



JAN 24 2013



MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
ACTING UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL
AND READINESS
CHIEFS OF THE MILITARY SERVICES

SUBJECT: Elimination of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule

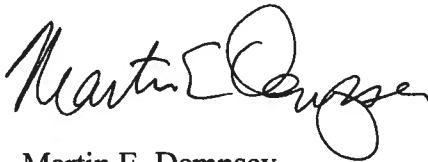
We are fully committed to removing as many barriers as possible to joining, advancing, and succeeding in the U.S. Armed Forces. Success in our military based solely on ability, qualifications, and performance is consistent with our values and enhances military readiness. Today, women make up 15% of the U.S. military and are indispensable to the national security mission. In fact, thousands of women have served alongside men in Iraq and Afghanistan, and like men, have been exposed to hostile enemy action in those countries. However, many positions in our military remain closed to women because of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule.

In February 2012, in collaboration with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, we modified the 1994 Rule, thereby opening up over 14,000 positions previously closed to women. Subsequently, the Joint Chiefs of Staff reviewed the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule and they now propose a way forward that will fully integrate women without compromising our readiness, morale, or war-fighting capacity. We agree with their approach and guiding principles, and the milestones they propose. A copy of the memorandum explaining the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is attached.

Therefore, the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule excluding women from assignment to units and positions whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground is rescinded effective immediately. Currently closed units and positions will be opened by each relevant Service, consistent with the guiding principles set forth in the attached memorandum and after the development and implementation of validated, gender-neutral occupational standards and the required notifications to Congress. The Military Departments shall submit by May 15, 2013, to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, their detailed plans for the implementation of this directive. Their plans shall be consistent with the guiding principles, and goals and milestones contained in the attached memorandum.

Integration of women into newly opened positions and units will occur as expeditiously as possible, considering good order and judicious use of fiscal resources, but must be completed no later than January 1, 2016. Any recommendation to keep an occupational specialty or unit closed to women must be personally approved first by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then

by the Secretary of Defense; this approval authority may not be delegated. Exceptions must be narrowly tailored, and based on a rigorous analysis of factual data regarding the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the position. The Military Departments shall submit quarterly progress reports on their implementation of this memo to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.



Martin E. Dempsey
General, USA
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff



Leon E. Panetta
Secretary of Defense

Attachment:
As stated

cc:
Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence
General Counsel of the Department of Defense
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs