

## Women in Ground Combat: Facts and Figures (02/01/2017)

**OVERVIEW:** The repeal of the ground combat exclusion policy in 2013 opened more than 250,000 previously closed positions (10%) to women in the military.<sup>i</sup> Since 2015 more than 640 women in the Army have entered previously closed jobs in Field Artillery, Ordnance, and Combat Engineer branches.<sup>ii</sup> In the Marine Corps 181 women serve in non-infantry jobs in previously closed combat units.<sup>iii</sup> Hundreds more women are currently in the training pipeline for combat arms jobs. Women comprise just over 15% of the military. Since September 11, 2001 over 300,000 women have deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq; 166 women have been killed during combat operations and more than 1,000 have been wounded.

### QUICK FACTS:

- **30 Army Women Officers** have qualified as infantry and armor officers. 32 additional women are currently in or slated to begin infantry and armor officer training at Fort Benning, GA.
  - **Infantry Officers:** 2 captains, both Ranger qualified, have laterally transferred into the infantry branch, 14 lieutenants (4 qualified in the top 20% of their infantry officer classes) accessed into the infantry branch in late 2016/early 2017.
  - **Armor Officers:** 14 lieutenants (2 qualified in top 20% of their class) accessed into the Armor branch in late 2016/early 2017.
- **24 Army Women Non-Commissioned Officers** have either completed training or are currently in training to re-branch into infantry and armor specialties.
- **Almost 200 women have enlisted for infantry and armor** in the Army. They are scheduled to begin basic training in February 2017.<sup>iv</sup> They will begin training when the first women officers and NCOs begin to join designated combat arms units so that leaders are in place before the newly accessed enlisted women arrive.
- The first woman officer was **accessed and selected into the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment** in December.<sup>v</sup>
- In the Army, as of March 2016, 814 female officers are assigned to combat units at the Brigade level (12% of officers).
- **No woman Marine officer has completed infantry or armor training**, although one woman is reportedly preparing to enter the Infantry Officer Course.
- **30 Women Marines** (including 6 officers and 2 NCOs) are serving in previously closed occupations in combat engineers, field artillery and low altitude air defense. The Army trains the Marine Corps' Field Artillery and Armor officers. The 2 women Marine field artillery officers finished at the top of their graduating class in 2016.<sup>vi</sup>

- **In the Marine Corps, 236 enlisted women completed infantry training** during a trial period and are eligible to make lateral moves into infantry positions. Only 3 women (out of 5 who reportedly applied) were approved to move into infantry positions. They reported to 1<sup>st</sup> BN/8<sup>th</sup> on January 5, 2017.<sup>vii</sup>
- In 2016, **31 women enlisted in the Marine Corps for ground combat jobs**, 21 of them for infantry occupations. Nine women with infantry contracts are currently in boot camp training at Parris Island, SC, and the first group is scheduled to graduate January 2017.<sup>viii</sup>
- No women have been accessed or selected into Army Special Forces, Navy SEALs, Marine Raiders or Battlefield Airmen.

## References

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/632536/carter-opens-all-military-occupations-positions-to-women>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R42075.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Marine Corps Data is derived from the Declaration of Colonel Douglas Meyer in Joint Case Management Statement, Hegar et al v. Carter, January 12, 2017.

<sup>iv</sup> <http://tradocnews.org/higher-than-expected-number-of-women-joining-combat-arms/>

<sup>v</sup> Army data is derived from the Declaration of LtCol Christine Rice in the Joint Case Management Statement, Hegar et al v. Carter, filed January 12, 2017.

<sup>vi</sup> <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2016/06/15/marine-corps-first-ever-female-artillery-officers-headed-fleet/85942326/>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://dacowits.defense.gov/Portals/48/Documents/General%20Documents/RFI%20Docs/Sept2016/Consolidated%20Responses%20for%20RFI%203.pdf?ver=2016-09-09-160805-050>

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/12/29/first-female-infantry-marines-graduate-boot-camp-january.html>