USArmy: Additional Physical Test for Combat Roles

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The United States Army announced on Wednesday the launch of a new physical assessment aimed at measuring the fitness of soldiers engaged in combat roles. The program, called the **Combat Field Test (CFT)**, aims to evaluate military performance in conditions that faithfully simulate the challenges of modern warfare, emphasizing strength, endurance, and movement under load.

Sergeant Christopher Smith was among the first to test the new standards at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall in Virginia, lifting 40-pound (about 18 kg) sandbags under the watchful eyes of instructors.

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A neutral and action-focused test

Unlike previous parameters, the Combat Field Test will be **age and gender neutral**, based solely on a "pass/fail" standard linked to operational needs.

The stages of the test

The test must be completed within a maximum time of **30 minutes**, with the stopwatch running continuously. Soldiers face the challenge wearing full combat uniform and standard boots. The sequence includes:

1. **Initial run:** 1 mile (1.6 km).
2. **Explosive strength:** 30 "dead-stop" push-ups (with chest to the ground).
3. **Speed:** 100-meter sprint.
4. **Load:** 16 lifts of an 18 kg sandbag onto a platform 1.65 meters high.
5. **Weight carry:** 50 meters of walking carrying two 18 kg water cans each.
6. **Agility:** 50 meters of tactical movement (crawling on the ground) and 25 meters of alternating sprints (3-5 seconds).
7. **Final run:** 1 mile (1.6 km).

The army specified that the Combat Field Test **will not replace** the current Army Fitness Test, but will be added to it for specific categories.

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Implementation and involved roles

The implementation of the new test will begin this month and the test will be conducted annually. For the first year, the Army has adopted a soft approach: no adverse administrative actions will be taken against those who fail to meet the standards.

However, soldiers in combat specialties who do not meet the minimum requirements may request a **voluntary reclassification** to other roles.

Who must take the test?

The specialties that are required to undergo this assessment include:

- Infantry (**Infantry**)
- Combat Engineering (**Combat Engineering**)
- Field Artillery (**Field Artillery**)
- Armor (**Armor**)
- Explosive Ordnance Disposal experts (**EOD**)