

A PROFESSIONAL ARMY

In a 1982 memorandum, the Department of Defense agreed that it “must aggressively break down those remaining barriers that prevent us from making the fullest use of the capabilities of women in providing for our national defense.” Thus began an unprecedented increase in the number of women in the Army, resulting in the removal of restrictions to many occupational specialties. The Army developed policies by which the exposure of women to combat would be diminished, but still allowed them to serve during contingency operations. These rules might have worked on a battlefield with a well-defined front line, but proved problematic in deployments to Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf.