

# **REVIEW INTO THE EXCLUSION OF WOMEN FROM GROUND CLOSE COMBAT ROLES**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The aim of the review will be to assess the current exclusion of women from ground close combat roles, to identify the benefits and risks of changing this policy and to make recommendations. The review is to be open and evidence based, building on the considerable work undertaken in support of the 2002 and 2010 reviews. The assessment of benefits is to include the impact of a change in policy on the recruitment of women into the wider Armed Forces. It is to cover all three Services, with the Army acting as the lead Service working in close cooperation with the Navy, the Air Force and the Chief of Defence Personnel.

It is to be based on the premise that all roles should be open to women unless this would undermine combat effectiveness. Armed Forces' effectiveness is not, however, to be prejudiced by lowering operationally necessary standards.

The review will undertake:

- An assessment of women's roles in recent operations.

- An internal survey to determine current attitudes within the Armed Forces towards the effectiveness of mixed gender teams in ground close combat environments.

- The engagement of external stakeholders and wider society to determine attitudes towards women in close quarter fighting.

- A review of recent research literature on the effectiveness of mixed-gender teams in a combat environment.

- Consideration of the experience of other nations in training women for and employing them in ground close combat roles.

- A review of scientific literature on gender related physiological issues relating to the performance of military tasks.

- A confirmation of the legal position and a review of relevant legal cases since 2010.

- An initial assessment of the practical issues and risks of implementing a change to the existing policy.

The review is to be led by CGS and is to report by the end of 2014.