



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
**HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
**3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON**  
**WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000**

IN REPLY REFER TO

CMC

12 Mar 14

WHITE LETTER NO 1-14

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps  
To: All Commanding Generals  
All Commanding Officers  
All Officers in Charge  
All Sergeants Major, Master Gunnery Sergeants, and Command  
Master Chiefs

Subj: INTEGRATING FEMALE MARINES WITHIN THE GROUND COMBAT ELEMENT

1. In January 2013, the Secretary of Defense rescinded the 1994 policy known as the Direct Ground Combat and Assignment Rule which restricted women from assignment to "units whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground." He then directed the Services to integrate females to the maximum extent possible. The Marine Corps subsequently submitted a detailed Implementation Plan as part of a deliberate, measured and responsible approach to assess the units, occupational fields and specific military occupational specialties (MOSs) that are closed to female Marines. Our goal is to open units and billets to the maximum extent possible while maintaining our high combat readiness.

2. As part of our supporting research effort, we have taken steps to develop a successful integration plan for assignment of female Marines to previously-closed units and MOSs. Since 2012, we have assigned female officers and staff noncommissioned officers (SNCO) in open MOSs to more than 20 closed, non-infantry, combat arms battalions. We have also afforded female officers and enlisted Marines the opportunity to volunteer for infantry training.

3. After consulting with the senior leaders of our Corps, I have approved four lines of effort (LOE) within our long-term plan to meet the Secretary's directive. I am certain that our Marines will have many questions, and we will publish additional details in the coming weeks. I expect all leaders to familiarize themselves with our ongoing efforts regarding integration of female Marines into previously-closed units and MOSs, including the forthcoming Force Integration Campaign Plan. You are the first line of information on this important topic. The four LOEs of our long-term plan are detailed below.

a. Based on the success to date in integrating female officers and SNCOs in closed, non-infantry, combat arms battalions, I have approved the expansion of the assignment of female Marines to these

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units to include noncommissioned officers. Those assignments will now be allowed down to the company and battery level.

b. I have approved the expansion of our entry-level training research effort. Upon graduation from recruit training, female Marines will now be able to volunteer for additional closed MOS training schools prior to continuing on to their assigned MOS. Female officers will continue to be able to volunteer for the Infantry Officer Course.

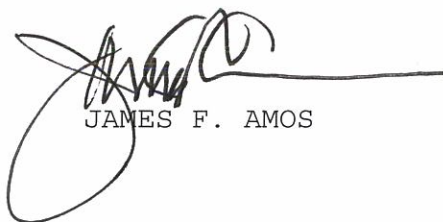
c. I have also approved the creation of a Ground Combat Element Experimental Task Force. This task force will train female Marine volunteers in closed MOS skills while a dedicated research team observes their performance in both entry-level training and an operational environment. This task force will be built around an infantry company (-) reinforced with attachments in the Battalion Landing Team model and will activate in June 2014 for a period of 12 to 15 months.

d. The fourth measure I have approved is the opening of 11 primary MOSs in the artillery, ground ordnance maintenance, and low altitude air defense occupational fields. Female Marines will be able to enter these MOSs through the normal accessions process and, in some cases, lateral moves after the required Congressional notification process is complete.

4. I remain dedicated to fielding the most combat ready and capable force our Nation can afford, and am exceptionally proud of all our Corps has accomplished, particularly in the last 12 years of combat. In reviewing the requirements of every closed MOS and unit as well as the outstanding, and in many cases heroic, performance of female Marines during the course of our Nation's longest conflict, I am confident in their ability to serve in a greater capacity than the previous policy allowed.

5. As we continue to broaden opportunities for female Marines, we will not lower our standards, and we will not sacrifice the high combat readiness that America demands of her Marines. Those MOSs that are deemed ready will be opened as soon as possible. Should our research efforts conclude that we should not open a particular MOS or occupational field, we will pursue an exception to the current policy with the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of Defense.

6. Thank you for your continued leadership as we progress on this azimuth of further integrating female Marines throughout the Marine Air Ground Task Force. Semper Fidelis.



JAMES F. AMOS