

In Quality, USAF Leads the Pack

Of the services, USAF has long attracted the highest-quality recruits. That is true today and the gap is widening. In one basic measurement—percentage of a recruiting class with at least a high school diploma (Fig. 1), USAF always has scored at or near 100 percent. Service differences are most evident in comparisons of Armed Forces Qualification Test results (Fig. 2). AFQT is used to screen recruits and assign

them to specific military occupations. AFQT examines math and verbal skills; resulting percentage scores measure aptitude, relative to the US population aged 18 to 23. As can be seen, nearly 100 percent of USAF recruits supersede the aptitude of the general population. The other services do not come close to matching that performance.

Fig. 1: Percentage With High School Diploma

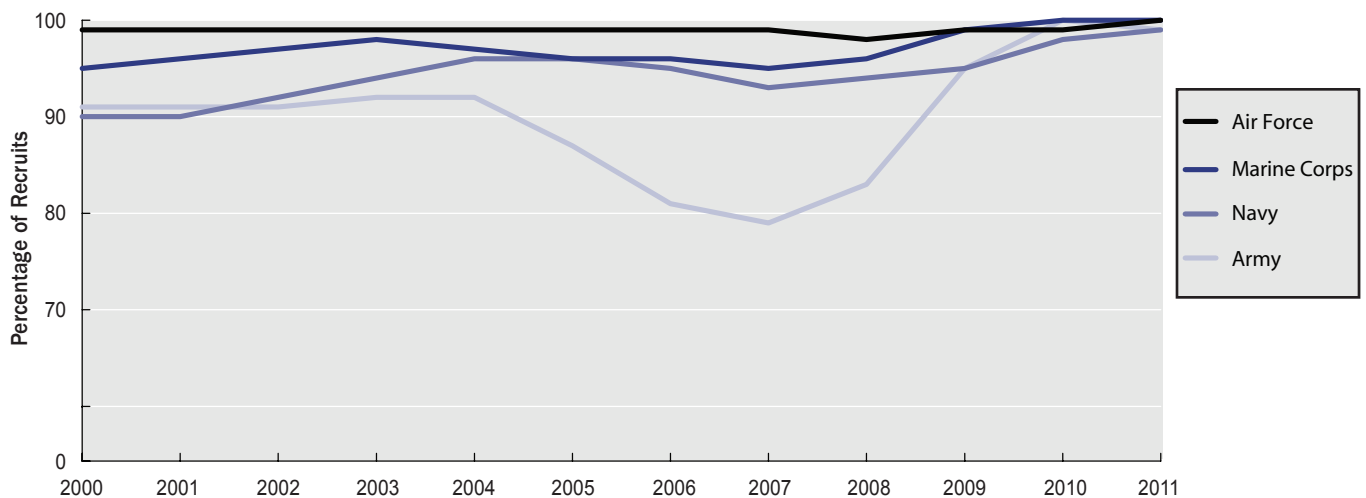
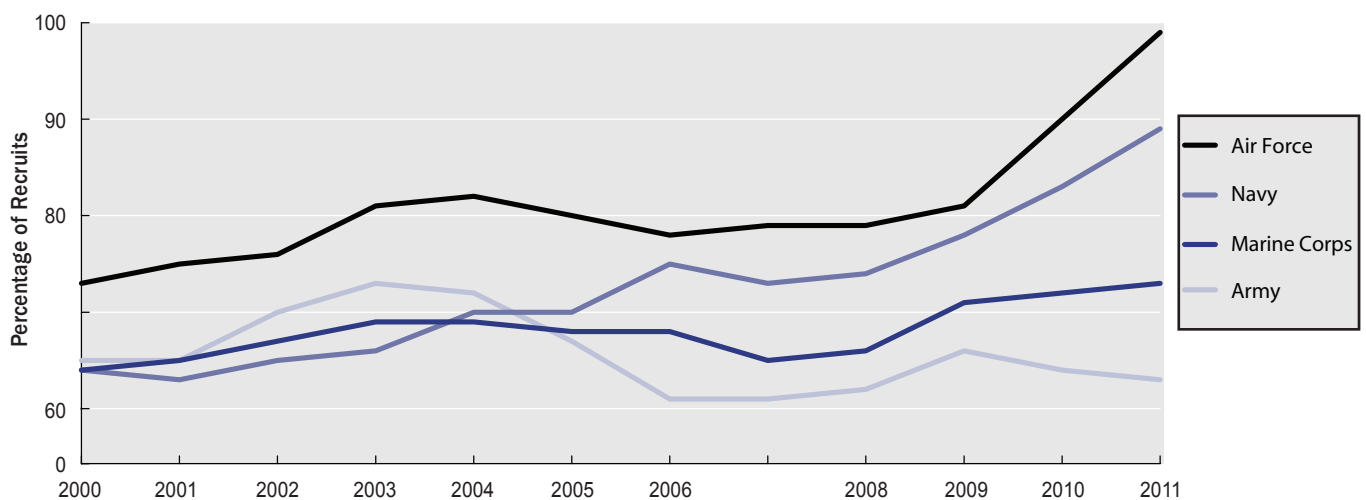


Fig. 2: Percentage With Above-the-Median AFQT Score



Source: "Costs of Military Pay and Benefits in the Defense Budget," Congressional Budget Office, Washington, D.C., November 2012. Based on Department of Defense and RAND Corp. documents.