifications

- Congress has mixed views
  - Potential for additional legislation to constrain the Departments' planned approach
- Impact to the Military Selective Service Act

# Secretary of Defense

**We are fully committed to removing as many barriers as possible to joining, advancing, and succeeding in the U.S. Armed Forces.**

**Success in our military based solely on ability, qualifications, and performance is consistent with our values and enhances military readiness.**