

## Interim CMR Special Report – Part II

### *U. S Marine Corps Research Findings: Where is the Case for Co-Ed Ground Combat?*

#### Section B Marine Corps Research & “Mitigation Myths”

##### A. Background & Overview

Since 2012, the **U.S. Marine Corps** has been conducting extensive research on the consequences of assigning women to direct ground combat (DGC) units such as the infantry. Hundreds of military personnel and civilians -- including training and education commands, external advisors, consultants, think-tanks and academics -- have been engaged in various phases of the **\$39 million** research program coordinated by the **USMC Force Innovation Office** at **Quantico, VA**.<sup>1</sup>

The full results of the Marines’ **Women in Service Restrictions Review (WISRR)**, reportedly over 900 pages, have not been revealed publicly. In 2014 CMR nevertheless obtained and analyzed preliminary results in a 54-page **Interim CMR Special Report – Part I**.<sup>2</sup>

In September 2015, more information about Marine field research results came to light.<sup>3</sup> A 4-page summary and 29 additional pages highlighted abundant empirical evidence that mixed-gender units do not perform as well as all-male units performing **69% (93 of 134)** tasks common in the combat arms.<sup>4</sup> In October, the *San Diego Union-Tribune* and the *Washington Post* obtained and reported on approximately 100 more pages of research results.<sup>5</sup>

The data shown in these documents make a convincing case for *retaining* sound policies that recognize physical differences and combat realities. There is no compelling reason why the armed forces should be ordered to include women in the infantry and other combat arms units.

With so many participants, consultants, and contractors involved in the three-year research program, it is not surprising that the documents include some passages, reflecting administration mandates, which are inconsistent with others. Some suggest theoretical ways to “mitigate” problems that are based on speculation or unrealistic scenarios that would not be workable.

For purposes of comparison and clarity, the **Center for Military Readiness (CMR)** has prepared a two-section analysis titled the **Interim CMR Special Report – Part II**.<sup>6</sup> Section A provides analysis of major findings,<sup>7</sup> while this Section B analyzes inconsistent information set forth in the most recent phases of Marine research.

On October 2 Secretary of Defense **Ashton Carter** promised, “My ultimate decision regarding any exception to policy request will be based on the analytic underpinnings and the data supporting them.” If Secretary Carter honors that promise, he will assign greater weight to Marine Corps empirical evidence than he does to speculations and mitigation myths.

## **B. Mitigation Myths**

Unless the military services ask for and justify exceptions, the Obama Administration intends to assign women to direct ground combat (DGC) arms units such as the **infantry, armor, artillery, Special Operations Forces**, and **Navy SEALs**, starting in January 2016.

Women have served with distinction “in harms’ way” in war zones and their courage is beyond dispute. But the direct ground combat units targeted for gender-integration today are trained to *seek out and attack the enemy with deliberate offensive action*. At the point of the bayonet, survivability and lethality often depend on physical strength, endurance, and speed – qualities needed to apply lethal force under fire.

This analysis highlights some of the questionable proposals that have been offered to “mitigate” problems in order to make the administration’s policies “work.” Relying upon unsupported theories, convoluted calculations or “best case scenarios” that disregard known high risks, most mitigation ideas would make life in the combat arms more difficult and more dangerous.

Regardless of how they are presented, these proposals would harm both military women and men in the combat arms. The “gentlemen” of **ISIS, al-Qaida**, and other potential adversaries will not go easy on our troops because they are disadvantaged by flawed “gender diversity” policies.

In July 2015 the **General Accountability Office (GAO)** reported that the **Department of Defense** has no plans to evaluate the consequences of this social experiment. The administration has ordered implementation of the biggest social experiment imposed on the military since the Vietnam-era **Project 100,000**, but members of Congress have shown little or no inclination to conduct responsible oversight and hearings with independent experts.<sup>8</sup>

Under the **U. S. Constitution, Congress** has the duty to conduct responsible oversight. Absent congressional attention or independent scrutiny, Pentagon officials and professional consultants will proceed with plans to implement policies known to elevate risks and endanger lives. The same advocates will evaluate their own work and spin the results as a complete “success.”

Given the depth and quality of the USMC research, members of Congress should objectively consider the quality of its findings, taking care to separate credible information from speculation. Lives and national security are at risk, and support for our troops demands nothing less.

**Negative Consequences Over Time:** “[S]ome of the initial negative impacts are likely to diminish over time...attrition rates...when compared to male attrition rates...are also likely to diminish over time.” (Summary & Conclusions, p. iv)

**Response:** This is speculation and wishful thinking. Physical differences between men and women can be narrowed with extra training and better nutrition, but since men have ten times more androgenic hormones than women, the same efforts make men even stronger.<sup>9</sup>

- a.) More than 20 years of studies and reports in the **United Kingdom** and the United States have found **no empirical evidence** that women’s comparative strength disadvantages can be diminished over time.<sup>10</sup>
- b.) Nor is there any evidence to support the notion that women will be more likely to forego personal and family choices in order to stay in the military while eligible for the combat arms. An official Army survey suggested that the opposite would be true.<sup>11</sup>
- c.) It is more likely that gender-integration issues would persist and trigger even more complicated problems such as sexual misconduct. Despite untold millions in dollars and time spent to mitigate these problems, incidents continue to escalate.

**Unit Cohesion:** “[A]ny initial detrimental effects on cohesion can eventually be mitigated with good training and solid leadership.” (Summary & Conclusions, p. iv)

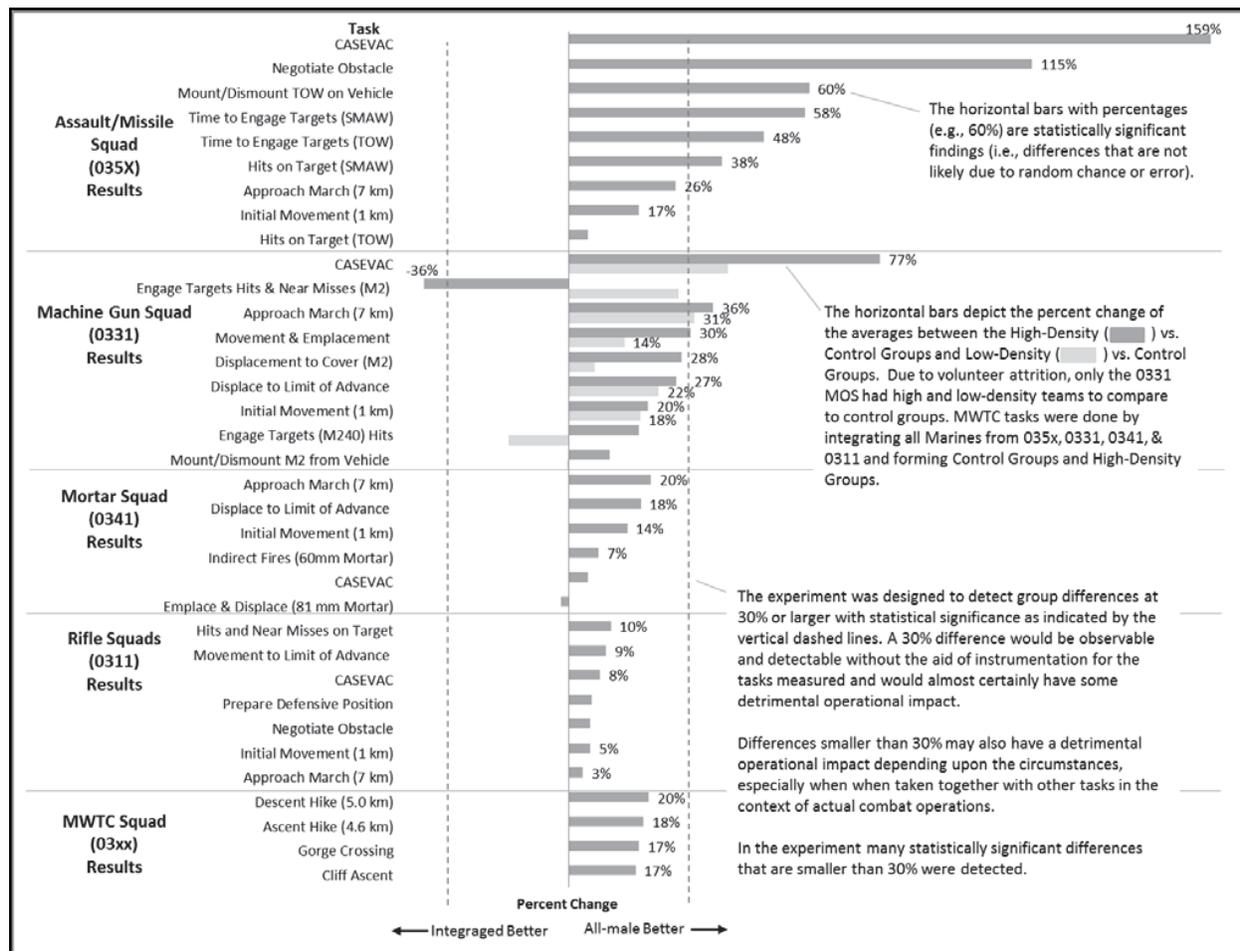
**Response:** This speculative comment mis-defines military cohesion in terms of social relationships or task accomplishment. However, experts who testified before the 1992 **Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces** explained that military cohesion is not about liking others socially or working together on tasks. **Cohesion is properly defined as mutual trust for survival and mission accomplishment in battle.**<sup>12</sup>

**Horizontal cohesion** exists between members of a combat team. **Vertical cohesion** is properly defined as **mutual trust** between the Commander-in-Chief, officials in the chain of command, and subordinate troops that they lead. Superior strength and endurance are directly related to unit cohesion, which is built on mutual trust for survival in battle.

- a.) Marine research found that all-male task force units outperformed gender-mixed ones in **69% of ground combat tasks**, especially in **“specialties that carried the assault load plus the additional weight of crew-served weapons and ammunition.”**
- b.) In addition, “All-male squads, teams and crews and gender-integrated squads, teams, and crews had a noticeable difference in their performance of the basic combat tasks of **negotiating obstacles and evacuating casualties.**”<sup>13</sup>

Gender diversity mandates that disregard obvious physical differences between men and women would severely degrade both horizontal and vertical cohesion. Such policies would be inherently demoralizing since subordinates at all levels will witness their leaders assigning highest priority to “gender diversity” goals even at the expense of high standards, survivability, and superiority in battle.

One of the graphs illustrating these differences in physical performance is reproduced below.



**Figure 12. Infantry Summary Comparison of Percentage Change of All Tasks**

Figure 12 presents a summary of the differences observed when comparing all-male infantry squads to integrated task force squads. The horizontal bars depict the percentage change observed when comparing the average all-male squad result to an average gender-integrated squad result on common infantry tasks such as casualty evacuation (CASEVAC). The numerical percentage presented adjacent to the bar is indicative of statistical significance, which is related to the size of the difference, variation, and the number of trials for that task. When a bar shifts to the right of the centerline the all-male group’s average is better than the integrated group’s, and vice versa. (Darker bars indicate “high density” units with more than two women; lighter bars represent “low density” units with two women or less.) (pp. 9-10)

Machine Gun Squad (0331) results were better for gender-mixed units in the “Engage Targets” category, but high-density squads took significantly longer to displace from the firing line compared to both the all-male and low-density integrated 0331 squads. (p. 25)

(Source: Marine Corps Operational Test & Evaluation, Activity Report, 14 August 2015, Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force Experimental Assessment Report – For Official Use Only – p. 29)

**Gender Diversity:** “Further integration of females into the combat arms brings with it many of the general benefits of diversity that we experience across the spectrum of the workspace, both within the military as well as the private sector.” (Summary & Conclusions, p. iv)

**Response:** Unity of purpose in war is far more important than gender diversity, a quality that has little or nothing to do with combat effectiveness. Potential adversaries of the United States do not waste time on social engineering and mandates for “gender diversity metrics.”

- a) **President Harry Truman** strengthened the armed forces when he confronted irrational prejudice in the military with his 1948 **Executive Order** outlawing racial discrimination. The Order advanced equal opportunity, but its primary purpose was military necessity.<sup>14</sup>
- b) Racial differences are not consequential in battle, but gender differences are profound and relevant to ground combat realities. Assigning highest priority to gender diversity will not alleviate reality-based concerns about combat survivability and lethality in battle. There is no military need to assign women to combat arms units that attack the enemy.
- c) The Pentagon has enthusiastically embraced recommendations of the **Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC)**, which instigated the drive for women in land combat in its 2011 Final Report.<sup>15</sup> The Defense Department and military services are enthusiastically implementing MLDC recommendations for “gender diversity metrics,” another name for quotas. The MLDC also called for a “**Chief Diversity Officer**” (**CDO**) to enforce diversity quotas through the promotion process.
- d) The MLDC report admitted that the new “diversity management” would *not* be about “treating everyone the same,” adding, “This can be a difficult concept to grasp, especially for leaders who grew up with the EO-inspired mandate to be both color and gender-blind.” This concept, if implemented, would be a radical departure from the military’s honorable tradition of recognizing individual merit.

**Small Numbers Won’t Matter:** “[T]he number of females entering these combat arms MOSs and units likely will be a very small percentage – significantly lower than the current **7%** female Marine Corps population overall. Thus, the overall impact on unit readiness will be buffered by the dominant numbers of male Marines, and should not show a significant difference.” (Summary & Conclusions p. vii)

**Response:** This comment disregards the consequences of intense Defense Department pressure to achieve gender diversity quotas of **25%** females or more.

- a.) At a January 2013 Pentagon briefing, then-Joint Chiefs Chairman **Gen. Martin Dempsey** called for a “*critical mass*” or “*significant cadre*” of women in the combat arms. Gen. Dempsey added that if “*a particular standard is so high that a woman couldn’t make it, the burden is now on the service to come back and explain ... why is it that high? Does it really have to be that high?*”

- b.) Over time in actual practice, this would become known as the “**Dempsey Rule,**” meaning that a standard too high for women will be deemed too high. These changes would affect not just a few people, but the entire culture of the military. In a single generation, gender-neutral minimum standards could replace high, maximum standards needed to achieve combat superiority and lethality in battle.

**Disciplinary Issues:** “We also see benefits to integrated units in areas in which females traditionally have better outcomes than males; e.g., incidents pertaining to disciplinary issues.” (Summary & Conclusions, pp. iv-v)

**Response:** Aggressive traits in boys and men sometimes lead to disciplinary problems, but the statement ignores the consequences of inappropriate male-female relationships, both voluntary and involuntary. To state the obvious in gender-neutral terms, human beings are not perfect, and combat arms personnel are no more perfect than anyone else.

- a) Despite countless hours devoted to sensitivity and leadership training, various types of misconduct, both voluntary and involuntary, persist in gender-mixed units at all levels and in all communities. If “training and leadership” could eliminate these problems, male/female disciplinary issues would have declined long ago.
- b) The question is whether disciplinary issues that have a profound effect on discipline, morale, and unit cohesion should be extended into the combat arms. These would include sexual misconduct of all types, accusations of same, distractions that weaken concentration, deterioration of mutual trust and cohesion, personnel losses during legal proceedings, and other types of turbulence. There are no benefits that would compensate for the extension of complicated male/female issues into the combat arms.
- c) A 2013 Defense Department study survey of 13,000 women found that those who had served in close combat situations reported **twice as many sexual assaults** by male colleagues. (**4%** compared to **2.1%**)<sup>16</sup>
- d) In an official 2012 survey about moving women into combat units, many male Marines listed being falsely accused of sexual harassment or assault as a top concern. Thousands of men indicated that the change would prompt them to leave the service altogether.<sup>17</sup>
- e) **Disciplinary problems reportedly occurred during GCEITF operations.**<sup>18</sup> A baseline survey done among task force volunteers “identified negative opinions towards social cohesion, disciplinary actions, unit readiness, and the overall success of individual Marines.” (p. 17) Officials should release the full results of all task force surveys.

**Effect on Recruiting:** “From a recruiting and propensity perspective, the opening up of these formerly closed MOS/units would likely have a neutral to positive effect, based on survey data.” (Summary & Conclusions, p. v)

**Response:** The next sentence continues: “However, **this presumes a voluntary assignment process**, if females were to be involuntarily ordered into combat arms units, this **could actually lower propensity and female enlistments.**” (Summary & Conclusions, p. v)

- a.) What if assignments are not voluntary? While testifying before the **House Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee** in June 2013, Marine **Lt. Gen. Robert Milstead** confirmed that women would be assigned on the same involuntary basis as men. <sup>19</sup>
- b.) According to non-service specific **Joint Advertising, Market Research, and Studies (JAMRS)** surveys done between January 2013 and March 2014, the announced change in policies affecting women caused **12%** of male respondents and **20%** of females to say they would be **less likely to join the military**. (CMR has requested 2015 JAMRS survey results but officials are withholding them.) <sup>20</sup>
- c.) An official 2012 survey found that about **22%** of male Marines and **17%** of female Marines said they would be likely to leave if women move into combat positions. <sup>21</sup>

**Selection Process & Graduation Rates:** “While we have seen **FLC [formal learning center]** graduation rates that range from comparable to considerably lower for females . . . by better screening [of] students before entry, we can substantially improve female graduation rates.” (Summary & Conclusions, p. vi)

**Response:** The next sentence continues: “The downside of such screening is that we would **drastically reduce the number of females eligible** for these [FLC] schools . . . We would also slightly **reduce the number of males eligible;**”

These statements summarize a 27-page section of the USMC Force Integration Plan, which may have been prepared by a consultant or contractor who used complex formulas to suggest ways to increase female graduation rates from MOS schools. <sup>22</sup> The mitigation plan is based on questionable data correlations, speculations, and misplaced priorities.

- a.) The suggested plan for boosting women’s MOS formal school graduation rates is based on an analysis of known performance scores and graduation rates of volunteer men and women in several **Infantry Training Battalion (ITB)** experiments in 2013-2014. Under the questionable presumption that performance scores would be similar among non-volunteers in the future, the plan would use basic physical fitness and combat fitness tests (PFT/CFT) to screen potential candidates for the combat arms MOS schools.
- b.) Officials would impose gender-neutral standards, such as 6 pull-ups instead of the current minimum 3, thereby excluding many women and some men who could not meet that mark. These recruits would be **“removed”** from the group sent to formal learning centers for combat arms MOSs.

- c.) By deliberately shrinking the pool of potential applicants to individuals most likely to succeed, such a system, in theory, would increase graduation rates, reduce injuries, and minimize **T2P2** personnel losses (transients, transfers, prisoners, and patients). The plan also is supposed to reduce expensive retraining and transfer costs when heavy MOS assignments do not work out. <sup>23</sup>

**The plan is problematic for several reasons, starting with misplaced priorities.**

- a.) In tough ground combat MOS training for infantry officers, Special Operations Forces and Navy SEALs, high failure rates are built into the program. Rigorous training excludes the majority of aspirants while finding and preparing the few remaining who really do have what it takes to be a Special Operator under extreme land combat conditions. The primary goal should be excellence and combat superiority, not gender diversity goals.
- b.) According to **Dr. William Gregor**, an expert in military physiology, screening programs based on gender-neutral PFT/CFT scores could cause the services to lose hundreds of potential graduates by excluding large numbers of men who very likely would have graduated. <sup>24</sup>
- c.) Recruiters who work hard to find qualified, willing recruits are sure to oppose an arbitrary plan to screen out significant numbers of male and female prospects, in exchange for a few female trainees who might, in theory, succeed.
- d.) The proposed screening plan also would exclude great numbers of female prospects who want to serve their country and would otherwise become fine Marines. In a 2013 test, female Marine Corps boot camp recruits were required to perform three pull-ups, the male minimum. The mandate was suspended indefinitely because **55%** of the female trainees could not do the three pull-ups. (Flexed-arm hangs are permitted instead.)
- e.) In addition to these pre-emptive losses, talented female Marines would be more likely to leave early due to what **Brig. Gen. George Smith** described as the “often **extreme physical demands** of infantry, reconnaissance, and special operations occupations.” <sup>25</sup>

Even if adopted, the screening plan probably would meet the same opposition as the **Military Entrance Physical Strength Capacity Test (MEPSCAT)** -- a detailed plan to match individual capabilities to MOS assignments that the Army proposed in 1982.

- a.) Initially, the **Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS)** supported the MEPSCAT, but later opposed it for being a “barrier” to women’s careers. As a result, the plan was never implemented as planned. <sup>26</sup>
- b.) PFT and CFT exercises, which are gender-normed and different for men and women, measure and help to maintain physical fitness; they were never intended to evaluate or prepare individuals for direct ground combat assignments.

- c.) A perfect pullup PFT score is 20 for men, 8 for women. If requirements for men are made gender-neutral, there would be no incentive to do 20 pull-ups or more. Over time men will emerge less strong and less prepared for the violence of direct ground combat.
- d.) Many studies in the U.S. and Britain have shown that men are more likely to sustain strength, endurance, and deployability during a full military career.<sup>27</sup> Replacing otherwise qualified men with women who meet minimal PFT/CFT requirements would exclude men who have a greater potential for training up to standard in MOS schools,<sup>28</sup> and for staying in the military for a full career.

These negative impacts on recruiting and retention, which are essential for maintaining the **All-Volunteer Force**, cannot be justified.

**Tolerance of Higher Levels of Risks:** “This decision [by Marine Corps leadership] will clearly be influenced by the levels of risk described, and the ability to mitigate those risks, balanced against the beneficial aspects of integration.” (Summary & Conclusions, p. viii)

**Response:** There are no “beneficial aspects of integration” that would justify elevated risks in direct ground combat operations. The Assessment noted that for measured tasks in the GCE-ITF field tests, “[I]ntegrated teams typically performed significantly (statistically) worse than all-male teams, especially within the infantry MOSs and the casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) tasks.” (p. 13)

- a.) The report provided detailed evidence, related to each MOS, in support of this statement: “Females have less strength than males in both upper and lower body, leading to **lower levels of performance on physically demanding tasks.** (p. 13) Subsequent pages provide brief summaries of detailed data presented in the **GCEITF Experimental Assessment Report** produced by the **Marine Corps Occupational Test and Evaluation Activity** cited in footnote #5. (Also see **MCOTEA** graph reproduced on page 12 of this report.)
- b.) In addition to infantry and CASEVAC performance differences, MCOTEA data highlight physical strength differences, target accuracy with weapons, ability to negotiate obstacles, and occupational-related injuries. In comparison to men, female participants were found to have **40% of upper body strength** and **60% of lower body strength.**
- c.) In addition, the report listed factors affecting survivability, lethality, and mission accomplishment, such as handgrip strength, marching speed under load, VO2 capacity (measuring endurance,) muscle mass, and body size.

In all of these factors, women clearly are disadvantaged. Increasing their numbers, therefore, would elevate risks for all personnel and combat missions. The Marines and other services should not be forced to “tolerate” levels of risk such as this.

**Effects of Gender Integration on Task Execution:** During task force personnel evacuation (CASEVAC) testing, “the 0341s (mortarmen) showed no differences in evacuation times . . . There was no significant difference between the integrated 0341 squad and the all-male 0341 squad with respect to emplacement and displacement times.” In addition, “During the destruction of captured munitions, integrated combat engineer squads showed no significant differences in times for loading, digging, unloading, or rigging for detonation.” (p. 16)

**Response:** The Assessment goes on to explain how “**male compensation** enabled integrated teams to complete at the same level as their all-male counterparts.” In squads with one or more women, **male Marines almost always did the heaviest work.** (pp. 16-17)

- a) For example, during CASEVAC testing, “the 0341s [mortarmen] primarily used a single-Marine **fireman’s carry** to move the casualty; in **16 of 18 trials**, a male Marine did this . . . The top one-third of the 0331 [machine gunner] results of the low-density [few women] squads was **almost exclusively male fireman’s carry results.**” (p. 16)
- b) With regard to 0341 [mortarman] squads, a “**masking effect that occurred within the emplacement portion is not captured by the current results.** It was observed that when slower members of the squad fell back during the initial movement, **their delay was hidden by the fact that the rest of the team began emplacing the 81-mm mortar system concurrently.** By the time the weapon system was fire capable, all members had arrived at the mortar firing position.” (p. 16)
- c) In the most demanding portion of the combat engineer testing, “**male engineers were responsible for picking up, moving, and lifting 155 mm artillery rounds onto a 7-ton truck**, whereas **females would position themselves on the truck** and only be responsible for receiving the round and preparing it for onward movement.” (p. 16)
- d) The Assessment also noted that when researchers compared integrated 0311 [rifleman] squads to all-male 0311 squads, there were no significant differences in times, but there was an issue with getting assault packs over the wall. “Prior to negotiating the wall, 0311 Marines removed their assault packs and individually threw them on top of the 8-foot wall prior to climbing. Females . . . were often noted as **requiring assistance from male squad members** in order to get their packs onto the wall.” (p. 17)
- e) Gender-integrated teams showed levels of achievement comparable to all-male units in some exercises, under controlled, limited conditions. As stated above, however, “**male compensations**” to make up for female strength deficiencies were needed to accomplish common heavy MOS tasks.

It would be unwise to rely upon “male compensations” under battlefield conditions – particularly in battles where there are no extra personnel to replace casualties.

**Small-Unit Dynamics:** “During the MSU research, all-male teams perform better at tasks requiring low-levels of problem solving skills; however, integrated teams with one female perform as well or better at tasks requiring a high degree of problem solving.” (p. 17)

**Response:** The Assessment continues: “Of note, these live tests were completed with **non-fatigued Marines**; i.e., Marines were not required to conduct any physically demanding tasks prior to performing the live testing. Therefore, **the impact of fatigue was not a factor in this assessment.**” (p. 17)

- a.) **Fatigue matters.** According to the December 2014 report of the **British Ministry of Defence**, “Survivability in combat is, in part, predicated by physiology . . . There will be some women, amongst the **physical elite**, who will achieve the entry tests for GCC roles. But **these women will be more susceptible to acute short term injury than men . . .** [W]omen have a **twofold higher risk of musculoskeletal (MSK) injury.**”<sup>29</sup>
- b.) The British Ministry of Defense report also found, “[Qualitative studies] suggest that the relative strength of women, configured to men, when carrying the combat load are likely to result in the **early onset of fatigue. This is likely to result in a distinct cohort with lower survivability in combat.**”
- c.) In addition, “Similar research points to a **reduced lethality rate**; in that **combat marksmanship degrades as a result of fatigue** when the combat load increases in proportion to body weight and strength.”

Claims that women’s undefined “problem-solving” capability would be a suitable trade-off for the physical realities described above are not credible – especially when higher rates of injury and non-deployability due to other medical reasons are factored in.

**Unit Readiness:** “University of Pittsburgh research indicates that injury prevention programs would eliminate the preponderance of time-loss injuries suffered by ITF [integrated task force] females . . . While there may be higher attrition among female Marines in newly opened occupational fields, in previous integration efforts these differences faded over time.” (p. 18)

**Response:** The statements above, which are not supported by examples or data, cannot disguise findings on the previous page: “Historically, the **non-deployable rate for female Marines is significantly higher than male Marines (up to 4x higher)**, and non-deployability is predominantly due to **medical reasons.** (p. 17)

“Further, gender integration may increase the rate at which female Marines become non-deployable – an effect that might be felt at the company/battery level . . . **training events injured ITF females at approximately twice the rate of their male counterparts.**” (pp. 17-18)

**Previous Gender Integration Efforts:** “A thorough review of previous gender-integration experiences, in particular the opening of Marine Corps logistics and aviation occupational fields, suggested that unit and personnel readiness do not change significantly following gender integration. . . Ultimately, the effect of gender integration, at both the unit and individual Marine level, was largely determined by leadership and training.” (p. 18)

**Response.** The information provided to support the claim primarily relates to military women’s careers and lack of bias against them. This is nothing new. For decades, Defense Department reports have indicated that military women are promoted at rates equal to or faster than men.

In addition, Marine logistics and aviation MOSs are not comparable to infantry and other direct ground combat battalions that seek out and attack the enemy with deliberate offensive action. The issue is combat effectiveness, not career opportunities.

**Experiences of Other Nations:** Marine Corps Force Innovation Office personnel conducted several visits to exchange information with commanders of gender-integrated units in allied armies. “[A] thorough review of the experience of **NATO** and **Allied nations** was conducted. The review of these studies indicated that concerns about the detrimental impact of women on military readiness and cohesion have not materialized.” (p.19)

**Response.** Report pages released so far do not provide details of what MCFIO personnel found when they visited armies of **Israel, Britain, Canada, and Australia.** <sup>30</sup>

- a.) Nor do the pages released explain why the allied nations in question do not use women in direct ground combat units comparable to DGC units in the United States. There are no discussions of gender-integration policies of potential adversaries, such as **North Korea, Iran,** and jihadist forces such as **ISIS** and **Al Qaeda.**
- b.) The final sentence in this section is footnoted to a person associated with RAND Corporation, which has been a strong advocate for women in direct ground since the early 1990s. <sup>31</sup> The comment is an opinion, not a fact supported by evidence.

**Gender Integration & Deployability Rates:** “Research conducted by Allied nations indicates that female Marines will be at great risk of overuse injury, but this risk can be mitigated with proper training.” (p. 21)

**Response:** There is no evidence to support assurances about proper training substantially mitigating risks of debilitating injury.

- a.) The same paragraph notes, “Historically, female Marines become non-deployable at approximately **three to four times** the rate of male Marines.” (p. 21)
- b.) The paragraph refers to efforts by the **Israeli Defense Forces (IDF)** to reduce overuse injuries, adding, “However, due to differences in operating environments, force

composition, public law, and employment patterns, it appears these techniques would be **unsuitable for the Marine Corps.**” (p. 21)

- c.) “[S]ome aspects of the IDF policy equate to **gender-normed standards**. For example, based on their load carriage index (LCI) for tactical movements, female IDF personnel are limited to **33% of their body weight**, while males are limited to **60% of their body weight**. Such standards violate the gender-neutrality requirement established by the SecDef, and the law prescribed in the NDAA 2014 mandate.” (p. 25)
- d.) “During the GCEITF, there were **significantly higher injury rates** for hiking MOSs . . . compared to riding MOSs.” (p. 21) “In the U-Pitt data set, the injury rate for Hiking MOSs is **45.3%** (63/139); the injury rate for Vehicle MOSs is **11.1%** (6/54). (p. 23)
- e.) Over a four year period (FY08-12), female Marines became **medically non-deployable (MND)** at rates four times greater than men’s. (**20.2% - 5.4%**) (p. 21) Disproportionate rates of MND losses among women likely would increase even more in the physically demanding combat arms. Personnel losses would be far more disruptive to others in small teams, such as infantry squads and tank crews, than they would be in larger combat support groups.

**RAND Predictions on Cohesion:** “In the end, meta-analysis of prior gender integrations efforts found that the detrimental effects on cohesion can be mitigated through good leadership, cohesion-building activities, and a shared sense of identity among men and women.” (p. 21)

**Response:** This unsupported comment is footnoted to RAND National Defense Institute researchers and a February 2015 paper that is unavailable for review. The comment inaccurately describes cohesion in civilian terms such as getting along socially or working together on tasks, not mutual trust for survival in combat.

- a.) The report continues, “Analysis suggests that **lowering standards or giving women preferential treatment would be detrimental to cohesion and morale.**” (p. 30)
- b.) Surveys of GCEITF personnel were conducted during the forming period, the training period, and the research period. The surveys found that “**Volunteers’ perceptions regarding the effect of women on combat effectiveness declined over time.**” (p. 30)
- c.) “Volunteers were divided by gender regarding their support for female Marines in combat roles, with females strongly supporting. Post-training, cohesion levels averaged **medium to good** across the ITF, with **31%** males and **36%** reporting very good cohesion. Post-assessment, the average cohesion levels dropped to **medium, trending to poor.**” (p. 30)

These findings, observed during a short-term, controlled experiment, suggest that cohesion would decline even more during oversea deployments and direct ground combat conditions.

**Long-Term Monitoring & Assessments:** The **General Accountability Office (GAO)** reported in July 2015 that **the Defense Department has no plan to monitor or evaluate the WIC social experiment.** <sup>32</sup> (p. 32)

**Response:** GAO recommends that the Defense Department devise such a plan, which will very likely involve outside contractors such as RAND. <sup>33</sup>

- a. Since the 1990s, RAND has produced a series of liberal polemics advocating for causes such as women in combat and gays in the military. <sup>34</sup>
- b. If RAND or other organizations that advocated for women in the combat arms are invited to evaluate the results of their own recommendations, and to withhold problematic information, all social experiments will be declared “successful,” no matter what.

## C. Conclusion

When multi-phased research projects began in 2012, officials expected that results would prove the research study hypothesis: *“An integrated unit under gender-neutral standards will perform equally as well as a gender restricted unit; hypothesis will be tested via operational evaluations.”* Instead, scientific data resulting from the unprecedented research program have disproven the hypothesis.

Advocates of women in combat have tried to discredit the results by raising smokescreen arguments. Navy Secretary **Ray Mabus**, for example, criticized the GCEITF research methodology because test results reported numerical averages and percentages, instead of individual performances. Said Mabus, “The Marines have never been about being average.”

Either the play on the word “average” was pure sophistry, or Secretary Mabus seriously misunderstands statistical analyses that University of Pittsburgh experts used in scientifically measuring male and female task force performances in the field.

Data points that determine statistical averages and comparative percentages are derived from the performances of multiple research participants. Policy-making conclusions should not be based on the best or the worst individual performances alone. Strong military forces depend on core values and unity of purpose that puts national security first. These qualities must not be compromised in pursuit of “gender diversity metrics” or any other politically motivated goal.

The Center for Military Readiness calls on members of Congress to shoulder the constitutional responsibility to conduct responsible oversight *before* harmful policies go into effect. In view of empirical evidence produced in the past three years, the administration’s plans to proceed with gender integration in the combat arms should be objectively reassessed. Major decisions regarding military women should be rooted in reality, not wishful thinking or mitigation myths.

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to six Marine Corps organizations, the following external agencies participated in the WISRR research: **University of Pittsburgh Warrior Human Performance Research Center (U-Pitt)**, **Center for Naval Analyses (CNA)**, **RAND Research & Development Corporation**, **Naval Health Research Center (NHRC)**, **Michigan State University (MSU)**, **Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS)**, and **George Mason University**.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on earlier stages of the USMC research, see various articles posted on the CMR website, [www.cmrlink.org](http://www.cmrlink.org). Part I in this series is posted here: [Interim CMR Special Report, Sept. 2014, U.S. Marine Corps Research Findings: Where Is the Case for Co-Ed Ground Combat?](#) This is an [Executive Summary](#).

<sup>3</sup> CMR: [Memo to Secretary Mabus: Marines' Lives Matter](#), September 2015.

<sup>4</sup> [Analysis of the Integration of Female Marines into Ground Combat Arms and Units](#), marked "Pre-Decisional – Not Releasable Under FOIA. These pages were covered by a [Memorandum for the Commandant of the Marine Corps](#) from Brigadier General George W. Smith, Jr., Director, Marine Corps Force Innovation Office, Subject: United States Marine Corps Assessment of Women in Service Assignments, dated August 18, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> [Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force Experimental Assessment Report, Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity, K. M. Moore, Col., USMC](#), Director (MCOTEA), Approved August 14, 2015, marked Pre-Decisional – Not Releasable Under FOIA. It appears that two activists for women in combat obtained these pages and provided them to selected newspapers.

<sup>6</sup> CMR: [Marines Set Sound Priorities: Survivability and Lethality in Battle](#), October 2015.

<sup>7</sup> [Interim CMR Special Report – Part II, Section A: USMC Research Findings: Where is the Case for Co-Ed Ground Combat?](#) October 2015. This report is posted on CMR's website, [www.cmrlink.org](http://www.cmrlink.org).

<sup>8</sup> Kelly M. Greenhill, *New York Times*, [Don't Dumb Down the Army](#), February 17, 2006. During the **Vietnam War**, Defense Secretary **Robert S. McNamara** created Project 100,000 to help approximately 300,000 men who annually failed Army aptitude tests. Many "**Category IV**" recruits, known as "**New Standards Men**," were relegated to "soft skill" jobs or the infantry, where they were 2 ½ times more likely to die in combat. Eleven times more had to be re-assigned, and 9 to 22 percent required remedial training. New Standards Men involved in the failed experiment fared no better than non-veteran counterparts, and many suffered post-combat psychological problems.

<sup>9</sup> Letter from **Rear Adm. Hugh P. Scott, MC, USN (Ret.)**, Letter to **House Armed Services Committee** Chairman **Howard P. "Buck" McKeon**, June 22, 2012. Excerpt: "While men and women have an equal number of muscles and muscle fibers, the strength difference relates exclusively to muscle size that is determined by testosterone levels. Because women have less testosterone than men, they have smaller muscle fibers that result in the development of small-size muscles; in effect, women have less muscle to activate. That also is the reason why women develop less muscle when training with weights and exercising."

<sup>10</sup> Interim CMR Special Report, Part I, [Partial List of Studies and Reports Relevant to Research on Women in Direct Ground Combat](#).

<sup>11</sup> AP and *USA Today*: [Few Women Want Combat Jobs, Survey Says](#), Feb. 24, 2014. Among Army women surveyed, **92.5%** said they would not accept land combat assignments if they were offered.

<sup>12</sup> Report of the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, November 15, 1992, CF 2.5.1, p. C-81.

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<sup>13</sup> See CMR Interim Report Part II, Section A, endnote #7 *supra*, for specific references. The MCOTEA report (Endnote #5, *supra*) provides detailed comparisons of the performances of all-male and gender-integrated units.

<sup>14</sup> Presidential Commission, Endnote #18 *supra*, CF 1.33 and CF 1.33A, p. C-40.

<sup>15</sup> [From Representation to Inclusion, Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century Military](#), Final Report, March 15, 2011. Instead of being blind to racial and gender differences, the MLDC report recommends race and gender consciousness. It repeatedly pushes for "diversity metrics," which are supposed to enforce race- and gender-conscious "inclusion" that goes beyond EO, and "needs to become the norm." (p. 18, 97)

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Tilghman, *Navy Times*, [Female Combat Vets Report More Assaults](#), Oct. 14, 2013, p. 10. Researchers found that women in a high-stress, life-threatening combat setting may find it more difficult to identify, diffuse, or avoid high-risk settings for sexual assault and harassment.

<sup>17</sup> Julie Watson, AP, [Marine Survey Lists Concerns on Women in Combat](#), Feb. 1, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Hope Hodge Seck, *Marine Corps Times*, [Grunt Life: Marines Dish on the Corps' Women in Combat Experiment](#), Sept. 7, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> **Rep. Loretta Sanchez** (D-CA) asked Lt. Gen. Milstead about women who aren't interested in "that combat thing." Could such assignments be a matter of "choice?" Gen. Milstead responded by noting that military assignments are not voluntary. "That's why we call them orders," he said.

<sup>20</sup> USMC Recruiting Command presentations titled [Female Enlisted Marine Accessions Brief to DACOWITS](#), Col. Smitherman, March 2014, p. 7; and Col. T. D. Trenchard, [Efforts to Influence Propensity to Serve and Increase Female Accessions](#), 19 September 2014, p. 7. CMR obtained additional data regarding propensity to serve in the Marine Corps from June 2011 through Spring 2014.

<sup>21</sup> CMR: [Survey of Marines Fails to Show Support for Women in Direct Ground Combat Units](#), posted on [www.cmrlink.org](http://www.cmrlink.org), February 2, 2013.

<sup>22</sup> Pages referenced appear the USMC Analysis linked in Endnote #4, *supra*.

<sup>23</sup> Army documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act indicate that the estimated re-assignment cost for each individual would be **\$30,697** per soldier, with an additional **\$17,606** being lost for individuals leaving the Army, not counting higher recruiting costs for women. See CMR Policy Analysis, [Co-Ed Combat Tests Hazardous to Women's Health](#), Aug. 2015.

<sup>24</sup> In an October 22 email on file with CMR, Prof. William J. Gregor, an expert in military physiology, explained how the losses might occur. "To understand the effect of screening you need to keep track of the changes in populations; i.e., how many are screened out and how many graduates are screened out. Table 4-4 through 4-7 will serve as an example. In Table 4-4: women 124 grads/359 started. If I require all women and men to do 6 pull-ups, Table 4-5 tells me that only 184 women start and 70 graduate. Thus, requiring 6 pull ups means 175 women are not permitted to start (359-184) and I lose 54 women graduates, 30% of women excluded would have graduated. However, requiring 6 pull ups for men means only 1620 start but I only exclude 19 from starting (1639-1620) and I lose 18 male graduates; 95% of the excluded males would have graduated. In other words, applying this screening criteria to men is unwise because it only screens out men who actually will succeed. Applied to women this screening criteria avoids training 121 women who will not graduate at the cost of 54 women who would; a potentially reasonable trade-off. The criteria is not gender neutral because it does not identify men who would fail and, thus, is unwise."

<sup>25</sup> [Statement of Brig. Gen. George Smith, Jr.](#), Director Marine Corps Force Innovation Office, p. 7.

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<sup>26</sup> **Brian Mitchell**, *Women in the Military: Flirting with Disaster*, 1998, p. 109. Also see paper by William J. Gregor, footnote #26 *infra*, pp. 5-6. MEPSCAT was recommended as part of the 1982 **Women in the Army Policy Review**.

<sup>27</sup> Interim CMR Special Report, Part I, [Partial List of Studies and Reports Relevant to Research on Women in Direct Ground Combat](#)

<sup>28</sup> William J. Gregor, PhD, Professor of Social Sciences, School of Advanced Military Studies Fort Leavenworth, KS, [Why Can't Anything Be Done? Measuring Physical Readiness of Women for Military Occupations](#), a paper on physiology presented at the 2011 International Biennial Conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society. Excerpt: "The data clearly reveals a very large gap between the physical strength, aerobic capacity and size of Army men and women. Training men and women correctly improves the performance of both groups but it also widens the gap in performance."

<sup>29</sup> CMR Policy Analysis: [New British Report Shreds Case for Women in Ground Close Combat \(GCC\)](#), p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Neither Britain nor Israel use female personnel in DGC units comparable to those in the United States. See CMR Policy Analysis: [New British Report Shreds Case for Women in Ground Close Combat \(GCC\)](#), and CMR: [Israeli Defense Force Decides: Armored Tanks Will Stay All-Male](#). The Canadian Forces are allied with the U.S., but their primary mission is peacekeeping, not offensive warfare. In a 1989 decision by the **Canadian Human Rights Tribunal**, all combat positions in the **Canadian Forces (CF)**, except submarines, were opened to women. The primary purpose was equal opportunity. No attempt was made to consider the impact on operational readiness or unit effectiveness. (Presidential Commission Report, CF 1.129, P. C-67) The Australian push to assign female soldiers to land combat units was the direct result of a sex scandal at the nation's military academy. Even though Australia offered various incentives, interest among women has been low. The culture of the Australian military is not comparable to that of the United States.

<sup>31</sup> Several times since the early 1990s RAND has produced papers advocating for women in combat and other liberal military/social policies. In 1997, RAND removed negative information from their own report on women in combat. See [CMR Analyzes 1997 RAND Study](#), Oct. – Nov. 1997. RAND also ignored a congressional mandate in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for 2006 to produce a report on *de facto* repeal of the 1994 Department of Defense collocation rule. RAND produced what CMR called the [Rubber Stamp RAND Report](#) 17 months (and two congressional cycles) beyond the legal deadline.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report, Military Personnel: [DoD is Expanding Combat Service Opportunities for Women, but Should Monitor Long-Term Integration Progress](#), July 2015. A section of BG General George Smith's memo cited in Endnote #11 *supra*, supports a "Long-term Assessment" of the results of gender integration. It mentions RAND and/or CNA (Center for Naval Analysis) to do the assessments, for as long as 10-20 years. (Sec. 5, p. 10)

<sup>33</sup> Appendix II of the GAO report cited above lists many outside organizations that have been working on various phases of the **Women in Services Restrictions Review (WISRR)**. The Defense Department Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel & Readiness lists RAND as the primary contractor. RAND also has been primarily responsible for a still-undisclosed study for **Special Operations Command (SOCOM)**, which considers RAND to be an objective organization.

<sup>34</sup> See Endnote #30, *supra*.