



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-3000

MCO 1542.3E
AVN (MAD)
15 Nov 2024

MARINE CORPS ORDER 1542.3E

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: UNITED STATES NAVY/UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TEST PILOT SCHOOLS

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 3710.37A
(b) NAVAIRINST 3710.9F
(c) NAVAIR M-3710.1
(d) CNAF M-3710.7
(e) MCO 1900.16 w/CH-2
(f) SECNAV M-5210.1
(g) MCO 5210.11F
(h) 5 U.S.C. § 552a
(i) SECNAVINST 5211.5F
(j) MCO 5215.1K w/Admin CH-1

1. Situation. Marine Corps Test Pilots, Test Naval Flight Officers (NFOs) and Test Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Officers perform a critical function in the aviation acquisition life cycle. Service as a Test Pilot/Test NFO/Test UAS Officer is demanding and potentially dangerous, requiring a careful and rigorous selection process. In accordance with the references, this Order posts specific requirements and promulgates standardized procedures for application to the United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS) and the United States Air Force Test Pilot School (USAFTPS). This Order is in accordance with references (a) through (j).

2. Cancellation. MCO 1542.3D.

3. Mission

a. Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) is responsible for Test and Evaluation (T&E) of aircraft, weapons systems, components, and related equipment, among other aspects of the acquisition life-cycle process.

b. USNTPS at Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River, Maryland (MD), provides instruction to experienced pilots, NFOs, UAS Officers, and civilians in the processes and techniques of aircraft and systems T&E. The school investigates and develops new flight test techniques, publishes manuals for use by the flight test community, and standardizes flight test techniques and project reporting.

c. USAFTPS, at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB), California (CA), trains pilots, navigators, and engineers to conduct flight T&E of research-prototype and production aerospace vehicles, systems, and weapons. The school develops, implements, and conducts a theoretical and applied academics and flying curriculum.

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

4. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent. Establish baseline qualifications, standards, and selection processes, to inform applicants interested in USNTPS and USAFTPS.

(2) Concept of Operations

(a) United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS). The 11-month course of instruction at USNTPS includes concurrent academic and flight events in fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft. Students participate in either a fixed-wing or a rotary-wing curriculum.

(b) United States Air Force Test Pilot School (USAFTPS). The 12-month course of instruction at USAFTPS emphasizes flight test methods and techniques in selected USAF aircraft.

NOTE: Curricula at both schools is considered equivalent in terms of the training and education provided. Graduates of USNTPS and USAFTPS receive the 7595 Free Military Occupational Specialty (FMOS).

b. Subordinate Element Tasks

(1) Applicants. Applicants should carefully consider possible career impacts prior to applying. Applicants should discuss potential impacts with their respective monitor and current/former test pilots, if able. Applicants must meet the following requirements:

(a) Administrative

1. Be a designated Naval Aviator, NFO, or UAS Officer.
2. Hold a current security clearance, secret or higher.
3. Meet syllabus aircraft anthropometric requirements per references (a), (b), and (c). Applicants falling outside these parameters shall receive case-by-case consideration.

a. Weight: 136-213 lbs. (max allowable is 103-245 lbs.).

b. Sitting Height: 32.0" through 40.9".

c. Buttock-Knee Length: 21.0" through 27.4".

(b) Academics

1. United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS). A bachelor's degree in an engineering, physical science, computer science or mathematics field is highly desirable. Minimum academic requirements:

a. College physics or mechanics (static and dynamic).

b. College algebra and calculus.

2. United States Air Force Test Pilot School (USAFTPS). A bachelor's degree in an engineering, physical science, or mathematics field is mandatory.

(c) Flight and Professional

1. Rotary-Wing, Tiltrotor, and Fixed-Wing Pilots

a. A minimum of 750 military flight hours.

b. Designation as a Helicopter Aircraft Commander, Tiltrotor Aircraft Commander, or Aircraft Commander, per reference (d).

c. Additional designations/qualifications/experience such as section/division/flight leader, mission commander, functional check flight pilot, advanced tactical designations, instructor qualifications, and combat experience are beneficial and highlight maturity, judgment, and aircraft mastery.

2. Naval Flight Officers (NFOs)

a. A minimum of 750 military flight hours.

b. Additional designations/qualifications/experience such as advanced tactical designations, instructor qualifications, and combat experience are beneficial and highlight maturity, judgment, and aircraft mastery.

3. Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Officers

a. A minimum of 500 UAS flight hours.

b. Manned aircraft flight time (military or civilian) and additional designations/qualifications/experience such as advanced tactical designations, instructor qualifications, and combat experience are beneficial and highlight aeronautical adaptability, maturity, and judgment.

(2) Marine Aviation Detachment (MAD). The MAD will coordinate with multiple departments within Marine Aviation to produce the number of pilots, NFOs, and UAS Officers selected.

(a) MAD Patuxent River, MAD China Lake, and Pt. Mugu provides future T&E requirements.

(b) Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA), Manpower Personnel Management Aviation Officer Assignments (MMOA-2), provides current staffing priorities.

(c) Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC) Aviation verifies and submits T&E requirements to Combat Development and Integration (CD&I).

(d) CD&I validates requirements and verifies authorized personnel structure exists.

5. Administration and Logistics

a. Application

(1) Submit applications via the most current Test Pilot School Selection Panel Marine Administrative (MARADMIN) Message.

(2) Applicants should upload documentation with the online questionnaire. Required and recommended documentation includes:

(a) A letter of intent written in Naval Letter Format and endorsed by the applicant's commanding officer and first O-6, or equivalent, in the chain of command. The command endorsement should evaluate the applicant's airmanship, intelligence, initiative, integrity, judgment, adaptability, and motivation. In cases where the endorsing officer has no firsthand knowledge of the applicant's flying ability, applicants shall provide a letter of recommendation from one or more officers who have supervised the applicant in an operational flying billet within the past three years. An example letter resides with the online questionnaire.

(b) Applicants must include a letter to the president of the selection board addressing academic background and flight experience (hours and qualifications) falling outside the parameters outlined in paragraph 4.

(c) Applicants shall disclose and provide relevant documentation pertaining to any Field Flight Performance Board (FFPB) of which they were a subject.

(d) Applicants may include letters of recommendation with their application. Letters from those familiar with, or having experience in the T&E field, provide valuable insight to the selection board.

(3) Applicants may withdraw their application at any time via written or e-mail notification to the Commanding Officer, Marine Aviation Detachment, Patuxent River.

(4) Application packages are not retained. Applicants must submit a complete application for all subsequent boards.

b. Deadline. Submit applications in accordance with the most current Test Pilot School Selection Panel MARADMIN.

c. Applicants must report to USNTPS/AFTPS with a current Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization (NATOPS) check in their primary type/model/series (T/M/S) aircraft and a valid instrument check. Applicants must report with a current flight physical examination (Medical Service Group I), as defined in reference (d).

d. Selection. The TPS selection boards are non-statutory boards conducted semi-annually on the date published by the most current Test Pilot School Selection Panel MARADMIN. The board shall select officers "best qualified" to meet the needs of the Marine Corps. A selection MARADMIN will notify primary and alternate selectees.

(1) Attending USNTPS or USAFTPS incurs a two-year service obligation per reference (e). Following TPS, graduates typically serve a three year test tour at NAS Patuxent River, MD, NAWS China Lake, CA or Edwards AFB, CA.

(2) Pre and post TPS training requirements may vary by class and selectee(s).

(3) Fixed-wing pilot selectees can expect T-6 and T-38 training prior to TPS.

(4) Rotary-wing pilot selectees can expect H-60 and H-72 training prior to TPS.

(5) Tiltrotor pilot selectees can expect additional rotary-wing training prior to TPS.

(6) UAS selectees that do not have 7518 PMOS, can expect approximately six months of MQ-9 training before or after graduation.

e. Records Management. Records created as a result of this Order shall be managed according to National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)-approved dispositions in reference (f), SECNAV M-5210.1 w/CH-1, to ensure proper maintenance, use, accessibility, and preservation, regardless of format or medium. Records disposition schedules are located on the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration (DON/AA), Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page at: <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>. Refer to reference (g), MCO 5210.11F, for Marine Corps records management policy and procedures.

f. Privacy Act. Any misuse or unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) may result in both civil and criminal penalties. The Department of the Navy (DON) recognizes that the privacy of an individual is a personal and fundamental right that shall be respected and protected. The DON's need to collect, use, maintain, or disseminate PII about individuals for purposes of discharging its statutory responsibilities shall be balanced against the individuals' right to be protected against unwarranted invasion of privacy. All collection, use, maintenance, or dissemination of PII shall be in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended [reference (h)] and implemented per reference (i).

g. Forms. There are no forms used in this Order.

h. Updates. Updates made to this Order must be done in accordance with the current iteration of reference (j).

i. Recommendations. Recommendations concerning the contents of this Order are welcomed and may be forwarded to the Commanding Officer, Marine Aviation Detachment, 22401 Cedar Point Road, Building 102, Patuxent River, MD 20670-1186.

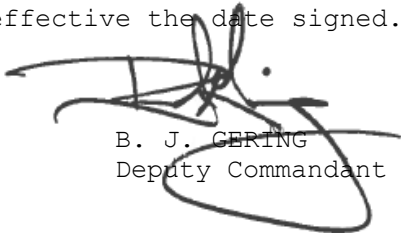
6. Command and Signal

a. Command

(1) This Order is not applicable to the Marine Corps Reserve.

(2) Commanding Officers should make the widest dissemination of this Order and encourage well-qualified officers to apply.

b. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed.



B. J. GERING
Deputy Commandant for Aviation

DISTRIBUTION: PCN 10255315500

APPENDIX A

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFB	Air Force Base
CA	California
CD&I	Combat Development and Integration
DON	Department of the Navy
DON/AA	Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration
DRMD	Directives and Records Management Division
FFPB	Field Flight Performance Board
FMOS	Free Military Occupational Specialty
HQMC	Headquarters Marine Corps
M&RA	Manpower and Reserve Affairs
MAD	Marine Aviation Detachment
MARADMIN	Marine Administrative
MD	Maryland
MMOA-2	Manpower Personnel Management Aviation Officer Assignments
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NAS	Naval Air Station
NATOPS	Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization
NAVAIR	Naval Air Systems Command
NFO	Naval Flight Officer
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
T&E	Test and Evaluation
T/M/S	Type/Model/Series
UAS	Unmanned Aircraft System
USAFTPS	United States Air Force Test Pilot School
USNTPS	United States Naval Test Pilot School