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798-803

PARTS I-V

1977

# DEFENCE COUNCIL INSTRUCTIONS ROYAL NAVY

Instructions in this series are automatically cancelled after one year



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
16 December 1977

By Command of the  
Defence Council

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## II. SERVICE PERSONNEL

### 798/77. AIRCREWMAN BRANCH—RE-ORGANIZATION (R)

[N/MAN/T/143/25/1/74(DNMT(S)(DGNMT))]

1. After 1978 conditions for flying at sea will be changed to a large degree, with only twin-engined helicopters and VSTOL aircraft embarked in HMS HERMES and the CAHs. On present plans none of these ships will have dedicated SAR helicopters or SAR divers embarked. The CAHs will have an Atlantic Sea Rescue Boat which would be used in the case of aircraft ditching or pilots ejecting in the immediate vicinity of the ship; it is not intended to carry an SAR diver in the boat. SAR operations at medium and long range where a helicopter is required will be carried out by Sea King using the crews complemented for ASW operations; again it is not intended to carry an SAR diver.
2. Accordingly it has been decided that the SAR and SAR diver categories of the aircrewman branch will lapse on *31 December 1978*. After this date, the shore billets currently filled by SAR aircrewmembers and SAR divers will be filled by ratings who have completed an operational tour in a front line squadron or ship's flight and who successfully complete SMAC 55F (Aircrewman SAR Acquaint course). The aircrewman branch will then consist of the following four categories:
  - a. *Sonar operator*; for duty in sonar and sonics equipped ASW helicopters.
  - b. *Commando aircrewman*; for duty in commando helicopters.
  - c. *AS 12 missile aimer*; for duty in guided missile equipped helicopters.
  - d. *Communications aircraft aircrewman*; for duty in fixed wing aircraft and helicopters employed on communications flight duties.
3. **Training.** No further ratings will be trained initially as SAR aircrewman or SAR divers from the date of this DCI. SMAC 55F was introduced at RNAS Culdrose on 24 October 1977 as PJT for ratings drafted to 771 and 772 squadrons and SAR flights.
4. Ratings will be trained initially in one of the aircrewman branch categories, except communication aircraft aircrewman, but may be required to cross-train to other categories, dependent upon manning requirements. This cross-training will broaden experience and afford equal opportunities in all categories for shore employment.
5. **SAR divers.** There will remain a limited requirement for qualified aircrewmembers of any category to train as SAR divers and join a small cadre of SAR divers which will be maintained to meet the needs of the shore-based SAR squadrons and flights. Training in the skills and responsibilities required will therefore continue with the SAR diver qualification classified as an Additional Qualification. When vacancies occur in the cadre, candidates for the course will be selected exclusively from aircrewman volunteers who are 'in date' ships' divers with a minimum of 500 minutes diving time. On successful completion of SMAC 55G (SAR divers' course), Group 2 Diving Pay will commence and will continue so long as a man remains in the SAR diving cadre.
6. **Cross-training.** Aircrewmembers who are qualified solely in the SAR or SAR diver categories will be required to cross-train to other categories by *1 August 1979*. These ratings are to render Form C240 to the Commodore, HMS CENTURION, by



31 March 1978, stating their preferences in order for the Sonar, Missile Aimer, Communication or Commando categories. This requirement may be waived for ratings whose engagements expire before 31 July 1979. The award of first preferences will depend upon the numbers required for each category.

7. **Eligibility.** Candidates for the aircrewman branch are selected from volunteers from any non-technician branch. From 1 January 1979 they must be able or leading rates in medical category B1, qualified educationally (NAMET 4/4), passed naval swimming test and be aged over 19 and under 26 years *at the start of basic flying training*. In order to meet the upper age limit it is essential that early application is made in order to allow for completion of current sea drafts, courses being over-subscribed, Leading Rates Leadership course and Pre-Flying Training (PFT). Able rates must have the potential for early advancement to leading rate in the aircrewman branch.

8. **Application for transfer.** Applications to transfer to the aircrewman branch are to be forwarded to the Commanding Officer, RN Air Station, Culdrose, with a copy to the Flag Officer Naval Air Command and to the Commodore, HMS CENTURION, accompanied by certified copies of the rating's Service Certificate, Form S264a and History Sheet, and a certificate that the PULHEEMS assessment is in date and that the PULHEEMS profile corresponds to the profile for aircrew as laid down in BR 1750A, Article 0602.2. In addition, Form F Med 4 is to be forwarded direct to the President, Central Air Medical Board, for scrutiny. For able rates the application must include a favourable assessment of the potential for leading rate on Form S264a.

9. BR 1066 and BR 1950 will be amended.