

IDF Commissions First Female Combat Battalion Commander

Maj. Oshrat Bachar will soon become the Israel Defense Forces' first female combat battalion commander. Bachar's appointment was made by IDF Ground Forces Commander Maj. Gen. Guy Tzur.

Bachar will be promoted to lieutenant general and will take command of Field Intelligence Battalion 727, stationed on the Israel-Egypt border. She has held positions in the Field Intelligence Corps for almost her entire service, starting as a field intelligence spotter and later becoming a deputy company and company commander.

Bachar primarily served in the Nesher battalion, which until recently was deployed on the Israel-Egypt border. As a result of developments in the Sinai Peninsula, the IDF created Battalion 727, known as Eitam.

The relatively young Eitam battalion has become instrumental in IDF Southern Command's Division 80's efforts to keep up with the ever-changing security situation in Sinai after the fall of the Mubarak regime—and the entry of terrorist elements to the region.

Bachar also served as the head of the field intelligence spotter training course, as well as the chief of general staff's adviser on women's issues. Bachar is married to a fellow career officer who serves in the Engineer Corps, and the two have a 7-year-old daughter.

Bachar's promotion will set a precedent in the IDF. While the field intelligence branch has many female company and deputy company commanders, there has never been a female battalion commander. The position she will soon enter is a demanding one, and she will be in charge of a theater that requires constant vigilance.

Bachar's promotion is seen as a sign of the respect and appreciation she commands from her superiors and subordinates. Bachar received many congratulatory phone calls after the announcement of the promotion and said she was elated.