This chapter describes the processes by which the services implemented the legislative and policy guidance into specific assignments and occupations and skills available to women. This chapter begins with a summary of the changes in each of the services and an evaluation of the process of integration. Then, the specific factors that affected the rate of progress for each of the services, as well as the current opportunities open to women, are summarized below. More detailed data are located in Appendix B and are referenced throughout this chapter.

**SUMMARY OF SERVICE CHANGES**

Overall, the changes in policy and legislation opened more than 250,000 positions in the Armed Services to women, and over 80 percent of the total jobs in the services are open to women. Table 2.1 summarizes the total number of positions opened to women since April 1993. It is notable from this table that, while the Navy alone had opened by far the most positions to women, both the Navy and the Marine Corps had a considerable percentage of overall positions become available. In addition, the difference between the percentages of positions now available to women is also interesting. The Navy can assign women to 91.2 percent of its positions, and almost all Air Force assignments are open to women. However, it is important to note that, while 91.2 percent of all Navy positions are available to women, only approximately 13 percent of all shipboard bunks will be female berthing at the end of the current embarkation plan. Thus, the number of Navy positions that could be simultaneously
Table 2.1

Positions Opened to Women by Law and Policy Since April 1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Total New Positions</th>
<th>Before April 1993</th>
<th>After Law and Policy Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>41,699</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>67.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>145,500</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps</td>
<td>59,000</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DoD Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>259,199</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
<td><strong>80.2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roughly one-third of Army and Marine Corps assignments are still closed to women. Additionally, the percentage of positions in newly opened occupations (as opposed to newly opened units) that is filled by women remains very low. Table 2.2 indicates the degree to which women are represented among newly opened occupations. There are multiple factors for this low representation, including the number of women in each service, their interest in newly opened occupations, the training or retraining times, whether facilities or systems had to be reconfigured, and the rate of movement (both male and female) into that occupation. Our study did not determine whether the recruitment, selection, or assignment practices of the services limit these numbers.

Table 2.2

Representation of Women in Newly Opened Occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Personnel in Newly Opened Occupations</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>2,062</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>25,705</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>8,799</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps</td>
<td>10,175</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OVERALL EVALUATION OF SERVICES' PROGRESS INTEGRATING WOMEN INTO NEWLY OPENED OCCUPATIONS AND UNITS

An important change for military women has been made in the integration of the Navy's surface fleet. The Navy is incorporating as many women as it can into combatant vessels, given the limitations of the berthing conversion schedules and the small number of female leaders available for assignment. Sea duty is now expected of both men and women, and women will be competitive for command positions onboard combatant ships and in aviation wings. At the unit level, we were not told about any barriers to women serving in Navy combat aviation assignments.

In the Army units and enlisted occupations that opened to women, we were told that women do not always have full career opportunities and that this situation is not transitional but based on official and unofficial assignment policies. The integration of women into newly opened occupations is especially problematic in the Army because the ground combat exclusion policy keeps many units and organizational levels officially closed to women. Therefore, the number of women who will be able to progress in some career fields will be limited by the small number of command positions that are open to them. For example, although field artillery MOSs opened to enlisted women, women cannot serve in field artillery units below the brigade level. In field artillery, interacting with infantry and armor units is perceived to be extremely valuable to one's career, but women are precluded from this opportunity. The only field grade command opportunities available to women in field artillery are in training units, which are not perceived to be as career-enhancing as other command opportunities.

Additionally, both male and female focus-group participants and command personnel told us that Army women's integration into newly opened units has been restricted unofficially. Reportedly, some local commanders resist having more than a few women in these units, and thus send “surplus” women to work elsewhere. Second, some local commanders will not assign women to certain newly opened units because they have made their own interpretations of the collocation restriction and concluded that some assignments that are officially open to women should be closed.
The Marines have integrated women into new positions, even though they cannot be deployed on ships that have not yet been integrated. As this limitation is transitional, the Marines have made plans to increase the percentage of Marines who are women over the next few years.\textsuperscript{1} However, the percentage of female Marines will still be considerably lower than the percentage of women in the Army. Additionally, because the Marine Corps also has a large percentage of units that remain closed to women in the newly opened occupations, opportunities in the Marine Corps may be limited to the same extent that they are for Army women in these occupations (although we did not observe this during our limited research).

The Air Force has lifted the barriers to women’s careers in combat aviation, and women are being integrated as quickly as they enter flight school, as they qualify for and choose combat aircraft, and as those aircraft become available.

We should also point out that it was beyond the scope of this short-term study to examine whether recruiters in each of the services made any effort to encourage women to enter the newly opened occupations or units, or how women in training schools for these new positions were treated. Further study would be needed to determine the effects of these practices on the number of women entering the new fields. This further study should pay especially close attention to the recruitment and training of women for aviation roles in all the services, as this entry level is most crucial in determining the future progress of the aviation integration.

**POLICY INTERPRETATION AND ACTIONS BY EACH OF THE SERVICES**

**Air Force**

At the time Secretary of Defense Les Aspin wrote the April 28, 1993 memorandum repealing combat aircraft restrictions for women, 97.3 percent of the Air Force’s 472,484 positions were already open to women. Fighter, bomber, and special operations aircraft made up the majority of the remaining closed positions. Secretary of the Air

\textsuperscript{1}The berthing modifications will be completed over the next 5-10 years.
Force Sheila Widnall had just distributed a memorandum to open all Air Force positions to women, and thus Air Force staff were already in the process of determining how best to implement full integration. This advance work greatly eased the integration process following Aspin’s guidance. Prior to 1993, 12,654 positions were closed to women; currently, 2,244 are closed, which means that over 99 percent of Air Force positions are currently open to women. Tables listing the currently closed or restricted skills are included in Appendix B.2

Although the Air Force had initially planned to open all positions to women, a few positions were closed or restricted after consultation with the Army to determine the correct application of the Secretary of Defense’s new guidelines for change. Such positions as combat aircraft control were closed because they deploy with all-male Army combat troops engaged in direct ground combat. A few specialties that are open to women have restrictions in assignment for the same reasons. For example, air liaison officers deploy with ground units and coordinate close air support for the Army and therefore cannot be assigned below battalion level with units engaged in direct ground combat. Few enlisted positions are currently closed or restricted.

The positions that remain closed to women are in small career fields not viewed as critical to an individual’s career advancement. This differs from the other services, where most of the currently closed positions are perceived as elite, such as SEALs, submarines,3 Special Forces, infantry, and armor. In the Army and Marines, the closed positions are often considered the primary, central roles of each service: to fight the enemy through direct ground combat.

Most of the changes in the Air Force affected officers’ opportunities. The last of the elite and most coveted positions in the Air Force were opened when women were allowed to choose bomber and fighter aircraft. Women can now be pilots and navigators in F-15, F-16, and

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2This subsection benefited from the assistance and review of the Air Force office of Force Structure Plans and Policy, which also provided a helpful review of this subsection.
3Submarines are closed because of berthing restrictions.
A-10 fighter aircraft; in B-52, B-1, and the new B-2 bomber aircraft; and in AC-130, HC-130, and MC-130 Special Operations aircraft.4

The Air Force had a policy of only training aviators for combat aircraft who could serve in combat. Thus, unlike the Navy, which had trained and developed an inventory of experienced noncombat female aviators (e.g., flight instructors), the Air Force had to start from scratch in training women to operate previously prohibited aircraft.

The initial female candidates for assignments to combat aircraft were selected from previous flight-school graduates. Previously, women went through the same basic flight school as men. Upon flight school graduation, all students were ranked, and the top student had first choice of available aircraft; the second had second choice; and so on. However, women had been prohibited from selecting combat aircraft, the most desirable choice for many pilots. So, in 1993, the Air Force examined the flight-school graduate lists since 1990 (when the merit assignment system was established) to identify women who would have qualified to select a combat aircraft. There was a rich pool of qualified women to offer Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve combat aircraft positions.

From that point on, a gender-neutral assignment policy was adopted: As women and men graduate from flight school, they compete under the same standards for combat aircraft. Of the 8,825 pilot and navigator positions that were previously closed to women, 26 are currently filled by women, who are spread out over 22 locations. Another 15 female students are currently in training for these positions.

The Air Force relied upon the existing system to assign women to units. Pilots fall under the Officer Assignment System, which means they can request where they would like to serve based on available slots. The result is that the female combat aviators are distributed in small numbers across many units, and most are the only female aviator in their units.

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4We should note that the B-52 bombers are currently being phased out and thus are not equal in career opportunity to the other recently opened positions.
One concern with integrating women in these aircraft was whether aircraft equipment (e.g., support equipment, g-suits, urinary relief devices) would need redesigning for average female anatomy. But many of these concerns were already being addressed for other reasons. American women may have a smaller average weight and height than American men, but this is also the case with many men from other countries that Americans train and equip. Aircraft were being redesigned to fit smaller people because many clients, such as Asian men, were lighter in weight and had shorter arms and legs than the average American male pilot.

In general, the transition was simpler for the Air Force than for the other services for several reasons. First, because the vast majority of positions were already open to Air Force women, fewer positions and individuals were affected by the newly opened positions and units than was the case in the other services. Second, although some minor aircraft and equipment modifications were under consideration, these changes were minimal compared to the modifications required on many Navy combatant ships. Third, equal standards and an organizational process for selecting women for combat aircraft were already in place. Fourth, the Air Force did not have as many occupational areas or numbers of units that qualified for ground combat exclusion as did other services. Further, the positions that were restricted under the new guidance are few and are not viewed as critical to overall career advancement in the service. The rate of gender integration into the previously closed positions now depends on four factors: the number of women entering flight school, the number of women who score high enough in flight school to be able to choose combat aircraft, the number of those women who actually choose combat aircraft, and the number of combat aircraft available.

**Army**

As in the Air Force, the Army had existing plans to expand women's roles further before the Department of Defense mandated service-wide changes. The Army Chief of Staff at the time, General Gordon R. Sullivan (now retired) was already planning to open combat aircraft to women when the Department of Defense asked him to put such changes on hold until its new policy for all the services was
formulated and announced. The opening of those aviation positions was thus delayed for nearly a year.\(^5\)

The Army was also modifying its gender-based policies at the training level. A September 28, 1994 letter to Senator Strom Thurmond\(^6\) from Secretary of Defense William J. Perry explained the process:

> In the fall of 1992 the Commanding General, TRADOC initiated a plan to study the feasibility of integrating the [basic training] programs. Between February 1993 and June 1993 Ft Jackson conducted a gender integrated training test (at squad level). The results were positive. The research found no significant difference in training performance outcomes and the Army leadership made the decision to integrate basic training in June 1994. Additionally, as assignment opportunities for women are expanded, the Army has recognized the importance of training male and female soldiers together as a cohesive team.

Once Secretary of Defense Les Aspin released his memorandum setting a certain date for redefining the combat exclusion policy and the rescinding of the “risk rule,” Army staff began working to determine which units and occupations would be affected, as women were still prohibited from serving in direct ground combat.

The Department of Defense provided further exceptions to opening roles to women, including the option to restrict the assignment of women “where job related physical requirements would necessarily exclude the vast majority of women Service members.” Some Army personnel took this opportunity to propose closing occupations women already filled, such as mechanic and cook, arguing that most women could not lift 150-lb. toolboxes or 100-lb. sacks of potatoes. The Army rejected such claims, citing that toolboxes can be mounted on wheels and that lifting and carrying around an entire 100-lb. sack of potatoes at once is too infrequent an occurrence to exclude all women from the job. Perhaps anticipating such proposals, the secre-

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\(^5\)These data were provided by the office of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff of Personnel. This subsection benefited from reviews conducted by the office of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff of Personnel, as well as the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (M&RA).

\(^6\)Then-ranking Republican of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services.
tary’s memorandum declared that “No units or positions previously open to women will be closed under these instructions.”

The Secretary of Defense guidance rescinding the risk rule purposefully left room for interpretation in its definition of collocation (how close is close?), recognizing that the services would need to make determinations within the context of policy and based upon their own doctrines for employment. As a result, however, the Army’s interpretation and implementation plans were difficult to determine. The Secretary of the Army, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, and the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service were all involved in the discussions on what units and positions should be opened to Army women.

Some areas were generally agreed upon, while others spurred a lengthy debate. There was little to no debate regarding opening Washington ceremonial positions (3rd Infantry [Old Guard] Regiment) or combat aircraft (except for Special Forces), and there was no apparent challenge to keeping the infantry and armor closed under the justification that they constitute direct ground combat. One area of debate, however, was whether or not field artillery and combat engineering fell into the definition of collocation with direct ground combat units. In a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense dated June 1, 1994, the Secretary of the Army proposed that these units be opened to women, arguing that

the primary mission of the combat engineers is not to engage in direct ground combat, and the battalion headquarters do not routinely collocate with maneuver battalions (they operate independently or from the brigade headquarters).

Similarly, he wrote that

field artillery units are not subject to a “high probability of direct physical contact with the hostile force’s personnel.” In addition, field artillery batteries do not collocate under a strict definition. Artillery (especially MLRS) operates separately from the maneuver battalions.

In the final outcome of the decision process, however, combat engineer line companies, field artillery battalions, and Multiple Launch
Rocket System (MLRS) occupations remained closed to women under the justification of collocation with direct ground combat units. The Army units that remain closed to women follow:

- Infantry battalions
- Armor battalions
- Field artillery battalions
- Special Forces battalions
- The Ranger regiment
- Ground cavalry squadrons
- Forward air defense artillery batteries
- Combat engineer line companies
- Ground surveillance radar platoons.

The career fields and occupations that opened to women were warrant officer career fields (four opened) and enlisted occupations (three opened); no new career fields opened for officers. As of March 1997, out of 2,157 personnel assigned in those newly opened MOSs or career fields, only 95 (4.4 percent) are women. These women are assigned to 35 of the 491 units that contain such positions. The number of men and women in these newly opened occupations or career fields is presented in Appendix B, as is a list of the fields that remain closed to women.

Army women comprise approximately 13 percent of officers and 14 percent of enlisted personnel. Statistics intending to represent the number of positions open or closed to women soldiers generally only capture a segment of the entire picture, because there is no simple way to represent what is available and what is not. Women can serve in 97 percent of officer career fields and 83 percent of MOSs, but less than 70 percent of all job slots are open to women. This is because approximately 30 percent of the Army’s job slots are in combat arms. Approximately 6 percent of women officers and 1 percent of enlisted women are in this aggregated skill grouping. Of the remaining women in the Army, 22 percent of officers and 25 percent of enlisted women serve in combat support skills, and 72 percent of officers and 74 percent of enlisted women serve in combat service support occu-
pations, which include fields traditional for women, such as medical and administrative.

Any listing we might compile of opportunities open to women by MOS using Army databases would overrepresent the actual number of women working in nontraditional roles and units. Likewise, the number of positions formally open to women listed in Appendix B does not reflect opportunities closed due to the informal behavior of commanders. In Chapters Three, Four, and Five, we will discuss in more detail the nature of these informal exclusionary practices and the effects those practices have on those units' morale, cohesion, and readiness.

**Navy**

Although the Navy had made progress in opening units and occupations to women before 1992, it did so under the premise that the combat exclusion on women serving aboard ships would endure, not just as policy but because of the costs of engineering difficulties associated with modifying ships to accommodate mixed-gender crews.\(^7\) The Navy first assigned women to combat aviation squadrons following the Secretary of Defense's April 28, 1993 memorandum stating that “the services shall permit women to compete for assignments in aircraft, including aircraft engaged in combat missions.” This guidance prompted a gender-neutral assignment policy for Naval aviation. The memorandum also directed the Navy to open additional ships to women within the then-current law and to prepare a proposal to repeal the combat exclusion law preventing women from assignments on combatant ships. That combat exclusion law was repealed in November 1993, and women were first assigned to combatant ships in 1994. This change was dramatic for women in the Navy, as combatant ships constitute 66 percent of the fleet, and many perceive that the tactical employment experience gained from duty on combatants is crucial to a successful career in the Navy. In addition, these changes have eliminated the shore-only

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\(^7\)This subsection and the relevant tables in Appendix A benefited from the assistance and review of the Office of the Special Assistant for Women’s Policy, Bureau of Naval Personnel.
career path previously available to some women. Serving sea duty is now an expected part of every Navy career.

A working group organized under the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs developed the gender-integration plan for the U.S. Navy. This plan had several parts: a matrix that listed and justified those previously closed occupations and units that were to remain closed to women, an embarkation plan to place women aboard combatant ships, and specific precepts for the assignment of women. These outputs from the working group were sent first from the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Department of the Navy, to the Assistant Secretary of Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), and then from the Navy Secretariat to the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) during April 1994.

In summary of the changes, the Navy kept submarines and small ships (mine countermeasure, mine hunting craft, and patrol craft) closed because of prohibitive berthing and privacy issues. The other assignments that remained closed are either Special Warfare Forces personnel who engage in direct ground combat or who support personnel who deploy and collocate with Navy Special Forces, Sea-Air-Land (SEALS). The majority of the closed positions are those on submarines.

Despite the occupations that remained closed, over 91.2 percent of all designators and ratings are now open to women. Of the 8.8 percent of positions that are closed, 4 percent of Navy billets are closed to women because of laws regarding direct ground combat (i.e., SEALS) or policy restrictions that are related to the prohibitive cost of habitability modifications. An additional 4.8 percent of billets are closed to women when associated closed ratings, designators, and required Navy enlisted classifications (NECs) are taken into account.

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8 These matrices are reproduced in tables in Appendix B.
9 Memorandum from Bureau of Naval Personnel, Department of the Navy, to Assistant Secretary of Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), Subject: Review of Units and Positions Relative to the DoD Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule, April 28, 1994; and Memorandum from the Secretary of the Navy to the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) dated April 29, 1994, Subject: Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule.
The other notable constraint on available women-at-sea billets is shipboard “bunks” for enlisted Navy women. Enlisted berthing compartments require major habitability modifications to provide “bunks” at sea for women. Currently, 12.5 percent of enlisted personnel are women, and 10.6 percent of shipboard bunks are available to women. Differences in sea-shore requirements (a higher percentage of women are in shore-intensive ratings) mean that there is no direct relationship between the overall percentage of women and the percentage of bunks available to women. Although no direct relationship exists, “bunk” availability is a limiting factor in the assignment and recruitment of enlisted women. This limiting factor is more significant than billets closed by law or policy restrictions. To ensure equitable career progression, assignment of women must be in accordance with sea-shore rotation requirements, and recruitment of women must not exceed the supply of available bunks. Budget limitations and decommissioning of gender-integrated ships has made keeping the women-at-sea program on track more challenging.

Female officers, who constitute 13.6 percent of the officer corps, serve in 24 of 26 officer communities (all but submarine and special warfare), and this was not affected by the recent legislative changes. Instead, the ships to which they could be assigned changed. Enlisted women, who comprise 12.5 percent of enlisted personnel, serve in 91 of 94 skill fields, or ratings. Within the enlisted occupations that were newly opened to women, 515 of over 25,000 positions are filled by women, who comprise almost 2 percent of the personnel in those occupations.

The embarkation plan specified the timeline by which specific ships were to be modified to accommodate female crew members. This plan was designed to coincide with the existing overhaul schedule and thus scheduled the modifications when ships were normally scheduled for overhaul. This approach prevented the ships’ operational schedules from being changed and was less expensive than a separate modification schedule would have been. The modifications to permit the assignment of women included both berthing and head facilities. In some cases, the modifications for officers were extremely minor, as officers are berthed mostly in double rooms. Where multiple officer heads were available, one was designated as the female head. If only one officer head was available, significant
modification was required to add a head for female officers. The modifications required for the enlisted personnel berthing and heads were more extensive. The heads are generally modular, and urinal units can be extracted and replaced with additional toilets. However, the location of these heads is a more problematic issue. On some ships, individuals have to walk through berthing areas to access head facilities, other berthing areas, or even working areas of the ship. These structural problems proved more difficult to resolve, and some ships will not be modified prior to their decommissioning.

The working group established several precepts for the gender integration of combatant ships. First, cost effectiveness and mission readiness were to be maintained above all else. Second, senior female personnel, to include both female officers and women in the grades of E7 to E9, were to be assigned to ships prior to junior enlisted women, and women would be assigned to ships en masse. Finally, indoctrination training would be provided for male and female personnel of the newly integrated ships, as well as for the spouses of these personnel. Of these precepts, only the requirement for senior female personnel to precede junior enlisted women proved problematic, because of the small number of senior enlisted women in the Navy. Initially, the Navy increased its recruiting target numbers for junior enlisted women. However, it encountered a surplus of junior women who could not be assigned to sea because of the shortage of both modified ships and female chiefs. Now the Navy manages the pipeline to admit only the number of women to whom they can offer full career opportunities.

In general, the Navy has not had difficulty finding women willing to pursue traditionally male occupations in the Navy. Many of these occupations are highly technical, so the training is perceived as more valuable and marketable in the civilian world. Many of these occupations also offer better college guarantees and better financial bonuses. However, the majority of enlisted women remain in traditional occupations. Women constitute only 12.5 percent of the Navy’s enlisted personnel and 13.6 percent of officers (Table 2.3). In traditional occupations, however, they account for 21 percent of

\[\text{10 Data shown in Appendix B.}\]
Table 2.3

Women in the Navy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>7,831</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlisted</td>
<td>45,044</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: As of March 31, 1997; extracted from Navy briefing.

assigned personnel. Nevertheless, a number of women are now serving on combatant ships. Two-thirds of the 99 combatant ships now open to women have been reconfigured. Approximately 3,150 female enlisted personnel and 400 female officers serve on these ships, and they average 6 percent of all enlisted personnel and 12 percent of all officers aboard.\(^\text{11}\)

In conclusion, because everything was open to women in the Navy unless it met guidelines that were relatively easy to interpret, determining which units were or were not to open appears to have been a simpler process than that experienced by the Army or the Marines. The embarkation plan, which followed the existing modification schedule for ships through FY03, slowed the assignment of women in the Navy, but it also provided an opportunity to benefit from lessons learned in the process of integration. The decisions to assign women to ships en masse and to assign female officers and female chief petty officers before assigning female junior enlisted personnel were evaluated as well-considered and appropriate by Navy personnel we interviewed. Although this approach has limited the number of junior enlisted women being recruited into the Navy, this limitation is short term and will be resolved as the transition period nears an end.

Marine Corps

The Marine Corps, prior to 1993–1994, had expanded opportunities for women but had done so within the constraints of both the combat exclusion of women serving aboard combatant ships and the risk

\(^{11}\)See the data in Appendix B.
rule. Thus, while all occupation fields except infantry, artillery, armor, pilot, and aircrew were open to women, women could only be assigned to units in the rear echelon of Fleet Marine Forces. Three changes in policy or law during the 1993–1994 time frame affected the Marine Corps. The April 28, 1993 guidance from the Secretary of Defense opened the opportunity for female Marines to serve in combat aircraft. Effective October 1, 1994, the Secretary of Defense rescinded the risk rule and instead established a ground combat rule for the assignment of women to military units. In addition, when the combat vessel exclusion law was repealed, the legal restriction against female Marines deploying aboard U.S. Navy ships was removed. These changes had a considerable effect upon the number and types of occupations and assignments available to women in the Marine Corps.\textsuperscript{12}

Following these changes in guidance and legislation, the Marine Corps reviewed the occupations and the units that had previously been closed to women. The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and the service staffs for both the Marines and the Army coordinated their reviews. The Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Marine Corps Commandant were briefed before the plan was submitted to the Secretary of Defense to ensure consistency between the two services. In general, the proposals were very similar. However, there are seeming inconsistencies that actually result from differences in the ways the services employ certain kinds of units. For example, because the Marine Corps doctrine expects combat engineer battalion headquarters to provide decentralized support to front-line units, the Marine Corps proposed these units remain closed, while the Army proposed to open its similar units. These seeming inconsistencies were addressed in a April 28, 1994 letter from Secretary of Defense William J. Perry to Senator Strom Thurmond\textsuperscript{13}:

> While the Army Brigade Headquarters and the Marine Corps Infantry Regimental Headquarters appear to be at a similar organi-

\textsuperscript{12}This subsection benefited from the assistance and review of the Manpower Policy Branch, Manpower Plans and Policy Division, HQMC.

\textsuperscript{13}Then–ranking Republican of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services.
zational level, doctrinally they are employed and organized differently. The Army Brigade Headquarters serves as the command and control element of a composite organization that includes the direct ground combat maneuver battalions and all the combat support and combat service support units required for the Brigade to accomplish its mission. The Marine Corps Infantry Regimental Headquarters is a fighting headquarters that commands only the direct ground combat element of a Marine Corps Air/Ground Task Force (MAGTF). The MAGTF Headquarters serves as the command and control element for the Air Combat Element, the Ground Combat Element and the Combat Service Support Element. Therefore, the MAGTF Headquarters, which is open to women, is the true counterpart to the Army Brigade.

The results of the unit and occupation review are shown in Appendix B. This information was submitted to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) and from there was forwarded to the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness). These changes resulted in the opening of a total of 93 percent of Marine Corps officer and enlisted occupations to women, for 101,000 gender-neutral positions. However, this represents only 62 percent of all billets in the Marine Corps. Of the remaining 38 percent, 20 percent are closed because of MOS restrictions, and the remaining 18 percent are closed due to restriction on assignment to those units. The majority (43,000) of the new positions resulted from the change in law permitting women to deploy aboard combatant ships, as this change opened the rotary wing aviation units and AV-8 Harrier squadrons to women.

Only 178 women have been assigned to the 34 occupations newly opened to women, and they represent approximately 2 percent of all personnel in these occupations. There are several explanations for this low number. First, while women score generally well on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT), they tend to score lowest on

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14USMC Information Paper, 1000, MPP-56, Subject: Gender Equality Efforts.
15Statement of Lieutenant General George R. Christmas, Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, United States Marine Corps, Before the Subcommittee on Military Forces and Personnel on Assignment of Army and USMC Women Under New Definition of Ground Combat, October 6, 1994, p. 4.
16These numbers, broken down by occupation, appear in Appendix B.
the other, more technical subtests of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), which are used to select candidates for the technical occupations, and the newly opened occupations tend to be technical occupations. Second, while the Marine Corps accession goals for entering women are being met, recruiters are not held accountable for placing women in these newly opened occupations, even when the women do score well on the technical testing. Third, women have not expressed interest in all of the newly opened occupations. In addition, the Marine Corps has decided not to transfer women into newly opened occupations from other units or occupations, because such lateral movement would place women in leadership positions in technical fields in which they have little prior experience.

Some of the occupations show an earlier introduction of women than do others. This resulted in part from similar pipelines that were already open to women. For example, although the helicopter specialist occupations had not previously been open to women, women were already attending school for aircraft mechanics. When the new occupations were opened, women who were already in aircraft mechanic training were able to divert to these occupations.

Given the increased opportunities for female Marines, the Marine Corps planned to increase the percentage of women in the Marine Corps. In FY 94, women constituted 4.4 percent of the total Corps. The target numbers would increase female enlisted personnel in the Marine Corps to 6 percent of the total enlisted population and would more than double the percentage of female officers to 7.3 percent. Table 2.4 indicates the percentage of female Marines in company and field-grade officer ranks as of August 1995 and the projected percentage of female officers. These increases are expected to produce a total population of 10,400 female Marines by the years 2004 to 2010. These are believed to represent a slow, pragmatic approach to recruitment that gradually increases the number of female Marines. The planned increases to these numbers are aggressive, but the Marine officers we interviewed perceived the annual accession goals to be manageable and thus achievable.

The Marines have noted two direct benefits, or areas of increased fairness, from admitting women to these new occupations and units (Christmas, 1994, pp. 4-5). First, when women share the deployment
Table 2.4
Current and Projected Female Marine Corps Officers (percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lt</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maj</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LtCol</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

burden, especially in air squadrons, the personnel tempo of men is expected to decrease. Second, the Marines propose that women now have the opportunity to move into the top positions of enlisted and officer leadership.

In conclusion, while some of the most coveted of Marine occupations remain closed to women because of legislative and policy guidance restricting the assignment of women, the Marines have opened a considerable number of occupations and units to women.

LIMITATIONS TO WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MILITARY

Despite the increases in the number of positions open to women in the services, women are currently limited in their services in at least four ways.

First, some entire units, occupations, and skills are closed because they are direct ground combat units or collocate with such units.

Second, in both the traditional and nontraditional occupations that are open to them, women are assigned on a restricted basis. Some occupations are open, but women can only be assigned at certain organizational levels. For example, enlisted women in the three newly opened Army MOSs of field artillery surveyor, combat engineer bridge crewmember, and combat engineer senior sergeant can-
not serve at the organizational levels closest to “the front”: field artillery battalions or combat engineer line companies. Other MOSs are only partially open to women because they can only be attached to units that do not engage in direct ground combat or collocate with those units. For example, women who are chemical operations specialists, chaplain’s assistants, and administrative specialists can be attached to medical or transportation units but not to infantry units.

Third, positions may be officially open to women, but indirectly closed because an unknown number of the slots are coded to be filled by someone from an occupation that excludes women. For example, although drill sergeant is a position completely open to women and is coded to reflect a gender-neutral assignment policy, the position is often coded to be filled by someone with an infantry skill coding, which is closed to women. The extent to which this practice occurs cannot be easily assessed and is an effort beyond the capabilities of this short-term project. Clearly, an analysis of all positions coded gender neutral would be necessary in order to quantify the indirect exclusion of women due to codes that specify male-only occupations or skill qualifications.

Fourth, the decisions of some commanders result in an informal limitation of opportunities for women. This final limitation is not recorded in any type of organizational database because it is not formally sanctioned and thus not tracked by the services. These practices can only be discerned through site-based investigations, such as those conducted for this study. One example of this is illustrated by commanders who use their authorized discretion in assigning personnel as an informal way to cut off assignment opportunities to women. A common scenario is the commander who refuses to choose a driver or aide of the opposite sex because of the fear of potential rumors or sexual harassment charges. Through this practice, even more potential slots become unavailable to women. Furthermore, some women have been told by their commanders that, although they train and carry out field exercises with their units, they would be left behind if their units were actually to be deployed.

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17 It should be noted that a few positions within certain occupations or units are coded to be filled by women only to ensure that, for example, there are women prison guards to monitor women prisoners.
The greater impact of commander discretion on women's assignments, however, is in units, positions, and occupations that are non-traditional for women. These units and positions may appear on paper to be filled by women, but women may not actually be in those units or performing their MOSs either because (1) supervisors believe they have enough or too many women in a unit already, and thus they send “extra” women away to work elsewhere; (2) supervisors have excluded women based on their own interpretations of the colocation restriction, rather than on what the official interpretations have directed is opened or closed; (3) women are allowed into the unit but are given all the unit's administrative work, rather than learning the duties of the occupations, on which they will be tested for promotion; or (4) women may be “pulled away” from the non-traditional unit by more traditional units for women, such as administration and supply, that are seeking additional personnel.