

1970 Requirements to be a PJ

PREREQUISITES FOR ACCEPTANCE INTO PARARESCUE TRAINING

GENERAL

The applicant should have a history of outdoor adaptability and the ability to absorb military discipline. He should be willing to contribute to team effort and to appreciate the role played by the USAF aircrew member. He should understand and appreciate the moral and military obligation to provide maximum rescue effort in the event of an accident or with the advent of an aerospace recovery mission. He should understand and be dedicated to the overall humanitarian mission of ARRS.

SPECIFICS

1. United States citizen.
2. Enlist in the United States Air Force.
3. Eligible for overseas duty.
4. Thirty years of age or less.
5. Physically qualified for parachute jump status, diving and Class III flying status as outlined in AFM 160-1 and Article 15-30, Manual of the Medical Department, United States Navy.
6. Volunteer for parachute duty.
7. Volunteer for diving duty.
8. Possess a minimum ACB or AQE general aptitude index of 6 or percentile score of 60.
9. Possess all 1's on physical profile.
10. Physically able to perform:
 - a. 1600 yard swim using breast and side stroke.
 - b. One-mile run in 8 minutes.
 - c. Six chinups.
 - d. Twenty-two pushups.
 - e. Twenty situps.

(Items "b" and "e" should be performed with only a two or three minute breathing period)

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Selection of pararescue trainees is done only in Basic Military Training.
2. All ARRS pararescuemen are volunteers.

FORMAL SCHOOLS

1. PARARESCUE PRE-CONDITIONING SCHOOL - LACKLAND AFB, TX--FOUR WEEKS. This school starts immediately after completion of BASIC MILITARY TRAINING.
2. Medical--Four weeks at the Rescue and Survival Medical Technician School, Sheppard AFB, Texas.
3. Parachutist--Three weeks at the Army Airborne Parachutists School, Ft. Benning, Georgia.
4. Survival--Two weeks at the USAF Advanced Survival School, Fairchild AFB, Washington.
5. SCUBA--Four weeks at the U.S. Naval Underwater Swimmers School, Key West, Florida, or San Diego, California.
6. Pararescue--Eight weeks at the Pararescue Technician School, Hill AFB, Utah.

TRANSITION TRAINING

1. Transition parachute training includes open field, tree and SCUBA jumps. Twelve jumps of various types are required to qualify for operational status.
2. Training in ground communications, use of special equipment, mission procedures, map reading and mountain climbing, plus the Pararescue Trainee will receive an extensive Pararescue Medical Course.

1970 Pararescue Courses

31Oct69	Basic Training
15Feb69	Pararescue selection course also know as “pre-conditioning” 4 months Lackland AFB
20Feb70	USA Airborne School
18Apr70	USA SF SCUBA School 5 weeks
5May70	USAF Survival School 12 days
9Jun70	USAF Rescue and Survival Medical School 4 weeks
4Sep70	USAF Pararescue School 10 weeks
	Followed by ten days at USA Ranger mountain climbing course with graduation date of 4Aug70

The Pararescue indoctrination Course was the only AFSC awarding course requiring students to undergo tremendous stress and physical training as prerequisite to proceed to other required AFSC awarding courses

The putting in place of the Pararescue Indoctrination Course resulted from the selecting volunteer shifting from the serving second enlistment service member population to seeking volunteers from among the new recruits as they were going through Basic Military Training. Its secondary purpose was to improve the proportion of students successfully making it through all required training by giving students physical fitness training preparation so the student wouldn't have burden of obtaining necessary level of physical fitness while going through these courses.

The physical fitness approach initially implemented at the Pararescue Indoctrination Course relied on the established approach emerging from WWI and WWII of physical fitness training is a frequent daily activity that is both rigorous and strenuous.

The most noticeable problem being the volunteer applicants remained in a casual status training limbo until enough volunteers formed a class to ship out. This unpredictability included lack of a set standard for course length and lack of a set minimum physical standard before entering the pipeline training. Unfortunately, the unpredictability allowed some applicants to proceed into pipeline courses after a few days and others waiting several weeks or months before proceeding to the pipeline courses.

The lesser noticeable but of equal significance problem was lack of insufficient numbers of instructors for the numbers of student applicants being trained and more importantly those chosen to be instructors being inadequately prepared to do curriculum development, curriculum planning and other instructional system development. Although the instructors chosen had good on-the-job trainer experience, they lacked the academic instructing experience to operate and manage a permanent course of this nature. Occasionally the instructor was a wounded

combat veteran also undergoing outpatient treatments for combat wounds at Wilford Hall Medical Center.

More importantly, the attrition in the pipeline after leaving the Indoctrination began a steady decline from 60% to less than 4%.

Although the course training criteria has entry and exit Physical Ability and Stamina Test (PAST) standards, these standards do not require unreasonable effort or maximal athletic competitive effort. Nor does the PAST pass/fail standard pit students against each other to get selected to proceed into required AFSC awarding pipeline courses.

The Pararescue Indoctrination Course in addition to giving preparatory training exposes students to various stress-tolerance activities to give them an opportunity to realize what performing Pararescue duties for an enlistment or a career entails. Most attrition is students self-eliminating from training after getting a taste of the problem solving and adapting requirements confronting them further in training and operationally in the field.

In spring of 1970 Tommy Miles in a wheelchair and Al Avery on crutches were at Lackland AFB recruiting and testing the volunteers. Both were fresh from combat and recovering from injuries.

In 1970 only 300 of 750,000 enlisted men in the Air Force are PJ's.

To meet the basic qualifications for pararescue, a man must pass the following requirements: be in top physical shape, swim 1,600 yards in less than 60 minutes, run a mile in 8½ minutes, do a minimum of 6 pull-ups, a minimum of 20 sit-ups, a minimum of 22 push-ups and 80 deep-knee bends. Men are in competition for PJ work and only 16 out of every 8,000 interviewed for training are selected.

Once a man is accepted, he will attend the following formal schools:

The Pararescue Pre-Conditioning Course at Eglin AFB runs a duration of four weeks and puts the PJ candidate in top physical shape for attendance in the other training schools. When a PJ trainee leaves Eglin, he'll be able to complete a five mile run. The PJ inductee will attend a Scuba School for four weeks at the U.S. Navy Underwater Swimmer's School, Key West, Fla. He'll learn diving principles, underwater physics and physiology and undergo training to develop swimming stamina. Sgt. Richard Pambrun, another PJ instructor, said that pararescuemen are in one of two military units that are taught to repair their own scuba equipment.

At the Parachutist School in Ft. Benning, Ga., the student will make five parachute jumps

The PJ's medical training is taught at the Rescue and Survival Technical Course, Medical Service School, Sheppard AFB, Tex., and for four weeks he learns the principles of anatomy and physiology, basic medical terminology and advanced first aid. Graduate PJ's are the only non-professional personnel allowed to prescribe and administer drugs in emergency situations.

Three weeks of Survival training are taught at the USAF Advanced Survival School, Fairchild AFB, Wash. Here, the PJ learns the techniques of survival under adverse conditions, escape and evasion procedures, shelter construction, land navigation and principles of procuring food and water.

The twelve week course in the Pararescue Recovery Specialist School at Eglin winds up the initial training for PJ's.