



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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MAR - 9 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND
READINESS
CHIEFS OF THE MILITARY SERVICES
COMMANDER, U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

SUBJECT: Approval of Final Implementation Plans for the Full Integration of Women in the
Armed Forces

On December 3, 2015, I announced my decision to deny any exceptions to full implementation of the rescission of the "1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule." I also directed the Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chiefs of the Military Services, and Commander, USSOCOM to provide their final, detailed implementation plans to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness not later than January 1, 2016.

Following submission of these plans, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff co-chaired an Implementation Group that reviewed each of the plans in detail. This review determined that all plans adequately address each of the seven guiding principles I laid out in my implementation guidance memo—released in December 2015 (Transparent Standards, Population Size, Physical Demands and Physiological Differences, Conduct and Culture, Talent Management, Operating Abroad, and Assessment and Adjustment).

As I said in December, the simple declaration that opens all career fields to women is, by itself, not sufficient for their full integration. It is absolutely critical to our warfighting ability and the welfare of our people that we embark on full integration with a commitment to the monitoring, assessment, and in-stride adjustments that enable sustainable success. Your plans clearly demonstrate this commitment, and accordingly, I approve them. You may now execute your plans to open all previously-closed positions, occupations, specialties, career fields, and branches to women.

Ash Carter