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The Defense Department will lift all gender-based restrictions on military service starting in January, Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced Thursday.

The historic change will clear the way for women to serve alongside men in combat arms units.

Carter's decision comes as a rebuke to an internal recommendation from the Marine Corps that sought to keep some jobs closed to women. In contrast, the Army leaders recommended opening all combat arms jobs to women.

"While the Marine Corps asked for a partial exception in some areas such as infantry, machine gunner, fire support reconnaissance and others, we are a joint force, and I have decided to make a decision which applies to the entire force," Carter said at a Pentagon press briefing Thursday.

"The important factor in making my decision was to have access to every American who could add strength to the joint force," he said.

In effect, Carter's decision will open to women about 220,000 jobs in all, or about 10 percent of the entire active and reserve force. Most of those jobs are in Army and Marine Corps infantry and armor units.

FACT SHEET: What positions are opening? Download the list.

At its core, the decision means that as of Jan. 2, female service members — both current and incoming recruits — will be allowed to serve in any military job for which they meet the gender-neutral performance standards and other requirements.

"They'll be allowed to drive tanks, fire mortars, and lead infantry soldiers into combat. They'll be able to serve as Army Rangers and Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Marine Corps infantry, Air Force parajumpers and everything else that was previously open only to men," Carter said.

"And even more importantly, our military will be better able to harness the skills and perspectives that talented women have to offer."

Carter made the announcement at a Pentagon press briefing. Absent from the briefing was Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, the relatively new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who was serving as commandant of the Marine Corps earlier this year when the Corps made its pitch to keep some gender restrictions in place.

Dunford was in the Washington area Thursday attending a series of meetings, officials said. His absence raised questions about his support for Carter's decision. The top general issued a statement Thursday that stopped short of agreeing with the decision.

"I have had the opportunity to provide my advice on the issue of full integration of women into the armed forces. In the wake of the Secretary's decision, my responsibility is to ensure his decision is properly implemented," Dunford said in the brief statement.

Earlier this year, the Marine Corps outlined a justification for that stance by publicly releasing some results of a yearlong study that concluded male-only units performed better overall than gender-integrated units.

Specifically, that Marine Corps-sponsored study found that male-only infantry units shot more accurately, could carry more weight and move more quickly through some tactical maneuvers. The study also found higher injury rates for women than for men.

Carter acknowledged that the Marine Corps' recommendation was based on a conclusion that allowing women to serve in combat units would jeopardize readiness and combat effectiveness, but said he disagreed with that assessment.

"I believe that we could, in the implementation process, address the issues that were raised," Carter said.

The Army, in contrast, has shown strong support for opening all military occupational specialties to women. So far this year, three female soldiers completed the prestigious Army Ranger School and earned the Ranger tab. In November, the Ranger School's first fully integrated class got underway at Fort Benning, Georgia.

For the Navy, the impact will be felt mainly in to the SEAL community, which was historically limited to men. The Navy integrated its fighter pilot career fields in the 1990s and began allowing women to serve on submarines several years ago.

For the Air Force, the change will affect six occupational specialties that had been closed to women: special tactics officer and combat rescue officer, and the enlisted fields of special operations weather, combat control, pararescue and tactical air control party. Those gender restrictions affected roughly 4,000 positions.

The contentious issue revealed a rare public disagreement between the Marine Corps leadership and the Department of the Navy, which technically oversees the Marines.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus voiced strong public support for lifting all gender restrictions, including those for Navy SEALs, yet Dunford, commandant of the Marine Corps at the time, disagreed.

The Corps' nine-month study compared all-male units to mixed-gender units and included battlefield simulations examining the impacts of integrating women into combat roles. The Corps released only parts of the study's final report, which highlighted unit cohesion problems and increased rates of injuries for women.

Critics said the Corps' study was flawed because it failed to take into account that many of the male Marines, unlike the females, had prior training in the combat arms, and also because it focused on average results rather than individual results.

Thursday's announcement was greeted with some skepticism on Capitol Hill. The leaders of the House and Senate armed services committees, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, issued a joint statement vowing to take a close look at the issue during Congress's 30-day review period.

"The Senate and House Armed Services committees intend to carefully and thoroughly review all relevant documentation related to today's decision, including the 1,000-page Marine Integrated Task Force report. We expect the department to send over its implementation plans as quickly as possible to ensure our Committees have all the information necessary to conduct proper and rigorous oversight," the statement said.

The Pentagon does not need direct approval from Capitol Hill to move forward on Carter's decision, but strong opposition from Congress could pose problems in implementing related policies.

The Pentagon leadership's final decision on lifting all gender restrictions has been influenced by a pending lawsuit from several former female service members who claim the combat exclusion rules violate their constitutional rights.

The change was also driven in part by support from the White House and President Obama's interest in expanding opportunities for all Americans to serve in the military. In 2011, Congress passed, and Obama signed, a law to end the prohibition on open military service by gays and lesbians.

And the change also was fueled by claims from women that the restrictions limited their ability to ascend to the military's highest level of leadership, which is often filled with officers who served in the combat arms.

It also comes after 15 years of counterinsurgency operations that made rules referencing "ground combat" seem out of step with missions targeting a shadowy enemy that used nontraditional, asymmetrical tactics.

During a decade's worth of conflict, more than about 300,000 women were deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 9,000 female troops have earned Combat Action Badges. More than 800 female service members have been wounded and at least 161 have died from combat- and noncombat-related incidents, according to Defense Department data.

2.) Navy Looking at Simulation to Reduce Personnel Costs, Shorten Training / 1 DEC 15

NATIONAL DEFENSE, Allyson Versprille

ORLANDO — The Navy needs to take advantage of simulations to reduce personnel costs and shorten the amount of time service members spend in training, a top service official said Dec. 1.

"The training that we're providing from boot camp all the way to the fleet and beyond has to fundamentally change, and the culture of the Navy training programs have to fundamentally change," said Vice Adm. Bill Moran, chief of naval personnel.

"The only way we're going to be able to afford buying future weapon systems of many different types," is by reducing overall personnel costs, he said during a keynote address at the Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference.

There are two ways to accomplish that goal, he noted. "You can reduce the salaries and the benefits that come with military service — and none of us want to go there — or you can bring fewer people in, keep more of them along the way and get more out of what you train them to do."

Today the Navy has almost 33,000 sailors in training on any given day out of a total force of 326,000. Simulation would be a good tool to alleviate some of the congestion that exists within the training pipeline, he said.

Such technologies not only reduce costs compared to expensive live training practices, but shorten the time that service members spend in those programs. They provide personnel with more intuitive and modern systems, he said.

"Their access to information, their ability to learn, gaming — all of the things that [industry] is looking at — are the methods by which young men and women learn, and yet we are slow to get to that level in our own training programs," Moran said. It "makes it very difficult for someone who joins what they hope is going to be a modern

organization that's able to fight and win at any place around the globe, only to come in and find out that they're training on a valve or electrical circuit that was built in 1957."

One of the improvements the Navy is asking industry to consider is increased modularity, or having the ability to change a system to correlate to different training stages and levels. Such a capability would reduce learning time significantly, Moran said.

Mobility is another key component, he noted. The training capability, platforms and systems have to be easily delivered and accessible to sailors wherever they are stationed, he said.

Cyber threats also need to be looked at through the lens of simulation, he said. "The challenges of cyber space in this regime are not insignificant," he noted. While future forces might fight kinetic operations 1,000 miles away from the enemy, electronic and cyber warfare will bring sailors face-to-face with the adversary, he said.

The Navy is interested in simulations that "introduce the idea of stress and fear and fighting hurt into our training systems," Moran said. Service members need to learn not only how to protect information, but also how to operate in degraded settings when systems have been compromised, he noted.

One of the service's main priorities moving forward will be live, virtual, constructive training, which has the potential for huge returns on investment if common standards across all four services can be reached, Moran said.

Progress producing those standards has been slower than desired, he said. "We've got to get together and agree to get to common standards so that we can drive the cost down, drive the commonality across all of the platforms up and really get the benefit of what live, virtual, constructive can bring to the DoD."

The services need to embrace simulation technologies in training programs to ensure that the U.S. military remains industry's top priority customer, Moran added.

"I'm concerned about the fact that the commercial world is starting to see the value of simulation in training their own workforce and utilizing that," he said. "Before long, [industry will] look elsewhere and not to DoD."

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The conference, which is the world's largest modeling and simulation event, brought together members from industry, academia, government and each military service.

"We must learn faster and quicker," said Moran. "We must increase the tempo and efficiency with which we train, and adapt our processes to be inherently receptive to innovation and creativity. And this change must occur at every level; as individuals, as teams, and as an institution."

As head of Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education for the Navy, Moran is responsible for making sure that the Navy's newest Sailors are ready for the litany of jobs they will be asked to perform. This includes finding

and recruiting talented individuals to serve, as well as executing training pipelines that take young Sailors through their initial education.

On any given day, there are approximately 32,500 Sailors in the Navy's training pipeline. The new generation of Sailors has grown up in an information era where they have instant access to information, and have been raised to operate in a mobile environment.

"We want to meet Sailors where they are, and how they learn best," Moran said. "We're employing the best technologies to accelerate learning, make it more efficient, and are looking for more ways to continue to move these types of technologies to the fleet. I am encouraged by what I've seen here; from flight simulators, to gaming technology, to live-fire weapons, to virtual and augmented reality. There's a lot of new and cutting edge technology at I/ITSEC this year."

As the chief of naval personnel, Moran answers to the Chief of Naval Operations on matters of the Navy's manpower readiness. He also serves as the deputy chief of naval operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education/N1) and oversees the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Personnel Command, Naval Education and Training Command, and Navy Recruiting Command.

For more news from Chief of Naval Personnel, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/cnp/>.

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Designed to provide Sailors anytime, anywhere access to training and resources about Naval OPSEC, the app includes policies, references, training aides and courses into one easy application.

"We are continuing to build more mobile applications for our Sailors which will give them more opportunities and resources as we integrate new technology," said Rear Adm. Mike White, commander of Naval Education and Training Command. "The young men and women joining our services have been raised in a new area of information management. We want them to have the tools needed to succeed in the future."

The OPSEC app is all in one reference and is targeted for active duty and reserve service members who are filling an assigned duty or needing information on OPSEC. The "Uncle Sam's OPSEC" (USOPSEC) GMT is an FY16 requirement for all Sailors. It is a 14 section GMT video-based course designed to educate service members and their families on the vulnerabilities and risk associated with sharing too much information, particularly on social media and via mobile devices.

The OPSEC app is a bring-your-own device (BYOB) tool designed to work on personal devices outside of the NMCI domain. Users can download the OPSEC app from the App store and Google Play Store at no cost.

The GMT can be located at the training icon, under computer based training. Service members can provide the app their Department of Defense identification number from their CAC card and the app will send a completion certification to the Sailor's Electronic Training Jacket (ETJ). The user will then be able to e-mail the certificate to their supervisor as verification of completion. Completions should be visible in the EJT after two working days.

The U.S. Navy Sea Warrior Program (PMW 240) produced the app and Tracen Technologies Inc., a company that specializes in integrated mobile and web solutions, was the software developer.

To find the free Navy OPSEC app, search "Naval OPSEC" in the app stores or your web browser.

For more information on the Naval Education and Training Command visit the NETC website:
<https://www.netc.navy.mil>

For more information from Commander, U.S. Fleet Cyber Command/U.S. 10th Fleet, visit
www.navy.mil/local/FCCC10F/, www.fcc.navy.mil, or www.nioc.norfolk.navy.mil.

For more news from Naval Education and Training Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/cnet/.

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