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Chapter One. Operationalizing Women, Peace, and Security in
the Armed Services: Army Strategic Implementation Plan:
Introduction



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PART 8

Implementing Women, Peace, and Security

Operationalizing Women, Peace, and Security in the Armed Services

Army Strategic Implementation Plan

by Major Danielle Villanueva, U.S. Army*

Chapter One Introduction

This study explores how the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda is operationalized in the U.S. armed forces with specific emphasis on the Army. An analysis of publications and archival documents, interviews with subject matter experts, and a case study of WPS implementation in the Australian Defence Force helped inform this effort to operationalize WPS and identify best practices and to introduce a WPS Army strategic implementation plan (WPS ASIP). This plan is an opportunity to provide a critical enabler for the emerging global peace and security context and fulfill the Service's legal requirements under WPS.

In 2001, predicated on the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, the UN passed UNSCR 1325, which called for the full participation of women in peace and security initiatives. UNSCR 1325 and the eight subsequent resolutions provide the "international framework for the implementation of gender perspective in the pursuit of international security and the conduct of peace operations."¹ UNSCR 1325 coined the term Women, Peace, and Security to encompass a broad array of topics specifically related to the impact of armed conflict on women and girls and the importance of their contributions to conflict resolution and peace building. The follow-up resolutions included a range of complex, multilayered issues such as the representation of women in conflict resolution; gender perspectives mainstreaming; training reformations; and protection of women, girls, and boys from conflict-related threats. Eventually, the United States began its own body of founding documents, including the most recent DOD *Women, Peace, and Security Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan* released in June 2020. The plan provided three main defense objectives, which included to model and employ WPS within our own formations, to promote women's participation for partner nations, and to promote the protection of partner nation civilians. The Army is the foremost land service branch of the United States and the largest component of DOD. As of now, there is not a comprehensive plan for how the Army will operationalize WPS. As we enter a period of complex,

* The views expressed in this chapter are solely those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Marine Corps University, the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Army, U.S. Army War College, the U.S. Air Force, or the U.S. government.

¹ Robert Egnell, "Gender Perspectives and Military Effectiveness: Implementing UNSCR 1325 and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security," *Prism* 6, no. 1 (March 2016): 73.

multidomain conflict, the armed forces, specifically the Army, must capitalize on every opportunity to build capabilities and increase security.

At the Service level, efforts to incorporate WPS are ongoing and mostly focused on professional military education and incorporation into doctrine. A U.S. Army WPS strategic implementation plan is necessary to synchronize efforts across the Service to better guide tactical, operational, and strategic decisionmaking and warfighting. The recommendations given in this paper focus on mainstreaming a gender perspective and seek to bridge the gap between policy and operationalizing WPS. The current evolving nature of war and the threats facing the United States demand a greater emphasis on all warfighting tools beyond hard security tactics and strategies.