

Brigadier-General Jennie Carignan becomes highest ranked female officer in the Combat Arms of the Canadian Army

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Brigadier-General Jennie Carignan became the highest-ranked woman in the Combat Arms yesterday, June 15, in a ceremony presided over by the Commander of the Canadian Defence Academy, Major-General Eric Tremblay.



Brigadier-General Jennie Carignan (center) is promoted by Major-General Eric Tremblay (left) and her husband Eric Lefrançois at a ceremony held at Canadian Forces College in Toronto, ON.

DND Photo by Sgt Colin Kelley

The Canadian Army considers Brigadier-General Carignan's promotion exciting, since she was among the first women to enter the Combat Engineer trade after all military occupations were opened to women in 1989 (with the exception of submarine service which opened to women in 2000). With her promotion, she assumes the role of Chief of Staff, Army Operations. Brigadier-General Carignan's background is exceptional, with 30 years of military service. She holds several degrees, including a Degree in Fuels and Materials Engineering (Royal Military College of Canada), a Masters of Business Administration (Université Laval), and a Masters of Military Arts and Science (United States Army School of Advanced Military Studies, Kansas). She has deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Golan Heights, and Afghanistan as the Commanding Officer of the Task Force Kandahar Engineer Regiment. Brigadier-General Carignan recently received the prestigious medal *Gloire de l'Escolle* which recognizes graduates from l'Université Laval who have distinguished themselves professionally and in service to their communities.

Canada is a world leader in the proportion of women serving in all armed forces trades and professions. Among our allies, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are highly regarded as being at the forefront of military gender integration. The changes to CAF personnel policies followed Parliament passing the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (1985) and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982).



A ceremony was held at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto to promote Brigadier-General Jennie Carignan as the first female combat arms general officer in the Canadian Armed Forces. Present at the ceremony are (L to R) Chief Warrant Officer Robert McCann, Major-General Eric Tremblay, BGen Carignan, daughter Camille, husband Eric Lefrançois, son Ian and daughter Amelie.

DND Photo by Sgt Colin Kelley

Quotes

“Brigadier-General Jennie Carignan continues to be a trailblazer for women in the Canadian Armed Forces. Her promotion and assumption of the demanding role of Operations Chief of Staff of the Canadian Army is an example of our diverse and equal-opportunity military and the hard work and perseverance she brings to the job. I am proud of her accomplishments and am confident that her wealth of experience as a combat arms leader will serve her well in her new role.”

Harjit S. Sajjan, Defence Minister

“Brigadier-General Carignan is a true role model and has proven herself to be an exceptional leader of men and women. As the Defence Champion for Women I congratulate Brigadier-General Carignan on her promotion and posting. This will inspire our serving women and those considering a career in the CAF. Her success is yet another demonstration that doors previously closed to women in the Canadian Armed Forces are now fully open.”

Rear-Admiral Jennifer Bennett, Director General, Strategic Response Team on Sexual Misconduct and Defence Champion for Women

“With thirty years of experience in the Canadian Army as a soldier, a student, an educator and a leader, Brigadier-General Jennie Carignan is now ready to contribute to our nation’s defence as a General Officer in the Combat Arms. With her excellent record of service in Canada and internationally, she will continue to serve and lead in her new position as Chief of Staff, Army Operations at the Canadian Army Headquarters.”

Lieutenant-General Marquis Hainse, Commander Canadian Army

Quick Facts

- As of February 2016, the percentage of women in the CAF, Regular Force and Primary Reserve combined was at 15 per cent, with more than 9, 549 women in the Regular Force and more than 4,404 women in the Primary Reserve.
- The Chief of Staff, Army Operations provides strategic staff support to the Commander of the Canadian Army to direct, manage, synchronize and sustain the Army. Chief of Staff, Army Operations also manages the Army Staff on behalf of the Commander, Canadian Army.