

Numbers and Characteristics of Women in the Active Component, U.S. Armed Forces, 2011

As of 30 September 2011, women composed 14.5 percent (n=204,706) of the active components of the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force and 13.8 percent of the active duty members of the U.S. Coast Guard (Table 1).

Among the service branches, the Air Force (19.0%) and Marine Corps (6.8%) had the largest and smallest proportions of women among their active component members, respectively (Table 1). Women

accounted for approximately one-fifth (19.3%; n=2,596) of all U.S. military service academy cadets and midshipmen and nearly one-third (31%) of all cadets at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy (Table 2). Among the service academies, the U.S. Air Force Academy had relatively more women (22.0%) in 2011, and the largest absolute and relative increases (n=395, +70.7%) in women since 1994 (Table 2).

From 1994 to 2011, the absolute and relative numbers of women in the active component of the U.S. Armed Forces slightly increased (Table 2). Of note however, in 2011 compared to 1994, there were more than six times as many women among the highest ranking officers (Generals/Admirals), more than 80 percent more women in the highest enlisted grade (E9), and more than 60 percent more women in military service academies (Table 2).

TABLE 1. Profile of women serving in the U.S. Armed Forces as of 30 September 2011

	Total	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marine Corps	Coast Guard
All active component	1,453,429	561,435	320,139	328,821	201,025	42,009
Women	210,502	76,013	52,414	62,592	13,687	5,796
<i>% of active component</i>	14.5%	13.5%	16.4%	19.0%	6.8%	13.8%
Men	1,242,927	485,422	267,725	266,229	187,338	36,213
<i>% of active component</i>	85.5%	86.5%	83.6%	81.0%	93.2%	86.2%
Women only						
Military status						
Enlisted	171,261	60,253	43,894	50,302	12,360	4,452
<i>% of all enlisted</i>	14.2%	13.0%	16.4%	19.1%	6.9%	13.3%
Officers, commissioned/warrant	39,241	15,760	8,520	12,290	1,327	1,344
<i>% of all officers</i>	15.9%	16.2%	16.0%	18.8%	6.1%	16.0%
OEF/OIF/OND deployments (since 2001)						
<i>Any deployment</i>	50.6%	59.0%	49.1%	48.9%	36.5%	4.2%
1	29.3%	33.6%	29.7%	27.5%	23.4%	3.7%
2	13.8%	16.8%	13.3%	12.8%	9.3%	0.4%
3 or more	7.4%	8.5%	6.1%	8.6%	3.7%	0.1%
Enlisted occupations						
<i>% of women among all persons in occupational positions</i>						
Health care specialists	30.5%	27.4%	19.6%	49.3%	N/A	34.4%
Functional support and administration	30.1%	32.6%	24.2%	36.0%	18.7%	31.0%
Service and supply handlers	16.4%	17.7%	19.6%	17.1%	8.9%	1.1%
Communications and intelligence specialists	14.3%	9.2%	21.7%	22.1%	8.3%	19.2%
Other occupations enlisted	13.0%	13.5%	15.8%	14.5%	7.4%	13.8%
Electronic equipment repairers	10.1%	11.4%	11.9%	9.3%	4.9%	4.9%
Electrical/mechanical equipment repairers	8.5%	7.4%	13.0%	5.9%	4.7%	7.8%
Infantry, gun crews, and seamanship specialists	2.8%	0.9%	14.6%	7.2%	0.5%	5.8%
Officer occupations						
<i>% of women among all persons in occupational positions</i>						
Health care	39.2%	37.2%	37.5%	43.9%	N/A	13.0%
Administrators	26.6%	28.1%	21.2%	31.3%	17.7%	19.1%
Supply, procurement and allied	19.1%	22.6%	13.8%	20.6%	9.9%	11.6%
Other occupations	15.2%	13.9%	16.0%	17.7%	7.7%	17.6%
Engineering and maintenance	10.9%	13.4%	5.4%	12.9%	4.6%	0.7%
Tactical operations	5.2%	2.8%	7.9%	7.2%	2.4%	3.6%

TABLE 2. Proportions of women in certain categories of military service, 1994 vs 2011 (U.S. Coast Guard excluded)

	September 1994		September 2011		1994-2011	
	No.	% of all persons	No.	% of all persons	No. increase	Percent increase (%)
Active component	198,087	12.4	204,712	14.5	6,625	3.3
Officers, total	31,815	13.0	37,807	15.9	5,992	18.8
- General/Admiral (O7-O10)	11	1.2	71	7.3	60	545.5
- Colonel/Captain (O6)	590	4.8	1,372	11.3	782	132.5
Enlisted members, total	166,272	12.3	166,905	14.2	633	0.4
- Highest grade (E9)	405	3.3	755	7.3	350	86.4
- Next highest grade (E8)	1,775	5.9	2,541	9.3	766	43.2
Cadets/Midshipmen, total	1,601	13.0	2,596	19.3	995	62.1
- U.S. Military Academy	477	11.9	743	16.1	266	55.8
- U.S. Naval Academy	565	13.2	899	19.9	334	59.1
- U.S. Air Force Academy	559	14.0	954	22.0	395	70.7

In regard to military occupations, women account for nearly one-third of all enlisted health care and “administrative and functional support” specialists and approximately 40 percent of all health care officers. Of particular note, in the Air Force, women constitute 49 percent and 44 percent of all enlisted members and officers

in health care-related occupations, respectively (**Table 1**).

Of all female members of the active component in September 2011, approximately one-half (50.6%) had deployed at least once in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, or New Dawn (**Table 1**).

Finally, over the last 10 years (2002 –2011), the median age of female active component members overall has increased from 24 years to 26 years; women in the Marine Corps are younger (median age: 23 years) than their counterparts in the other services (**data not shown**).