



November 2015

# MILITARY PERSONNEL

## Oversight Framework and Evaluations Needed for DOD and the Coast Guard to Help Increase the Number of Female Officer Applicants

# GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-16-55](#), a report to congressional committees

## Why GAO Did This Study

Since the end of the Second World War, the role of women in the military has been evolving. Changes to laws and DOD policies have either eliminated or clarified restrictions on women serving in the military. A 2011 Military Leadership Diversity Commission reported that women comprise more than 50 percent of the recruiting pool for the officer corps.

Public Law 113-291 included a provision for GAO to review the Armed Forces' outreach and recruitment efforts directed at women's representation in the officer corps, among other things. GAO evaluated the extent to which (1) accessions of women into the officer corps have increased, and DOD and the Coast Guard have determined resources and funding to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps and (2) DOD and the Coast Guard have initiatives and an oversight framework to increase the recruitment and accessions of female officers.

GAO analyzed fiscal years 2010-14 female officer accessions data, reviewed budget reports, distributed a questionnaire to offices responsible for the recruitment and accessions of female officers, and interviewed agency officials about their efforts.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD and the Coast Guard develop an oversight framework and conduct evaluations for initiatives. DOD concurred with the first recommendation and did not state whether it concurred with the second recommendation. The Department of Homeland Security concurred with both of the recommendations.

View [GAO-16-55](#). For more information, contact Brenda S. Farrell at (202) 512-3604 or [farrellb@gao.gov](mailto:farrellb@gao.gov).

November 2015

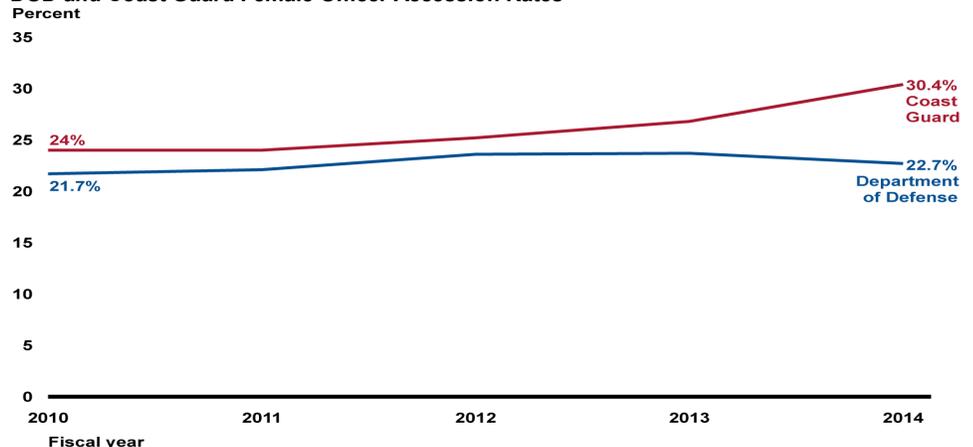
## MILITARY PERSONNEL

### Oversight Framework and Evaluations Needed for DOD and the Coast Guard to Help Increase the Number of Female Officer Applicants

## What GAO Found

Department of Defense (DOD) and Coast Guard fiscal year 2010-14 data show an overall slight increase in female officer accessions rates (e.g. the number of female officer accessions during a period of time, expressed as a percentage of total accessions) for all of the Armed Forces, with the Coast Guard having the highest percentage increase. Female officer accession rates for the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force fluctuated from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014. The Marine Corps had slight increases from 7.6 percent to 11.8 percent.

**DOD and Coast Guard Female Officer Accession Rates**



Source: GAO analysis of Defense Manpower Data Center data. | GAO-16-55

DOD and the Coast Guard have not determined the resources and funding to increase accessions of women. DOD has requested \$1.36 billion in general for recruiting and advertising in its fiscal year 2016 operation and maintenance budget request. However, DOD and the Coast Guard have not identified resources for all initiatives directed at the recruitment and accessions of female officers.

In response to GAO's questionnaire, DOD and the Coast Guard reported 10 initiatives specifically designed to increase the recruitment and accessions of female officers. For example, Coast Guard officials reported that U.S. Coast Guard Academy admissions officers visit all-female high schools to promote the opportunities available for women at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. However, DOD and the Coast Guard do not have an oversight framework for recruitment initiatives, to include program goals, performance measures, and resource allocation linked to program goals. One of the five Armed Forces has a goal related to the recruitment of women into the officer corps; however, the others do not. DOD and the Coast Guard also have not conducted evaluations of all 10 initiatives. Without an oversight framework and evaluations of initiatives, which can demonstrate that initiatives are achieving their intended purpose, DOD and the Coast Guard will be limited in identifying which initiatives are the most effective at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women, and in directing limited resources to the most effective initiatives.

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## Abbreviations

AIM	Academy Introductory Mission
CFT	Corona Fall Tasker
CVW	Candidate Visit Weekend
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOD	Department of Defense
NROTC	Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps

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November 13, 2015

Congressional Committees

Since the end of the Second World War, the role of women in the military has been evolving. Changes to laws and Department of Defense (DOD) policies have either eliminated or clarified restrictions on women serving in the military. For example, in 1975, Congress directed the secretaries of the military departments to take action to ensure women’s eligibility for appointment and admission to the three military service academies.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the Coast Guard also first admitted women in 1976 as part of its graduating class of 1980. More recently, on January 24, 2013, the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff rescinded a 1994 rule that prevented women from serving in direct ground-combat positions.<sup>2</sup> The memorandum rescinding the rule directed the military services to meet milestones for the full integration of women into these positions by January 1, 2016.<sup>3</sup> The Military Leadership Diversity Commission reported in 2011<sup>4</sup> that although women comprise

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<sup>1</sup>Pub. L. No. 94-106, § 803 (1975).

<sup>2</sup>A Department of Defense memorandum entitled *Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule* (Jan. 13, 1994) prohibited the assignment of women to positions in units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground. The memorandum permitted additional restrictions on several additional bases, and allowed the services to propose further restrictions on the assignment of women, together with justification for those proposed restrictions.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Defense, memorandum from Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Elimination of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule* (Jan. 24, 2013). This memorandum required that the integration of women into newly opened positions and units occur as expeditiously as possible, considering good order and judicious use of fiscal resources, but must be completed no later than January 1, 2016. The memorandum also required that any recommendation to keep an occupational specialty or unit closed to women be personally approved first by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then by the Secretary of Defense. Any exceptions must also be narrowly tailored, and based on a rigorous analysis of factual data regarding the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the position.

<sup>4</sup>Military Leadership Diversity Commission, *From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century Military*, March 15, 2011. The Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 established the Military Leadership Diversity Commission and directed it to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of policies and practices that shape diversity among military leaders. See Pub. L. No. 110-417, § 596 (Oct. 14, 2008).

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more than 50 percent of the recruiting pool for the officer corps, women are underrepresented across all of the services and accessions sources—that is, in the military service academies; Officer Candidate Schools and Officer Training School; the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC); and direct commissions for specialist officers in the medical, chaplain, and legal corps.<sup>5</sup>

In 2013, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services reported that outreach and recruitment of women for the officer corps is critical to ensuring that the military has the strongest possible leaders.<sup>6</sup> DOD and Coast Guard officials stated that increasing the representation, or the total number, of women is important and senior leadership in the military services have expressed the intent to increase diversity in their organizations, to include increasing the representation of women. For example, in September 2014, the Secretary of the Navy stated that there are not enough women in the Navy or the Marine Corps, and cited the importance of a diverse force. In June 2014, the Secretary of the Air Force released a memorandum establishing active duty officer applicant pool goals, which are intended to reflect the nation's diverse and eligible population. In addition, in March 2013, the Commandant of the Marine Corps issued a letter to Marine Corps leadership stating that it is imperative for the Marine Corps to take a fresh approach to diversity to attract, develop, and retain women officers. According to military service academy officials, the service academies want to ensure they have a diverse student population, and all have indicated a desire to increase the representation of women.

Section 524(c) of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015<sup>7</sup> included a provision for

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<sup>5</sup>"Recruiting" refers to the services' efforts to acquire candidates from the recruiting pool, or the population of eligible candidates, who will later be commissioned (i.e., "accessioned") upon completion of their officer education.

<sup>6</sup>Department of Defense, Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, *2013 Report* (December 2013). The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services was established in 1951 with a mandate to provide the Secretary of Defense with independent advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to women in the Armed Forces of the United States. Individual members of the Committee are appointed by the Secretary of Defense and serve in a voluntary capacity for 1- to 4-year terms.

<sup>7</sup>Pub. L. No. 113-291, § 524 (2014).

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us to review the Armed Forces' outreach and recruitment efforts directed toward women's representation in the officer corps.<sup>8</sup> This report evaluates the extent to which (1) accessions of women into the officer corps have increased, and DOD and the Coast Guard have determined resources and funding to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps and (2) DOD and the Coast Guard have initiatives and an oversight framework to increase the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps.<sup>9</sup>

For our first objective, we obtained and analyzed DOD and Coast Guard officer corps accessions and representation data from the Defense Manpower Data Center to identify trends in female officer accessions from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014. We chose to review data from the last 5 fiscal years to focus on current initiatives. We assessed the reliability of the accessions and representation data by reviewing the Defense Manpower Data Center's methodology for collecting data and conducting a review of the completeness of the data. We found the data to be sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report. To determine whether DOD and the Coast Guard have identified resources and funding dedicated to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps, we obtained and reviewed budget justification material and identified obligations for recruiting and advertising from fiscal year 2014, appropriations from fiscal year 2015, and estimated budgets for fiscal year 2016.<sup>10</sup> In addition, we obtained recruiting and advertising expenditures for women officers from DOD and the Coast Guard. We also obtained information on resources and funding through a questionnaire we developed and distributed to 19 offices in DOD and the Coast Guard we identified in consultation with DOD and Coast Guard officials that conduct recruiting and accessions of women into the officer corps. These offices included military service academies, recruiting commands, and service commands responsible for overseeing the ROTC, Officer

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<sup>8</sup>The "Armed Forces" refer to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard is also a service within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) when not operating as a service in the Navy.

<sup>9</sup>"Initiatives" refer to DOD's and the Coast Guard's efforts, programs, or activities related to the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps. During our discussions with DOD and Coast Guard officials, we discussed both planned and current initiatives. "Planned" refers to those initiatives that are in development and not currently in use.

<sup>10</sup>Appropriation amounts are as reported in relevant agency financial management documentation.

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Candidate Schools/Officer Training School, and direct commissioning programs. To identify these 19 offices, we reviewed DOD and Coast Guard guidance and we discussed the services' roles and responsibilities related to recruitment and accessions with officials from each military service, including the Coast Guard. In the questionnaire, we asked these 19 offices to identify resource and funding information for the initiatives they are currently using to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps. We assessed the reliability of the marketing budget and expenditures reported by the U.S. Military Academy by sending a questionnaire and interviewing academy officials. We found the data to be sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

For our second objective, we reviewed responses to our questionnaire identifying initiatives the Armed Forces, including the Coast Guard, have directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps. We also assessed the extent to which DOD and the Coast Guard have developed an oversight framework for these initiatives by comparing their efforts against the key elements of an oversight framework, which include establishing program goals and performance measures and linking resource allocation to program goals.<sup>11</sup> We also interviewed DOD and Coast Guard officials to determine if there were agency goals for recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps and if the reported initiatives were aligned with agency goals, if any. We also assessed the extent to which DOD and the Coast Guard

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<sup>11</sup>GAO, *Results-Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations*, [GAO-03-669](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 2, 2003). To identify key practices, we convened a forum to identify and discuss useful practices and lessons learned from private and public sector organizational mergers, acquisitions, and transformations, and we reviewed literature on the subject, including literature recommended by forum participants, to gain a better understanding of the issues that most frequently occur during such large-scale change initiatives. A key practice identified was establishing a coherent mission and integrated strategic goals. This can be accomplished through adopting leading practices for results-oriented strategic planning, such as establishing performance goals, measuring progress towards goals, and determining strategies and resources to effectively accomplish the goals. We have applied these criteria to other initiatives and programs within the Department of Defense (DOD). For example, see GAO, *Military Personnel: Sustained Leadership and Oversight Needed to Improve DOD's Prevention and Treatment of Domestic Abuse*, [GAO-10-923](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 22, 2010); and *Military Personnel: DOD's and the Coast Guard's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Programs Face Implementation and Oversight Challenges*, [GAO-08-924](#) (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 29, 2008). These criteria are applicable to initiatives directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women as the Military Leadership Diversity Commission stated that the transformation of the Armed Forces remains unfinished as women are still underrepresented in leadership positions.

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evaluate their initiatives to ensure they are achieving their intended purposes.<sup>12</sup> A more detailed discussion of our scope and methodology is provided in appendix I.

We conducted this performance audit from February 2015 to November 2015 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

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## Background

Officer candidates must complete education and military training programs, some of which take up to 4 years, before they are commissioned into the officer corps. The three federal accession programs that produce the most officer commissions are (1) military service academies; (2) ROTC; and (3) Officer Candidate School for the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard or Officer Training School for the Air Force.

- Military service academies: The U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Air Force Academy, and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy operate 4-year programs that provide successful candidates with bachelor's degrees and commissions as military officers.<sup>13</sup>
- ROTC: The services' respective ROTC units are located at civilian colleges and universities throughout the United States, with some academic institutions offering ROTC for more than one service. Officer candidates enrolled in ROTC programs must meet all graduation requirements of their academic institutions and complete required education and military training to receive commissions as

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<sup>12</sup>GAO, *Designing Evaluations: 2012 Revision*, [GAO-12-208G](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 2012). *Designing Evaluations* is one of a series of papers whose purpose is to provide guides to various aspects of audit and evaluation methodology and is based on GAO studies and policy documents and program evaluation literature. These guides have provided a key source of guidance influencing the development of human capital programs.

<sup>13</sup>The U.S. Naval Academy commissions officers for both the Navy and the Marine Corps.

officers, usually after 4 years. The Coast Guard does not have an ROTC program.

- **Officer Candidate Schools/Officer Training School:** These officer commissioning programs are designed to augment the services' other commissioning programs. Because these programs focus only on military training, they are short, ranging from 6 weeks (Marine Corps candidates participate in the Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps) to 17 weeks (Coast Guard).

Various offices within each military service, including the Coast Guard, are responsible for recruiting for these commissioning programs. In general, the military service academies recruit their own candidates and the service recruiting commands recruit for the other accession sources. Table 1 lists the office that primarily conducts recruiting for each major accession source.

**Table 1: Offices Conducting Recruiting for the Major Accession Sources**

	<b>Military service academy</b>	<b>Reserve Officers' Training Corps</b>	<b>Officer Candidate Schools/Officer Training School</b>
Army	U.S. Military Academy	Army Cadet Command	Army Recruiting Command
Navy	U.S. Naval Academy	Navy Recruiting Command	Navy Recruiting Command
Marine Corps	U.S. Naval Academy	Marine Corps Recruiting Command	Marine Corps Recruiting Command
Air Force	U.S. Air Force Academy	Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps	Air Force Recruiting Service
Coast Guard	U.S. Coast Guard Academy	n/a <sup>a</sup>	Coast Guard Recruiting Command

Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense and Coast Guard guidance, including manuals and organizational charts. | GAO-16-55

<sup>a</sup>The Coast Guard does not have a Reserve Officers' Training Corps program.

According to the 2011 Military Leadership Diversity Commission report, the military can recruit from a pool of individuals using specific eligibility requirements that can potentially present a barrier to service.<sup>14</sup> According to the report, those who wish to serve in the military must first meet

<sup>14</sup>Military Diversity Leadership Commission, *From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century Military*.

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standards related to age, citizenship, number of dependents, financial status, education level, aptitude, substance abuse, language skills, moral conduct, height and weight, physical fitness, and medical qualifications. Furthermore, commissioned officers must have a bachelor's degree. Together, these requirements define the eligible population from which the services can recruit. According to the Military Leadership Diversity Commission report and DOD officials, large portions of young people do not meet these requirements and are not eligible to join the military. In addition, according to a DOD Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies survey, fewer women than men have an interest in military service and that may be due in part to women's greater interests in education and professional careers, which women often see as incompatible with military service.

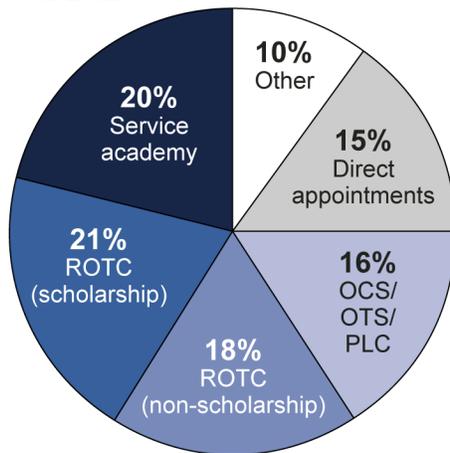
The general approach used by the services to meet their accession needs has been to start with their service academies and ROTC programs. When these programs are unable to meet a service's needs for newly commissioned officers, the service uses the Officer Candidate Schools/Officer Training School to bridge the gap. Conversely, during periods of downsizing, all of the commissioning sources may reduce their numbers of officer candidates, but the Officer Candidate Schools/Officer Training School provide the immediate means for achieving the downsizing. Unlike the military service academies and ROTC programs that require up to 4 years to produce an officer, the Officer Candidate Schools/Officer Training School can quickly expand or diminish the size of their candidate pools.

To various extents, these accession sources commission officers for both the active and the reserve components, including the National Guard. For example, the ROTC programs commission higher rates of officers for the reserves and the National Guard than do the military service academies. Additionally, the Air National Guard Academy of Military Science commissions the majority of the Air National Guard's officers. The Air National Guard Academy of Military Science is similar to the Air Force Officer Training School program and is a 6-week military training course. In contrast, state level officer candidate school programs, which are not included in this review, recruit and produce a significant portion of Army National Guard officers. Other accession sources for the federal components of the National Guard include ROTC, federal Officer Candidate School, and direct commissioning programs.

Additionally, each service directly commissions officers with particular professional skills—such as physicians, dentists, nurses, lawyers, and

chaplains—who do not in all cases attend the major commissioning programs. The Coast Guard also has direct commissioning programs for certain professions, such as aviators, engineers, lawyers, and physician assistants. Each military service, including the Coast Guard, also offers enlisted-to-officer commissioning programs that provide the enlisted population with opportunities to earn commissions as officers. Figure 1 shows the overall distribution of DOD military officers by accession source as of fiscal year 2012.

**Figure 1: Distribution of DOD Military Officers by Accession Source as of Fiscal Year 2012**



Officer Candidate School (OCS)  
Officer Training School (OTS)  
Platoon Leaders Class (PLC)  
Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-16-55

Note: The Platoon Leaders Class produces the most commissioned officers for the Marine Corps and is a program designed for undergraduate college students attending or accepted to accredited colleges or universities.

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## Accession Rates of Female Officers Have Slightly Increased, and DOD and the Coast Guard Have Not Determined Resources and Funding to Increase the Recruitment and Accessions of Female Officers

DOD and Coast Guard data from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014 show a slight percentage increase for female officer accessions. Specifically, the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard increased the rate of female officer accessions every year from fiscal year 2010 through 2014. In contrast, female officer accession rates for the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force fluctuated from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014, but were higher in fiscal year 2014 than in fiscal year 2010.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, DOD and the Coast Guard have not determined resources and funding to increase the recruitment and accessions of female officers.

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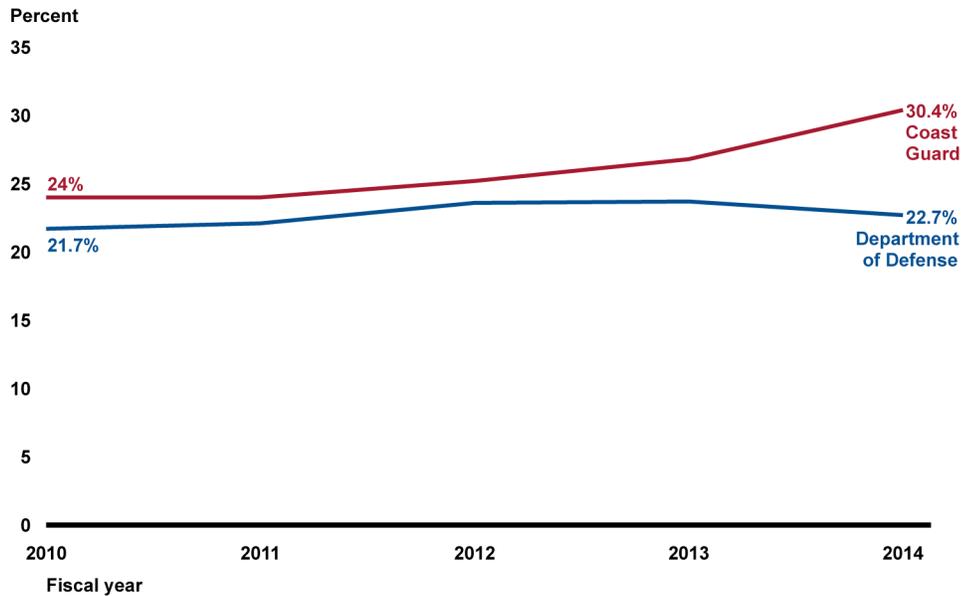
## Accession Rates of Women into the Officer Corps Have Slightly Increased

Female officer accession rates have increased from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014 for all of the Armed Forces, including the Coast Guard. For example, the Marine Corps increased female officer accessions by 4.2 percent from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014, and the Coast Guard increased female officer accessions by a total of 6.4 percent. The Army increased female officer accessions by about 0.8 percent, the Air Force increased female officer accessions by about 0.4 percent, and the Navy increased female officer accessions by about 0.2 percent from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014. Collectively, DOD increased female officer accessions by 1.0 percent from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014. Figure 2 shows female officer accession rates for DOD and the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2010 through fiscal year 2014.

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<sup>15</sup>For the purposes of this report, female officer accession rates refer to the number of female officer accessions during a period of time. It is expressed as a percentage of total accessions.

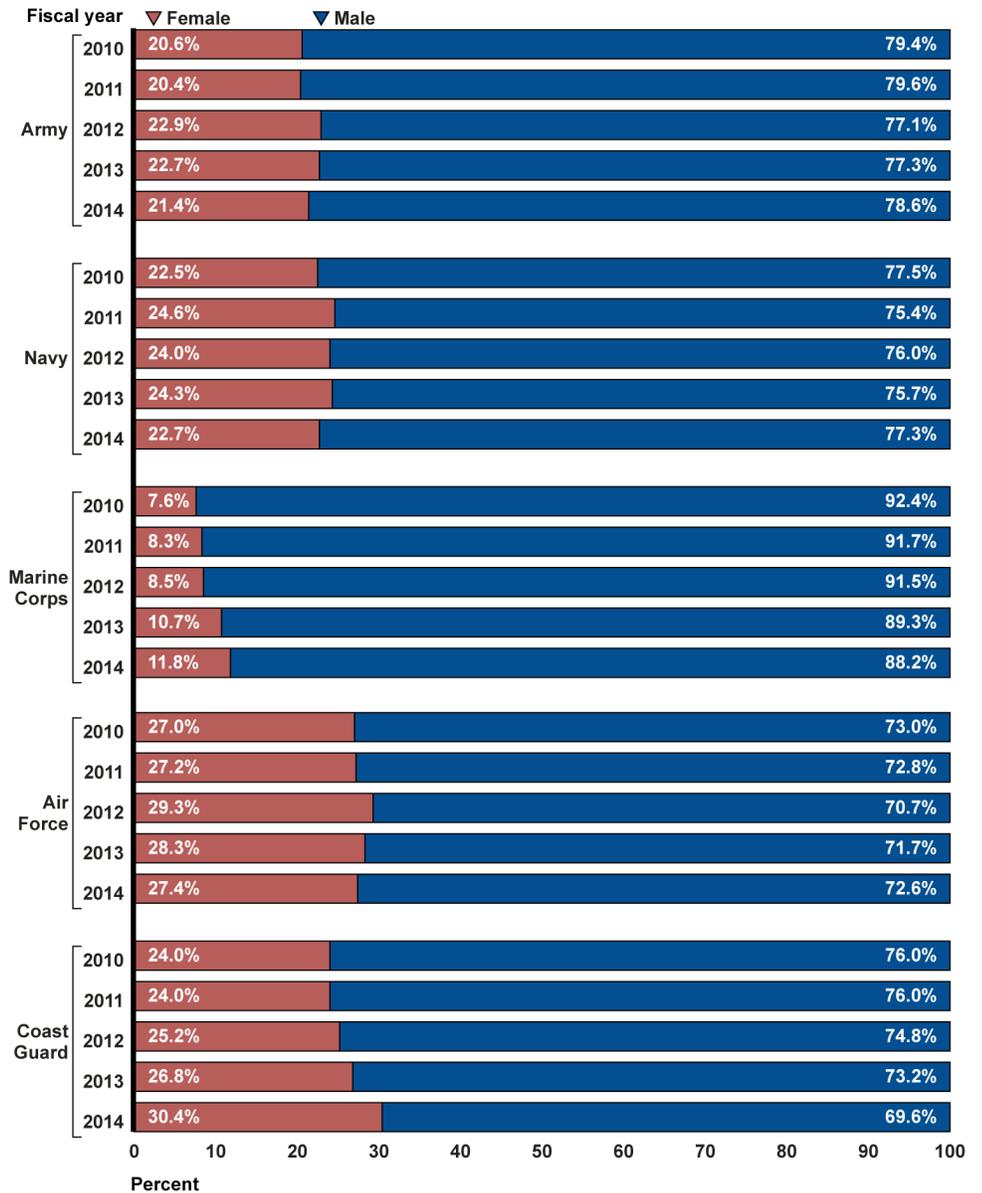
**Figure 2: DOD and Coast Guard Female Officer Accession Rates (Fiscal Years 2010-14)**



Source: GAO analysis of Defense Manpower Data Center data. | GAO-16-55

Although collectively the services slightly increased female officer accession rates during this time period, female officer accessions for the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force individually fluctuated from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014. For example, the highest rates for female officer accessions during this time frame for the Army and the Air Force occurred in fiscal year 2012, and fiscal year 2014 rates were lower in comparison. However, both the Army and the Air Force fiscal year 2014 female officer accessions occurred at a slightly higher rate than they did in fiscal year 2010. In fiscal year 2014, female officer accession rates were 30.4 percent for the Coast Guard, 27.4 percent for the Air Force, 22.7 percent for the Navy, 21.4 percent for the Army, and 11.8 percent for the Marine Corps. Figure 3 shows a comparison of accession rates for female and male officers in DOD and the Coast Guard from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014.

**Figure 3: Accession Rates of Female and Male Officers in DOD and the Coast Guard (Fiscal Years 2010-14)**



Source: GAO analysis of Defense Manpower Data Center data. | GAO-16-55

Similar to the increases in female officer accession rates, the representation of women in general in the officer corps for DOD and the Coast Guard has also increased. Appendix II provides a comparison of

female and male representation in the officer corps in DOD and the Coast Guard from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014.

**DOD and the Coast Guard Have Not Determined Resources and Funding for Increasing the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps**

DOD and the Coast Guard have not determined the resources and funding to increase the recruitment and, ultimately the accessions, of women into the officer corps. DOD has budget line items in its operation and maintenance budget for recruiting and advertising totaling over \$1 billion for fiscal year 2016 (see table 2). Additionally, the Coast Guard has a budget line item for recruiting and training, which was about \$202.9 million in fiscal year 2014, about \$197.8 million in fiscal year 2015, and the Coast Guard requested \$205.8 million in fiscal year 2016. According to Coast Guard officials, the Coast Guard budget line item does not include advertising. There is not a requirement for DOD or the Coast Guard to report budget line items on the recruitment and accessions of women officers.

**Table 2: Total DOD Operation and Maintenance Budget for Recruiting and Advertising (Fiscal Years 2014-16)**

<b>DOD operation and maintenance budgets for recruiting and advertising<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2014</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2015</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2016</b>
Army active duty	520,888,000	465,468,000	491,922,000
Army reserve	36,351,000	54,602,000	52,928,000
Army National Guard	221,719,000	256,998,000	283,670,000
Navy active duty	245,005,000	231,737,000	234,233,000
Navy reserve <sup>b</sup>	0	0	0
Marine Corps active duty	190,030,000	161,752,000	164,806,000
Marine Corps reserve	10,620,000	8,688,000	8,785,000
Air Force active duty	153,630,000	73,530,000	79,690,000
Air Force reserve	23,841,000	14,509,000	14,359,000
Air National Guard	32,988,000	31,188,000	30,652,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,435,072,000</b>	<b>\$1,298,472,000</b>	<b>\$1,361,045,000</b>

Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2016 budget justification estimates submitted to Congress. | GAO-16-55

<sup>a</sup>Budgets for the Army reserve and the Army National Guard, are not allocated exclusively for recruiting and advertising. Their budgets include additional funding for other personnel programs, such as retention initiatives and sexual assault prevention. Amounts for fiscal year 2014 are obligations, fiscal year 2015 are appropriations as reported in relevant agency financial management documents, and fiscal year 2016 are the amounts requested in the budget.

<sup>b</sup>The Navy Recruiting Command recruits for both the active and reserve components of their respective service. There is no separate recruiting budget for the Navy reserve.

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We asked 11 offices that recruit or advertise for DOD and the Coast Guard if they could identify how much was spent specifically on recruiting and advertising for women officers.<sup>16</sup> Of the 11 DOD and Coast Guard offices, 3 DOD offices identified expenditures specifically for recruiting and advertising for women accessions into the officer corps, 6 DOD and Coast Guard offices could not identify how much was spent specifically for recruiting and advertising for women accessions because their budgeting was not reported by gender, and 2 offices did not respond to the question.

Given that there is not a requirement to report budget information on recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps, we asked DOD and Coast Guard offices in our questionnaire whether they could identify resources and funding for their specific initiatives, if any, directed at increasing women officer accessions. We sent questionnaires to 19 DOD and Coast Guard offices regarding initiatives directed at the recruitment and accessions of women officers. Of the 18 offices that responded to the questionnaire, 12 offices reported initiatives. Of those 12 offices, 2 identified resources and funding for all of their reported initiatives.<sup>17</sup> The other 10 offices identified resources and funding for some, but not all, of their reported initiatives.

The military service academies have identified several types of both monetary and non-monetary resources required to increase the number of women candidates they enroll through their recruitment initiatives. According to academy officials, these initiatives are funded in part through

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<sup>16</sup>We contacted the following 11 offices that recruit and advertise for the Department of Defense and the Coast Guard: the U.S. Military Academy, the Army Marketing and Research Group, the Army National Guard, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy Recruiting Command, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the Air Force Recruiting Service, the Air National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the Coast Guard Recruiting Command.

<sup>17</sup>We sent questionnaires to the following 19 offices: the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, the U.S. Army Cadet Command, the Army Marketing and Research Group, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for the Army for Army Diversity and Leadership, the U.S. Army Judge Advocate Recruiting Office, the Army Strategic Initiatives Group, the Army National Guard, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy Recruiting Command, the Naval Service Training Command, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the Air Force Recruiting Service, the Air Force Personnel Center, the Air Force ROTC, the Air National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the Coast Guard Recruiting Command. We received completed questionnaires reporting on initiatives from 12 offices.

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the military service academies' direct budgets. The following four examples illustrate both monetary and non-monetary resources directed at initiatives for female officer candidates.

- U.S. Military Academy officials stated they implemented a direct mailing campaign directed at increasing overall awareness among potential applicants. The U.S. Military Academy purchased the names of highly qualified, top-performing, college-bound high school students from college testing services and then targeted the potential applicants through the direct mailing campaign. Officials reported allocating approximately \$462,000 overall and \$71,000 for women specifically since the campaign started in 2013.
- The U.S. Naval Academy reported that as of January 2015 it dedicated staff time resources to implement a Call-Out Program through which female candidates with offers of appointments are contacted to enable U.S. Naval Academy officials to answer any questions they may have and thereby help them decide to accept the offers of appointment.
- The U.S. Air Force Academy admissions office reported that it dedicated time and resources of staff, cadets, and faculty to offer women a 5-day, fully immersive cadet experience through a summer seminar. According to officials, this initiative allows women to see the opportunities available and experience life at the U.S. Air Force Academy, which they consider critical to overcoming the cultural biases that may deter some women from considering military service as a viable career.
- U.S. Coast Guard Academy officials reported that they utilized travel expenditures to conduct outreach visits to all-female high schools to recruit women and introduce them to the opportunities at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

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## DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Initiatives for Increasing the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps, but Do Not Have an Oversight Framework and Evaluations for Key Initiatives

In response to our questionnaire, DOD and the Coast Guard reported 10 initiatives directed specifically at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps. In addition, DOD reported another 10 initiatives directed generally at increasing recruitment and accessions of women. However, there is no oversight framework for the initiatives, related to increasing women in the applicant pool, consistent with applicable law, to include program goals,<sup>18</sup> performance measures linked to program goals, and resource allocation linked to program goals. In addition, DOD and the Coast Guard have not conducted evaluations of all of these initiatives, which could help ensure key initiatives are achieving their intended purpose.

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## DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Initiatives Directed at Increasing the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps

In response to our questionnaire, DOD and the Coast Guard reported 10 initiatives directed specifically at increasing female officers' recruitment and accessions. For example, as discussed earlier, U.S. Coast Guard Academy admissions officers visit all-female high schools to promote the opportunities available for women at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Additionally, in response to a Secretary of the Air Force memorandum that directs the Air Force to increase the applicant pool for female officers, the Air Force ROTC is examining how its enrollment process and criteria affects the ability of women to meet recruiting requirements.

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<sup>18</sup>Federal law places limits on the Department of Defense's ability to set certain kinds of recruitment or accessions goals. For example, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994, Pub. L. No. 103-160, § 543 (1993) (as amended by section 523 of Pub. L. No. 113-66 (2013)) provided that in the case of any military career designator that is open to both male and female members of the Armed Forces, the Secretary of Defense may not use any gender quota, goal, or ceiling except as specifically authorized by law, among other things. The statute defines a "military career designator" in the context of commissioned officers as officer areas of concentration, occupational specialties, specialty codes, additional skill identifiers, and special qualification identifiers.

DOD identified another 10 initiatives generally directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women, but not specifically directed at female officer accessions. For example, the Marine Corps hosts workshops for women’s college basketball coaches to increase awareness and support among the athletic coaching staff and to facilitate engagement with female college athletes. While this initiative is directed at women, the Marine Corps did not report this initiative as directed at female officer accessions but rather at increasing awareness of the Marine Corps among college athletes and coaching staff. The Navy Recruiting Command created a Facebook page specifically for women to provide them with a digital forum to exchange information and questions about the Navy. In table 3 we show that, on the basis of our analysis of DOD’s and the Coast Guard’s responses to the questionnaire, as of July 2015 the 20 initiatives (the 10 directed specifically at increasing female officers’ recruitment and accessions and the 10 directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women in general) fall into three main categories—advertising/marketing, outreach, and policy/program review and changes.

**Table 3: Categories of DOD and Coast Guard Initiatives to Increase the Recruitment and Accessions of Women as of July 2015**

Initiative category	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	Coast Guard
Advertising/marketing (video, print, social media, and mailing campaigns)	X	X	X	X	X
Outreach (speaking engagements, conferences, career fairs, campus visits, phone calls)		X	X		X
Policy/program review and changes	X			X	

Source: GAO analysis of GAO questionnaire data. | GAO-16-55

In addition to the 20 initiatives mentioned above, DOD and the Coast Guard reported another 37 initiatives that they are currently using to increase recruitment and accessions generally. While these 37 initiatives are inclusive of women and could serve to increase the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps, they are not exclusively directed at women or at female officers’ accessions. For example, the Navy Recruiting Command hosts a program called Influencers-to-Sea Embarks that is directed at increasing diversity generally and not directed only at women. Through this program, the Navy invites influencers, such as university presidents and mayors, to embark on a Navy vessel and

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learn about the opportunities the Navy offers.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the Coast Guard Recruiting Command has a hometown recruiter program in which current Coast Guard servicemembers return to their hometown to attend outreach events, such as visiting local schools to talk about their Coast Guard experience. While the Coast Guard Recruiting Command told us that it uses this program to increase women's accessions, the program is directed at increasing accessions generally. For a complete list of the 57 initiatives that DOD and the Coast Guard reported were directed at increasing recruitment and accessions (10 specifically at female officers' accessions, 10 at women in general, and 37 at increasing recruitment and accessions), see appendix III.

The Navy and the Air Force also reported planned initiatives that are not yet in use to increase the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps. According to U.S. Naval Academy officials, the U.S. Naval Academy is in the process of hiring a marketing consultant who will help in developing a strategic messaging and marketing campaign directed at young women as well as development of new marketing materials, videos, and social media channels to reach them. Additionally, according to Air Force officials, the Air Force Recruiting Service is planning to establish a cadre of officer recruiters dedicated to targeting applicants in accordance with the Secretary of the Air Force memorandum, which identifies increasing the applicant pool for women officers.

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<sup>19</sup>According to Department of Defense documentation and officials, "influencers" refer to the people in a person's life, such as parents, siblings, coaches, teachers, and community leaders, who have the power to sway them toward a specific direction, such as toward military service.

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DOD and the Coast Guard Do Not Have an Oversight Framework and Evaluations for Key Initiatives Directed at Increasing the Applicant Pool for Female Officers

DOD and the Coast Guard do not have an oversight framework for their initiatives. More specifically, they do not have an oversight framework that includes (1) program goals; (2) performance measures linked to program goals to measure progress toward achieving those goals; and (3) resource allocation linked to program goals.<sup>20</sup> Our prior work has demonstrated the importance of establishing an oversight framework and has shown that having an effective plan for implementing programs and measuring progress can help decision makers determine whether initiatives are achieving the desired results.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, key practices for implementing a results-oriented oversight framework requires agencies to clearly establish program goals for which they will be held accountable, measure progress toward achieving those goals, determine strategies and resources to effectively accomplish those goals, and use performance information to make programmatic decisions necessary to improve performance. Additionally, evaluations can play a key role in program planning, management, and oversight by providing feedback on both program design and execution.<sup>22</sup> Program evaluation analyzes performance measures to assess the achievement of performance objectives.

Although DOD and Coast Guard officials agree that increasing the representation of women is important, DOD and the Coast Guard do not have a clearly defined role for providing oversight of the various initiatives and the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard do not have program goals for their initiatives directed at increasing the recruitment of women into the officer corps. While federal law places limits on DOD's ability to set certain kinds of recruitment or accession goals and officials with several of the recruitment and accession sources

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<sup>20</sup>For the purposes of this report, "evaluation" includes any assessment of effectiveness, cost, or other measures related to a specific initiative.

<sup>21</sup>[GAO-03-669](#). One of the key practices that we identified was establishing a coherent mission and integrated strategic goals. We reported that this can be accomplished through adopting leading practices for results-oriented strategic planning, such as establishing performance goals, measuring progress toward achieving those goals, and determining strategies and resources to effectively accomplish the goals.

<sup>22</sup>[GAO-12-208G](#). This report is one of a series of papers whose purpose is to provide guides to various aspects of audit and evaluation methodology and is based on GAO studies and policy documents and program evaluation literature. These criteria were also identified in GAO, *Program Evaluation: Strategies to Facilitate Agencies' Use of Evaluation in Program Management and Policy Making*, [GAO-13-570](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 26, 2013).

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stated that there are legal concerns with quantifiable accession goals, officials also stated that there are not legal concerns with goals related to recruitment, such as applicant pool goals.<sup>23</sup> For example, an Air Force official stated that there were legal concerns with setting goals for actual accessions, or hires, since they cannot consider ethnicity, race, or gender when making decisions about hiring. However, Air Force officials stated there were not any legal concerns with targeting certain demographic groups in recruiting efforts in an attempt to shape the applicant pool. Officials at the U.S. Naval Academy also stated that they have no legal concerns with recruiting initiatives, but that gender-based accessions plans must serve an important, governmental objective and be substantially related to achieving that objective.<sup>24</sup>

One of the five Armed Forces we met with has a current quantifiable goal related to the recruitment of women into the officer corps. The Air Force has a quantifiable goal related to increasing the applicant pool of women into the officer corps, which could in turn serve to increase female officers' accessions. In a June 2014 memorandum, the Secretary of the Air Force directed the Air Force to institute a wide range of diversity goals for its active duty officer applicant pools, including a 30 percent applicant pool goal for female officers. An Air Force official stated that the officer applicant pool goal was developed to provide the Air Force's officer accession sources with the incentive to identify and recruit from untapped sources of officer applicants. An Air Force official also stated that establishing this goal generated discussions among the officer accession sources about how to achieve this common goal in light of these sources' respective operational differences and that the need to meet the broader goal might potentially result in the accession sources developing their own respective performance measures.

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<sup>23</sup>For example, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994, Pub. L. No. 103-160, § 543 (1993) (as amended by section 523 of Pub. L. No. 113-66 (2013)) provided that in the case of any military career designator that is open to both male and female members of the Armed Forces the Secretary of Defense may not use any gender quota, goal, or ceiling except as specifically authorized by law, among other things. The statute defines a "military career designator" in the context of commissioned officers as officer areas of concentration, occupational specialties, specialty codes, additional skill identifiers, and special qualification identifiers.

<sup>24</sup>For the standard of review see e.g. *U.S. v. Virginia*, 518 U.S. 515 (1996) and *Saunders v. White*, 192 F.Supp.2d 95 (D.D.C. 2002).

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Such applicant pool goals were also noted in the 2011 Military Leadership Diversity Commission report, which recommended developing similar goals for qualified minority applicants to precommissioning officer programs.<sup>25</sup> The Military Leadership Diversity Commission stated that one way to ensure that there is a demographically diverse applicant pool is to develop goals for qualified minority applicants. According to the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, the goals would not be used during the actual admissions decision but would help ensure that there is a demographically diverse applicant pool from which to select each year. A similar recommendation was made by the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services in its 2013 report. The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services recommended that all of the services have targets to gauge progress in increasing the representation of women in the officer corps (and therefore in the principal accession sources for officers).<sup>26</sup>

Officials with the other recruitment and accession sources with whom we met stated that they do not have clear goals with quantifiable metrics linked with those goals related to the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps. Army officials stated that they had not received any documented guidance or goals directing them to increase the number of female applicants for officer positions or female officer accessions. Similarly, while the Secretary of the Navy publicly expressed the importance of increasing the number of women in the Navy and Marine Corps, with the exception of submarines, Navy and Marine Corps officials stated that they currently do not have documented guidance or goals directing them to increase the number of female officer applicants or accessions. Coast Guard officials also stated that although there is an overall intent to increase diversity, they had no specific goals associated with increasing the number of female officer applicants or accessions.

Moreover, DOD and the Coast Guard reported evaluating seven out of ten of their initiatives focused exclusively on the accessions of women into the officer corps. However, in the absence of program goals for initiatives directed at increasing the applicant pool and ultimately the

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<sup>25</sup>Military Leadership Diversity Commission, *From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century Military*.

<sup>26</sup>Department of Defense, Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, *2013 Report*.

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accessions of women into the officer corps, they do not have performance measures linked to program goals to evaluate the extent to which their initiatives are achieving their intended purpose. In response to our questionnaire, DOD and the Coast Guard reported they had conducted evaluations of seven of the initiatives focused exclusively on the accessions of women into the officer corps, although we could only verify the evaluation of an initiative from Navy Recruiting Command. For example, Navy Recruiting Command conducted targeted direct mail and e-mail initiatives with female-specific content and tracked the leads generated in response to the initiative and the percentage of leads that resulted in a recruit joining the Navy. Additionally, Coast Guard Recruiting Command reported implementing an online and print marketing campaign directed toward women and using online user metrics to track the effectiveness of its online advertising materials. According to military service academy officials, they use data on applicants and accessions of women from the military service academies to measure how well current recruitment and accessions initiatives are working to increase the recruitment and accessions of female officers.

Military service officials provided a variety of reasons for not evaluating the initiatives, including the subjectivity of the information, the lack of funding for evaluations, and the newness of the program. For example, the Marine Corps provides take-home recruiting materials that feature stories of female Marine Corps officers. Officials reported that, although they have collected some data, they have not developed a way to evaluate the effectiveness of the initiative using those data. The Air Force ROTC reported an initiative implementing additional height measurements that could provide more waiver requests for women, since the current restrictions for undergraduate pilot training eliminates approximately 50 percent of female candidates. Although Air Force ROTC reported it has collected initial data on this initiative, it reported that it is too early in the process to evaluate this initiative. While it may be impossible and impractical to measure the effectiveness of all of DOD's and the Coast Guard's initiatives to increase the applicant pool and ultimately female officer accessions, developing performance measures and conducting evaluations are critical to assessing the effectiveness and quality of performance over time toward meeting program goals.

Without an oversight framework that includes program goals (consistent with applicable law), such as goals related to the composition of the applicant pool and performance measures, DOD and the Coast Guard are unable to ensure that resources are linked to program goals. As previously discussed, DOD and the Coast Guard have reported allocating

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resources and funding for initiatives directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps; however, many recruitment and accessions sources identified resources and funding for some, but not all, of their reported initiatives. Moreover, without evaluations of key initiatives, DOD and the Coast Guard are unable to ensure resources are dedicated to those initiatives most effective at achieving their intended purpose.

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## Conclusions

DOD and the Coast Guard have expressed their intent to increase the number of female officers beyond current levels. Data show that female officer accessions have increased slightly and DOD and the Coast Guard have several initiatives aimed at further increases. DOD and the Coast Guard have also targeted resources to some of these initiatives. However, without an oversight framework that includes program goals with performance measures and resource allocation linked to those goals and evaluations of key initiatives, decisions makers do not have the information they need to determine the effectiveness of DOD's and the Coast Guard's efforts to increase female officer recruitment and accessions. Given the effect of continuing fiscal challenges due to sequestration and reduced budgets, it is important that DOD and the Coast Guard are able to identify which initiatives are the most effective at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women and whether limited resources are being directed toward the most effective initiatives.

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## Recommendations for Executive Action

To improve DOD's management of initiatives directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, in collaboration with the service Secretaries, to take the following actions:

- Develop an oversight framework that includes or incorporates (consistent with applicable law):
  - Service-wide program goals for initiatives directed at female officers' recruitment, such as goals related to the composition of the applicant pool;
  - Performance measures linked to program goals; and
  - Resource allocations linked to program goals.

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- Conduct evaluations for key recruitment initiatives to help ensure these initiatives are achieving their intended purpose.

To improve the Coast Guard's management of initiatives to increase the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps, we recommend that the Commandant of the Coast Guard take the following actions:

- Develop an oversight framework that includes or incorporates (consistent with applicable law):
  - Service-wide program goals for initiatives directed at female officers' recruitment, such as goals related to the composition of the applicant pool;
  - Performance measures linked to program goals; and
  - Resource allocations linked to program goals.
- Conduct evaluations for key recruitment initiatives to help ensure these initiatives are achieving their intended purpose.

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## Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report to DOD and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for review and comment. Written comments from DOD and DHS are reprinted in their entirety in appendixes IV and V, respectively. In summary, DOD concurred with the first recommendation and did not state whether it concurred with the second recommendation. DHS concurred with both of the recommendations.

DOD concurred with the first recommendation to develop an oversight framework that includes or incorporates (consistent with applicable law), (1) service-wide program goals for initiatives directed at female officers' recruitment, such as goals related to the composition of the applicant pool; (2) performance measures linked to the program goals; and (3) resource allocations linked to program goals. In its comments, DOD noted that the services have taken steps, through targeted outreach and recruiting efforts, to increase minority and female representation in the officer applicant pool for DOD's commissioning programs. DOD stated that it had updated relevant service academy guidance that will address the development of quantifiable performance goals and measures linked with the program mission and goals of the service academies. DOD stated that it plans to publish updated guidance by February 2016 for the

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services' respective ROTC programs to measure the quality, demography, and resources of each unit to monitor and assess the performance, growth, and progress of programs in meeting the officer accession needs of the services. While these steps are positive, we continue to believe that fully addressing this recommendation by developing an oversight framework that includes service-wide program goals and performance measures and resource allocation linked to program goals would allow the department to improve DOD's management of initiatives directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps.

DOD did not state whether it concurred with the second recommendation to conduct evaluations for key recruitment initiatives to help ensure these initiatives are achieving their intended purpose. DOD stated that it is studying the dynamics of female accession and retention and that the RAND Corporation is preparing studies related to recruiting women and explaining gender differences in officer career progression. DOD also stated that the Joint Advertising, Marketing Research and Studies activity conducts surveys and analysis on the dynamics of the recruitment market, including the recruitment and accession of women. Lastly, DOD stated that revised DOD guidance reestablishes an annual assessment and report of the commissioning programs and would assist in evaluating the progress made by the service academies and ROTC in achieving program objectives. While these actions represent positive steps, we continue to believe that evaluations of the services' initiatives could help to ensure key initiatives are achieving their intended purpose. We found that DOD had not evaluated all of their initiatives directed at increasing female officers' recruitment and accessions, and while it may be impossible and impractical to measure the effectiveness of all of the initiatives, evaluations are critical to assessing the effectiveness and quality of performance over time toward meeting program goals.

In its written comments, DHS concurred with the recommendation to develop an oversight framework that includes or incorporates (consistent with applicable law), (1) service-wide program goals for initiatives directed at female officers' recruitment, such as goals related to the composition of the applicant pool; (2) performance measures linked to the program goals; and (3) resource allocations linked to program goals. In its comments, DHS stated that the Coast Guard has a goal for female officer accessions and will collect data to determine whether the goal is being achieved and allocate resources for officer recruitment focused on female campaigns. DHS also concurred with the recommendation to conduct evaluations for key recruitment initiatives to help ensure these initiatives

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are achieving their intended purpose. DHS stated that the U.S. Coast Guard Academy routinely evaluates recruiting initiatives to determine measures of success and that this data collection resulting from these evaluations will be tailored to specifically account for females. DHS also stated that the Coast Guard will collect data to determine whether the goals have been achieved, which will allow for processes and policies to facilitate collecting gender-based recruiting metrics. DHS provided an estimated completion date of October 2016 for these actions. We believe these are positive steps and if implemented as planned would meet the intent of our recommendations.

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We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees, the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretaries of the military departments, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Commandant of the Coast Guard. The report is also available at no charge on the GAO website at <http://www.gao.gov>.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-3604 or [farrellb@gao.gov](mailto:farrellb@gao.gov). Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made key contributions to this report are listed in appendix VI.

*Brenda S. Farrell*

Brenda S. Farrell  
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management

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*List of Committees*

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
House of Representatives

# Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

The scope of our analysis included female officer accessions from all Department of Defense (DOD) and Coast Guard officer accession sources, which include the military service academies, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), Officer Candidate Schools/Officer Training School, and direct commissioning programs. We included both the active and reserve components of the officer corps, including the federal components of the National Guard.<sup>1</sup> Table 4 contains a list of the agencies and offices we contacted during the course of our review.

**Table 4: Agencies and Offices Contacted**

<b>Department of Defense</b>	
	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, Washington, D.C.
	Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, Alexandria, Virginia
	Defense Manpower Data Center, Seaside, California
	Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies, Alexandria, Virginia
<b>Army</b>	
	Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Washington, D.C.
	Strategic Initiatives Group, Washington, D.C.
	U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Fort Knox, Kentucky
	U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Fort Knox, Kentucky
	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Eustis, Virginia
	U.S. Army Cadet Command, Fort Knox, Kentucky
	Army Marketing and Research Group, Washington, D.C.
	Office of the Assistant Secretary for the Army for Diversity and Leadership, Washington, D.C.
	U.S. Military Academy, West Point, New York
	U.S. Army National Guard, Arlington, Virginia
	U.S. Army Judge Advocate Recruiting Office, Fort Belvoir, Virginia
<b>Air Force</b>	
	Air Force Personnel Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Air Force Base, Texas
	U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado
	Air Force Recruiting Service, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Air Force Base, Texas
	Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama
	Air National Guard, Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

<sup>1</sup>The National Guard has officer accessions sources both at the federal and state level. Army National Guard officials stated that the majority of their officers are commissioned through state level Officer Candidate Schools and not federal Officer Candidate Schools. However, we did not include any state level accession sources in our review.

**Appendix I: Scope and Methodology**

	Diversity and Inclusion, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel, and Services, Washington, D.C.
<b>Navy</b>	Office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Officer Personnel Plans and Policy, Washington, D.C.
	Naval Service Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois
	Chief of Naval Personnel, Office of Women's Policy, Arlington, Virginia
	Navy Recruiting Command, Millington, Tennessee
	U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland
<b>Marine Corps</b>	
	Marine Corps Recruiting Command, Quantico, Virginia
<b>U.S. Coast Guard</b>	
	U.S. Personnel Service Center, U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting Command, Arlington, Virginia
	U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut
<b>Other</b>	
	RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, California

Source: GAO. | GAO-16-55

For our first objective, to evaluate the extent to which accessions of women into the officer corps have increased, and DOD and the Coast Guard have determined resources and funding to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps, we obtained accessions data maintained by the Defense Manpower Data Center from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014. We chose to review data from the last 5 fiscal years to focus on current initiatives. We analyzed the data to identify trends in female officer accessions over this time period. We also analyzed the data to identify trends in female officer representation for this same time period. We assessed the reliability of the accessions and representation data by reviewing the Defense Manpower Data Center's methodology for collecting these data and by conducting a review of the completeness of the data. We found the data to be sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

We also obtained and reviewed budget justification reports, focusing on budget line items for recruiting and advertising. We identified obligations for these activities from fiscal year 2014, appropriations from fiscal year 2015, and estimated budgets for fiscal year 2016.<sup>2</sup> In addition, we obtained recruiting and advertising expenditures for women officers from 11 offices we identified in DOD and the Coast Guard with responsibilities

<sup>2</sup>Appropriation amounts are as reported in relevant agency financial management documentation.

related to recruiting or advertising.<sup>3</sup> We also obtained information on resources and funding through a questionnaire that we developed and distributed to 19 DOD and Coast Guard offices we identified in consultation with DOD and Coast Guard officials that conduct recruiting and accessions of women into the officer corps, such as the military service academies, recruiting commands, and service commands responsible for overseeing the ROTC, Officer Candidate Schools/Officer Training School, and direct commissioning programs.

To identify these 19 offices, we reviewed DOD and Coast Guard guidance and we discussed the services' roles and responsibilities related to recruitment and accessions with officials from each military service, including the Coast Guard. In an e-mail in advance of the questionnaire, we asked the relevant DOD officials to confirm the offices that could have initiatives directed at increasing recruitment and accessions of women officers. We did not receive feedback from the headquarters officials that we should add any other offices to our questionnaire recipient list. In the questionnaire, we asked these 19 offices to identify resource and funding information for the initiatives they are currently using to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps. Of the 19 questionnaires we distributed, we received responses to the questionnaires from 18 offices.<sup>4</sup> Of these, 12 offices reported initiatives. We assessed the reliability of the marketing budget and expenditures reported by the U.S. Military Academy by sending a questionnaire and interviewing academy officials. We found the data to be sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

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<sup>3</sup>We obtained recruiting and advertising expenditure information from the following offices with responsibilities related to recruiting or advertising: the U.S. Military Academy, the Army Marketing and Research Group, the U.S. Army National Guard, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy Recruiting Command, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the Air Force Recruiting Service, the Air National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting Command.

<sup>4</sup>We sent questionnaires to the following 19 offices: the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, the U.S. Army Cadet Command, the Army Marketing and Research Group, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for the Army for Diversity and Leadership, the U.S. Army Judge Advocate Recruiting Office, the Army Strategic Initiatives Group, the Army National Guard, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy Recruiting Command, the Naval Service Training Command, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the Air Force Recruiting Service, the Air Force Personnel Center, the Air Force ROTC, the Air National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting Command. We did not receive a response from the Army Strategic Initiatives Group.

For our second objective, to evaluate the extent to which DOD and the Coast Guard have initiatives to increase the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps and an oversight framework, we reviewed responses to our questionnaire regarding initiatives the services have directed at increasing the accessions of women into the officer corps. We also contacted officials in DOD and the Coast Guard offices that have roles and responsibilities related to the recruitment and accessions of women. In the questionnaire, we asked these offices to identify current initiatives they were using to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps. For the National Guard, we requested that they report initiatives at the headquarters and not the state level. For each initiative, we asked officials to report whether the initiative was ongoing or ended and whether the initiative focused (1) exclusively on increasing the accessions of female officers, (2) exclusively on women but not only for accessions, (3) exclusively on accessions but not only for women, or (4) not only for women and not only for accessions. We also asked the offices to report whether they had evaluated the initiatives and if so to provide any documentation related to the evaluations. In addition to the questionnaire, we interviewed agency officials to determine if there were any new or planned initiatives to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps. We analyzed the questionnaire responses to identify initiatives underway to increase the recruitment and accessions of women. The initiatives included in this report are those that were reported by DOD and the Coast Guard in response to our questionnaire. There may be additional initiatives that exist but were not reported.

We conducted a content analysis of the questionnaire responses. We categorized all of the initiatives into three types: (1) advertising/marketing, (2) outreach, and (3) policy/program review and changes. Initiatives placed in the advertising category included videos, print, social media, and mailing campaigns. Outreach initiatives included speaking engagements, conferences, career fairs, campus visits, and phone calls. Policy/program review and change initiatives include those that are aimed at reviewing and revising current policies and programs. Initiatives could be placed in only one category. One GAO analyst conducted this analysis, categorizing the information and entering it into a spreadsheet, and a different GAO analyst reviewed the categorizations. Any initial disagreements in the categorization were discussed and reconciled by the analysts.

To evaluate the extent to which DOD and the Coast Guard have developed an oversight framework to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps, we compared the questionnaire responses,

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documentation, and information from our interviews against key elements of an oversight framework, which includes establishing program goals, performance measures, and resource allocation linked to program goals.<sup>5</sup> We interviewed officials to determine if there were agency goals for the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps and if the reported initiatives were linked to agency goals, if any.

To evaluate the extent to which DOD and the Coast Guard evaluated their initiatives to ensure initiatives are achieving their intended purposes, when possible, we reviewed the evaluations that questionnaire respondents said had been conducted on initiatives directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women into the officer corps.<sup>6</sup> Two GAO methodologists reviewed the documentation to assess whether an evaluation had been conducted. We focused the review of the reported evaluations on the 10 initiatives focused exclusively on the accessions of women into the officer corps. Of those initiatives, 7 responding offices reported conducting some form of evaluation. Of those 7 initiatives, 5 did not provide documentation of the evaluation so we could not assess

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<sup>5</sup>GAO, *Results-Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations*, [GAO-03-669](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 2, 2003). To identify key practices, we convened a forum to identify and discuss useful practices and lessons learned from private and public sector organizational mergers, acquisitions, and transformations, and we reviewed literature on the subject, including literature recommended by forum participants, to gain a better understanding of the issues that most frequently occur during such large-scale change initiatives. A key practice identified was establishing a coherent mission and integrated strategic goals. This can be accomplished through adopting leading practices for results-oriented strategic planning, such as, establishing performance goals, measuring progress towards goals, and determining strategies and resources to effectively accomplish the goals. We have applied these criteria to other initiatives and programs within DOD. For example, see GAO, *Military Personnel: Sustained Leadership and Oversight Needed to Improve DOD's Prevention and Treatment of Domestic Abuse*, [GAO-10-923](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sep. 22, 2010); and *Military Personnel: DOD's and the Coast Guard's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Programs Face Implementation and Oversight Challenges*, [GAO-08-924](#) (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 29, 2008). These criteria are applicable to initiatives directed at increasing the recruitment and accessions of women as the Military Leadership Diversity Commission stated that the transformation of the Armed Forces remains unfinished as women are still underrepresented in leadership positions.

<sup>6</sup>GAO, *Designing Evaluations: 2012 Revision*, [GAO-12-208G](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 2012). *Designing Evaluations* is one of a series of papers whose purpose is to provide guides to various aspects of audit and evaluation methodology and is based on GAO studies and policy documents and program evaluation literature. These guides have provided a key source of guidance influencing the development of human capital programs.

whether they had conducted an evaluation. The methodologists used a broad definition of evaluation to include any analysis of a specific initiative's process or outcome (including costs, effectiveness, or other possible measures) and applied professional judgment to decide whether the documentation provided sufficient evidence that such an analysis had been conducted. The methodologists concluded that the documentation for one initiative indicated that the accession source had tracked response rates to a specific e-mail initiative, which is a minimal yet reasonable measurement of the immediate output of the initiative. However, they concluded that the documentation for the other initiative reported general accession results but provided no evidence of an analysis that linked those results with any specific initiative.

We conducted this performance audit from February 2015 to November 2015 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

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# Appendix II: Officer Corps Representation by Gender and Armed Force from Fiscal Year 2010 through Fiscal Year 2014

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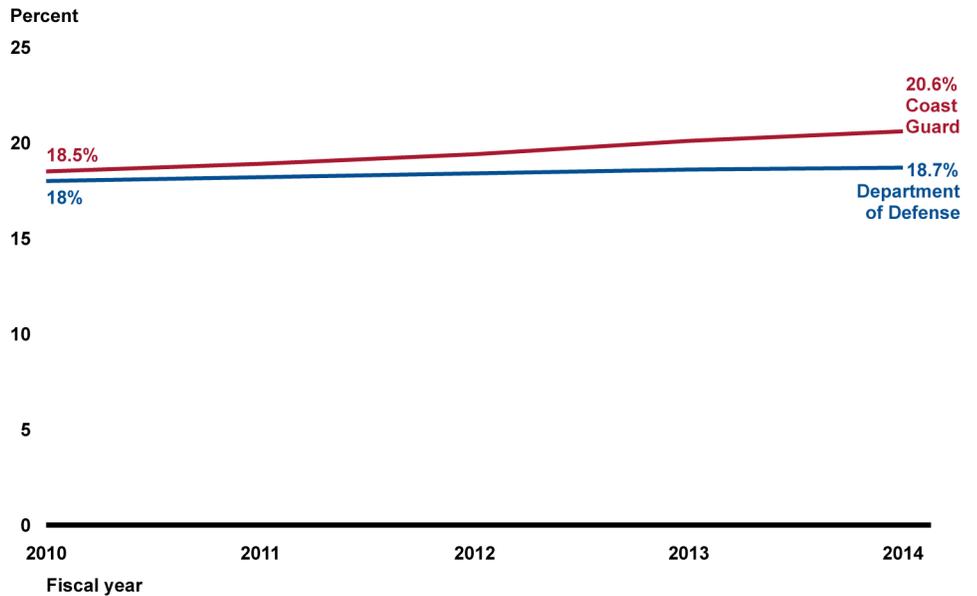
The percentage of women represented in the officer corps for DOD and the Coast Guard has increased since the early 1970s, including over recent years. According to the *Population Representation in the Military Services: Fiscal Year 2013 Summary Report* that is released by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, female representation in the active component commissioned officer corps has increased since 1973.<sup>1</sup> We reviewed active and reserve officer corps data from the Defense Manpower Data Center for fiscal years 2010 through fiscal year 2014. The data indicate that the percentage of women in the officer corps for DOD and the Coast Guard slightly increased during those years.<sup>2</sup> Collectively, the percentage of women in the officer corps for DOD has increased by 0.7 percent. For the Coast Guard, the percentage of women in the officer corps has increased by about 2.1 percent. Figure 4 shows female officer representation rates for DOD and the Coast Guard from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014.

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<sup>1</sup>Department of Defense, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, *Population Representation in the Military Services: Fiscal Year 2013 Summary Report*, n.d.

<sup>2</sup>Data from the Defense Manpower Data Center included officers from both the active and reserve component, including the National Guard.

Figure 4: DOD and Coast Guard Female Officer Representation Rates (Fiscal Years 2010-14)



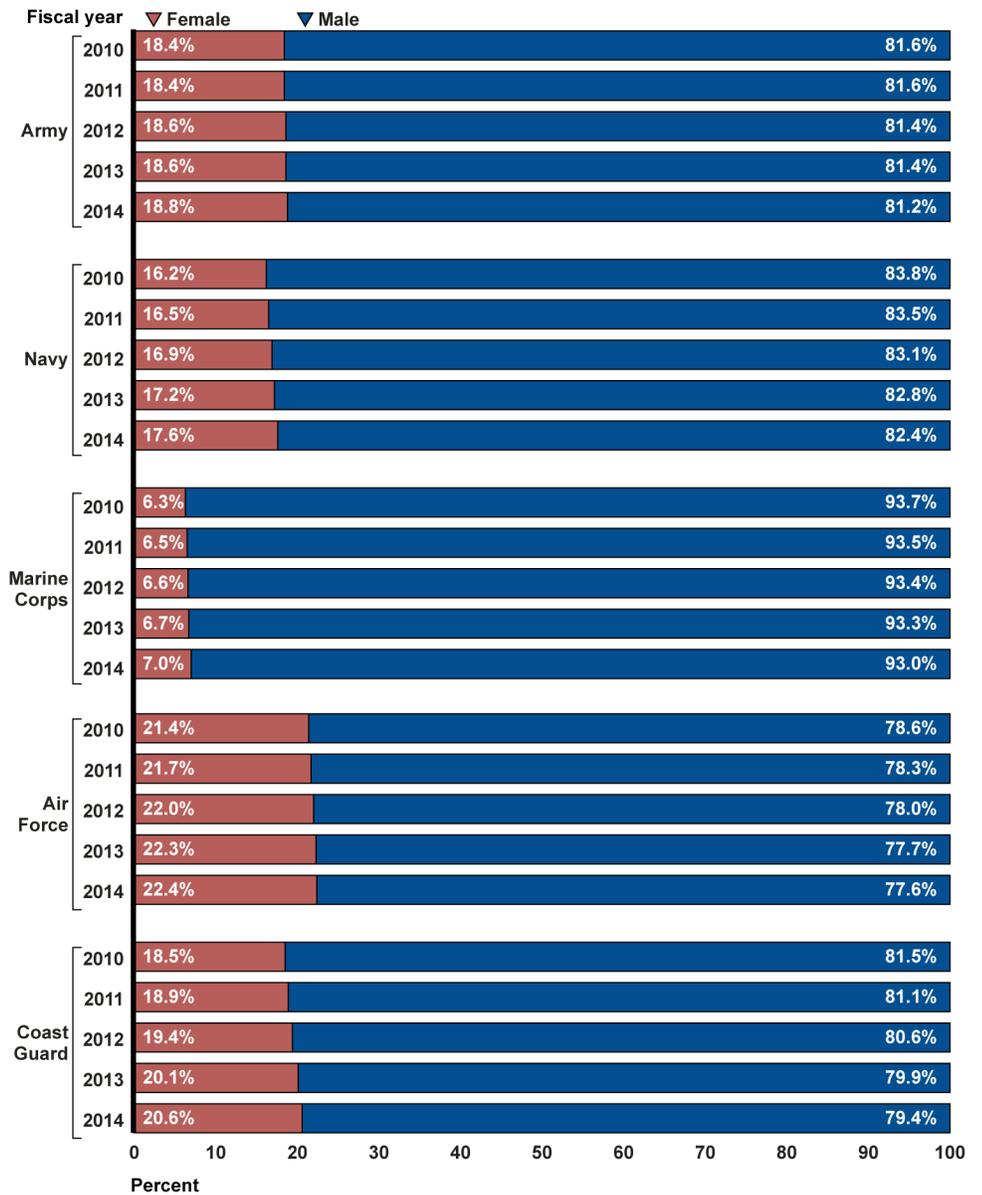
Source: GAO analysis of Defense Manpower Data Center data. | GAO-16-55

The percentage of women represented in the officer corps from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014 slightly increased each year across the services, including the Coast Guard.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the overall increase in female officer representation during this time period was 1.4 percent for the Navy, about 1 percent for the Air Force, about 0.7 percent for the Marine Corps, and 0.4 percent for the Army. Figure 5 shows female officer representation rates by Armed Force from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2014.

<sup>3</sup>Increases in Army female officer accession rates from fiscal year 2010 through 2011 and from fiscal year 2012 through 2013 were very slight and are not reflected in the percentages in figure 5.

Appendix II: Officer Corps Representation by Gender and Armed Force from Fiscal Year 2010 through Fiscal Year 2014

Figure 5: Armed Forces Female Officer Representation Rates (Fiscal Years 2010-14)



Source: GAO analysis of Defense Manpower Data Center data. | GAO-16-55

# Appendix III: The Initiatives That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Using to Increase the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps

In response to our questionnaire, DOD and the Coast Guard reported 57 initiatives that are used specifically or generally to increase the accessions of women into the officer corps. Responding offices were asked to place the reported initiatives in one of four types to describe whether the initiative was focused exclusively on women officer accessions or had a broader focus. The four types of initiatives are (1) exclusively women officer accessions; (2) women only, but not only for accessions; (3) accessions only, but not only for women; and (4) not only women and not only accessions. Table 5 shows initiatives DOD and the Coast Guard reported as “exclusive to women officer accessions;” table 6 shows initiatives that are for “women only and not only accessions;” and table 7 shows initiatives that fall into either of the last two types of initiatives—“accessions only, but not only for women” and “not only women and not only accessions.”

**Table 5: Initiatives (10) That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Using to Increase Female Officer Accessions**

Service/organization	Initiative	Initiative type	Start date	Category
<b>Army</b>				
U.S. Army Recruiting Command	Power Women initiative with <i>New York Moves</i> magazine	Exclusively women accessions	2014	Advertising/marketing
<b>Navy</b>				
U.S. Naval Academy	Call-out program	Exclusively women accessions	2015	Outreach
Navy Recruiting Command Marketing	Targeted direct mail/e-mail with female-specific content Recruiter Assistance Devices	Exclusively women accessions	2015	Advertising/marketing
<b>Marine Corps</b>				
U.S. Marine Corps	Female Officer Collateral Material	Exclusively women accessions	More than 10 years ago	Advertising/marketing
U.S. Marine Corps	Women in Aviation International	Exclusively women accessions	More than 5 years go	Outreach
<b>Air Force</b>				
Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps	30-35 percent Female Officer Corps – Secretary of the Air Force/Chief of Staff of the Air Force Initiative	Exclusively women accessions	2014	Policy/program review and changes
Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps	Increase Demographic Diversity (Minorities/Women) in Operations - Secretary of the Air Force/Chief of Staff of the Air Force Initiative	Exclusively women accessions	2014	Policy/program review and changes

**Appendix III: The Initiatives That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Using to Increase the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps**

<b>Service/organization</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Initiative type</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Category</b>
<b>Coast Guard</b>				
Coast Guard Recruiting Command	Marketing campaign	Exclusively women accessions	2014	Advertising/marketing
U.S. Coast Guard Academy	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics for Women (Campus Program)	Exclusively women accessions	At least 5 years ago	Outreach
U.S. Coast Guard Academy	Targeted outreach to all female high schools	Exclusively women accessions	At least 5 years ago	Outreach

Source: GAO analysis of questionnaire data. | GAO-16-55

**Table 6: Initiatives (10) That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported for Women Only, but Not Specifically for Accessions**

<b>Service/organization</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Initiative type</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Category</b>
<b>Army</b>				
U.S. Military Academy	Expansion of National Collegiate Athletic Association teams for women (women's lacrosse and rugby)	Women only, but not only for accessions	2014	Policy/program review and changes
U.S. Military Academy	Opening all branches of the Army to women	Women only, but not only for accessions	2014	Policy/program review and changes
<b>Navy</b>				
Navy Recruiting Command Marketing	Women in the Navy web page	Women only, but not only for accessions	2009	Advertising/marketing
Navy Recruiting Command Marketing	Women redefined Facebook page	Women only, but not only for accessions	2009	Advertising/marketing
Navy Recruiting Command Marketing	Female centric video projects	Women only, but not only for accessions	2013	Advertising/marketing
Navy Recruiting Command Marketing	Stories of service	Women only, but not only for accessions	2004	Advertising/marketing
<b>Marine Corps</b>				
U.S. Marine Corps	Women on a Mission Campaign	Women only, but not only for accessions	2014	Advertising/marketing
U.S. Marine Corps	Coaches Workshop	Women only, but not only for accessions	2013	Outreach
U.S. Marine Corps	Women's Basketball Coaches Association National Convention	Women only, but not only for accessions	More than 3 years	Outreach
<b>Air Force</b>				
Air Force Recruiting Service	Marketing and advertising, Female TV	Women only, but not only for accessions	2012	Advertising/marketing

Source: GAO analysis of questionnaire data. | GAO-16-55

**Appendix III: The Initiatives That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Using to Increase the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps**

**Table 7: Initiatives (37) That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported for Recruitment and Accessions, but Not Specifically for Women and Not Specifically for Accessions**

<b>Service/organization</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Initiative type</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Category</b>
<b>Army</b>				
Judge Advocate Recruiting Office	Outreach to female and minority career fairs and conferences	Not only women and not only accessions	Unknown	Outreach
Judge Advocate Recruiting Office	Highlighting female Judge Advocates via social and traditional media	Not only women and not only accessions	2010	Advertising/marketing
Judge Advocate Recruiting Office	Highlighting female Judge Advocates to the legal profession	Not only women and not only accessions	Unknown	Outreach
Judge Advocate Recruiting Office	Diversity Training	Accessions only, but not only for women	Unknown	Policy/program review and changes
Judge Advocate Recruiting Office	Field Screening Officer Diversity Outreach	Accessions only, but not only for women	2012	Outreach
U.S. Military Academy	Direct Marketing (Student Search Campaign)	Accessions only, but not only for women	2013	Advertising/marketing
U.S. Military Academy	Congressional Outreach	Accessions only, but not only for women	No response	Outreach
U.S. Military Academy	Letters of Assurance (Conditional Offers of Admission)	Accessions only, but not only for women	No response	Outreach
<b>Navy</b>				
U.S. Naval Academy	Summer program - Naval Academy Summer Seminar	Accessions only, but not only for women	1974	Outreach
U.S. Naval Academy	Summer program - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Camp	Accessions only, but not only for women	2008	Outreach
U.S. Naval Academy	School Visits	Accessions only, but not only for women	n/a	Outreach
U.S. Naval Academy	Prospect & Candidate Visit Weekends (CVW)	Accessions only, but not only for women	1970s	Outreach
U.S. Naval Academy	Summer Engagement	Accessions only, but not only for women	1999	Outreach
U.S. Naval Academy	Music Groups	Accessions only, but not only for women	2009	Outreach
U.S. Naval Academy	Social Media Advertising (Facebook)	Not only women and not only accessions	2015	Advertising/marketing
Navy Recruiting Command Diversity	Society of Women Engineers Sponsorship	Not only women and not only accessions	2012	Outreach

**Appendix III: The Initiatives That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Using to Increase the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps**

<b>Service/organization</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Initiative type</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Category</b>
Navy Recruiting Command Diversity	Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing Sponsorship	Not only women and not only accessions	2015	Outreach
Navy Recruiting Command Diversity	National Association of Women Masters in Business Administration Sponsorship	Not only women and not only accessions	2014	Outreach
Navy Recruiting Command Diversity	Women In Aviation, Inc. Sponsorship	Not only women and not only accessions	2015	Outreach
Navy Recruiting Command Diversity	National Society of Black Engineers Professional Development Conference Sponsorship	Not only women and not only accessions	2015	Outreach
Navy Recruiting Command Diversity	Carrier Embarks	Not only women and not only accessions	2014	Outreach
Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps (NROTC)	4-Year National NROTC Scholarships	Accessions only, but not only for women	Before 1980	Policy/program review and changes
Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps	NROTC Host Unit establishment at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, Yale University and cross-town affiliation with Princeton University.	Accessions only, but not only for women	2012	Policy/program review and changes
<b>Air Force</b>				
U.S. Air Force Academy	Diversity Visitation Program	Accessions only, but not only for women	2008	Outreach
U.S. Air Force Academy	Strategic Cities Initiative	Accessions only, but not only for women	2010	Outreach
U.S. Air Force Academy	Diversity Marketing and Media	Accessions only, but not only for women	2008	Advertising/marketing
U.S. Air Force Academy	Summer Seminar	Accessions only, but not only for women	2007	Outreach
Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps	Secretary of the Air Force/Chief of Staff of the Air Force Signed Officer Applicant Pool Goal Memo; request for Strategic Plans	Accessions only, but not only for women	2014	Policy/program review and changes
Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps	Corona Fall Tasker (CFT-9) 2014 (Enlisted to Officer accessions)	Accessions only, but not only for women	No response	Policy/program review and changes
Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps	Corona Fall Tasker (CFT-10): Expand AF Officer Applicant Pool to grow leadership that reflects the population at large	Accessions only, but not only for women	No response	Policy/program review and changes

**Appendix III: The Initiatives That DOD and the Coast Guard Reported Using to Increase the Recruitment and Accessions of Women into the Officer Corps**

<b>Service/organization</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Initiative type</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Category</b>
Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps	LONG-TERM INITIATIVE (ANNUALLY): Tactical Diversity Outreach Events (Attract)	Accessions only, but not only for women	2014	Outreach
Air Force Recruiting Service	U.S. Air Force Academy Advertising Campaign	Not only women and not only accessions	2015	Advertising/marketing
Air Force Recruiting Service	Marketing and Advertising	Not only women and not only accessions	2015	Advertising/marketing
Air Force Recruiting Service	Development of Officer Accession Recruiting Squadrons	Accessions only, but not only for women	2015	Policy/program review and changes
<b>Coast Guard</b>				
Coast Guard Recruiting Command	Hometown Recruiter, Everyone is a Recruiter, Ambassadors	Accessions only, but not only for women	1990	Outreach
Coast Guard Recruiting Command	Strategic Partnerships and Outreach	Accessions only, but not only for women	2008	Outreach
U.S. Coast Guard Academy	Academy Introductory Mission Program (AIM)	Accessions only, but not only for women	Well over 30 years ago	Outreach

Source: GAO analysis of questionnaire data. | GAO-16-55

# Appendix IV: Comments from the Department of Defense



MANPOWER AND  
RESERVE AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

Ms. Brenda S. Farrell  
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management  
United States Government Accountability Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

OCT 21 2015

Dear Ms. Farrell:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) draft report, GAO-16-55, "MILITARY PERSONNEL: Oversight Framework and Evaluations Needed for DoD and the Coast Guard to Help Increase the Number of Female Officer Applicants," dated October 1, 2015 (GAO Code 352003).

Recommendation 1. The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), in collaboration with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, develop an oversight framework that includes or incorporates (consistent with applicable law): service-wide program goals for initiatives directed at female officers' recruitment, such as goals related to the composition of the applicant pool, performance measures linked to the program goals, and resource allocations linked to program goals.

Response 1. The Department concurs with the recommendation. The Services do not set recruitment goals based on race or gender. The Services have, however, taken steps, through targeted outreach and recruiting efforts, to increase minority and female representation in the officer applicant pool for DoD's commissioning programs. Concerning establishment of oversight framework for commissioning accessions programs, the Department updated and published Department of Defense Directive 1322.22, *Service Academies*, on September 24, 2015, that addresses the development of quantified performance goals and measures linked with the program mission and goals of the Service Academies and the Preparatory Schools. Additionally, the Services' Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs will measure the quality, demography and resources of each unit to monitor and assess the performance, growth and progress of programs in meeting the officer accession needs of the Services. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1215.08, *Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Programs*, is in the process of being reissued and addresses these program standards. This Directive has been reviewed by the Services and is expected to be published Feb 2016.

Recommendation 2. The GAO also recommends that USD(P&R) in collaboration with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, take the following action: Conduct evaluations for key recruitment initiatives to help ensure these initiatives are achieving their intended purpose.

Response 2. The Department is studying the dynamics of female accession and retention. The RAND Corporation is preparing studies entitled "Recruiting Women for Today's Military" and "Explaining Gender Differences in Officer Career Progression". Additionally, the Joint

Advertising Marketing Research and Studies activity also conducts ongoing surveys and analysis on the dynamics of the current recruitment market, to include the recruitment and accession of women. Lastly, DoDI 1322.22 and the revision of 1215.08 reestablishes an annual assessment and comprehensive report of the commissioning programs of the Military Departments. These reports will assist USD(P&R) in evaluating the progress made by the Service Academies and ROTC Programs in achieving program objectives.

We thank the GAO for its insight and the opportunity to comment on the draft report.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Miller  
Director, Accession Policy  
(Military Personnel Policy)

# Appendix V: Comments from the Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528



**Homeland  
Security**

October 22, 2015

Ms. Brenda S. Farrell  
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20548

Re: Draft Report GAO-16-55, "MILITARY PERSONNEL: Oversight Framework and Evaluations Needed for DOD and the Coast Guard to Help Increase the Number of Female Officer Applicants"

Dear Ms. Farrell:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) appreciates the U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) work in planning and conducting its review and issuing this report.

The Department welcomes GAO's positive recognition that the Coast Guard had the highest percentage increase in female officer accession rates for all of the Armed Services organizations from 2010 through 2014. The Coast Guard is committed to increasing the representation of women throughout the organization and has measures in place to reach its recruitment initiatives.

The draft report contained two recommendations, with which the Department concurs. Specifically, GAO recommended that the Commandant of the Coast Guard to:

**Recommendation 1:** Develop an oversight framework that includes or incorporates (consistent with applicable law):

- Service-wide program goals for initiatives directed at female officers' recruitment, such as goals related to the composition of the applicant pool;
- Performance measures linked to the program goals; and
- Resource allocations linked to program goals.

**Response:** Concur.

- The Coast Guard's service wide program goals are stated in the Recruiting Commands Operations Plan (OPLAN) with a 25% goal for female officer

accessions. In FY 2015, the officer applicant pool was 27% female, and 34% of the primary selectees were female. The FY 2016 OPLAN specifically includes three initiatives directed at female officer recruitment (Recruiting, Marketing, and Strategic Partnerships and Outreach).

- The Coast Guard will collect data at the end of FY 2016 to determine if the goals have been achieved. This allows for processes and policies to be put in place that facilitate collecting gender recruiting metrics and culling data to establish a historical baseline.
- Resources will be allocated for officer recruitment will be focused on female campaigns. The Coast Guard has developed partnerships with two all-female colleges and conducted outreach events at both of these schools to ensure women at these institutions are aware of the programs and assist with the application process. The Coast Guard is seeking similar partnerships with other institutions.

Estimated Completion Date (ECD): October 31, 2016.

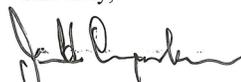
**Recommendation 2:** Conduct evaluations for key recruitment initiatives to help ensure these initiatives are achieving their intended purpose.

**Response:** Concur. At present, the United States Coast Guard Academy (CGA) routinely evaluates recruiting initiatives to determine measures of success (i.e. participation levels as compared to applications and accessions). This current data collection will be tailored to specifically account for females. Additionally, the CGA employs female targeted marketing strategies, focused outreach to female-only high schools, CGA women's sports clinics, and participation in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math for women programs.

The Coast Guard will collect data at the end of FY 2016 to determine if the goals have been achieved. This allows for processes and policies to be put in place that facilitate collecting gender recruiting metrics and culling data to establish a historical baseline.  
ECD: October 31, 2016.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. Technical comments were previously provided under separate cover. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Jim H. Crumpacker, CIA, CFE  
Director  
Departmental GAO-OIG Liaison Office

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# Appendix VI: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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## GAO Contact

Brenda S. Farrell, (202) 512-3604 or [farrellb@gao.gov](mailto:farrellb@gao.gov)

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## Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Kimberly C. Seay (Assistant Director), Timothy Carr, Nicole Collier, Cynthia Grant, Mae Jones, Amie Lesser, Elisha Matvay, Terry Richardson, Matthew Sakrekoff, Michael Silver, Paola Tena, Cheryl Weissman, Alexander Welsh and Michael Willems made major contributions to this report.

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# Related GAO Products

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*Military Personnel: DOD Is Expanding Combat Service Opportunities for Women, but Should Monitor Long-Term Integration Progress.* [GAO-15-589](#). Washington, D.C.: July 20, 2015.

*Military Personnel: Actions Needed to Improve Evaluation and Oversight of Reserve Officers' Training Corps Programs.* [GAO-14-93](#). Washington, D.C.: November 13, 2013.

*Military Education: Additional DOD Guidance Is Needed to Enhance Oversight of the Service Academies and Their Preparatory Schools.* [GAO-12-327R](#). Washington, D.C.: February 27, 2012.

*Military Personnel: Strategic Plan Needed to Address Army's Emerging Officer Accession and Retention Challenges.* [GAO-07-224](#). Washington, D.C.: January 19, 2007.

*Military Education: DOD Needs to Enhance Performance Goals and Measures to Improve Oversight of Military Academies.* [GAO-03-1000](#). Washington, D.C.: September 10, 2003.

*Gender Issues: Trends in the Occupational Distribution of Military Women.* [GAO/NSIAD-99-212](#). Washington, D.C.: September 14, 1999.

*Gender Issues: Perceptions of Readiness in Selected Units.* [GAO/NSIAD-99-120](#). Washington, D.C.: May 13, 1999.

*Gender Issues: Information to Assess Servicemembers' Perceptions of Gender Inequities Is Incomplete.* [GAO/NSIAD-99-27](#). Washington, D.C.: November 18, 1998.

*Gender Issues: Improved Guidance and Oversight Are Needed to Ensure Validity and Equity of Fitness Standards.* [GAO/NSIAD-99-9](#). Washington, D.C.: November 17, 1998.

*Military Academy: Gender and Racial Disparities.* [GAO/NSIAD-94-95](#). Washington, D.C.: March 17, 1994.

*Military Downsizing: Balancing Accessions and Losses is Key to Shaping the Future Force.* [GAO/NSIAD-93-241](#). Washington, D.C.: September 30, 1993.

*Air Force Academy: Gender and Racial Disparities.* [GAO/NSIAD-93-244](#). Washington, D.C.: September 24, 1993.

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Related GAO Products

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*Naval Academy: Gender and Racial Disparities.* [GAO/NSIAD-93-54](#). Washington, D.C.: April 30, 1993.

*Officer Commissioning Programs: More Oversight and Coordination Needed.* [GAO/NSIAD-93-37](#). Washington, D.C.: November 6, 1992.

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