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DCI RN 163-176
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Defence Council Instructions

Royal Navy

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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DCIs are automatically cancelled after one year

Introduction

1. Following extensive study, it has been decided that the best way to maintain Operational Capability in the front line Naval Commando Squadrons (Cdo Sqns), is to establish a Royal Marines Aircrewman (RMAC) specialisation. The introduction of this specialisation will allow for the gradual transfer of responsibility from the present Naval Cdo Aircrewman (Acmn) sub-specialisation, which will be discontinued when the transfer is complete.

Aim

2. This DCI will outline the entry and training requirements for the RMAC Specialisation, and the implementation plan including implications for the Naval Cdo Acmn.

Manning Requirement

3. There is a requirement for 49 RMAC billets in FONA, and the Front and Second Line Fleet Air Arm (FAA) units, including three billets in the Higher Training Quotient (HTQ).

Future RM Commando Structure

RM Aircrewman entry and selection requirements

4. The entry requirements for RMAC are as follows:

- a. Marine 1st Class passed Junior Command Course at Grade B or above, or substantive Corporal status.
- b. Medical category B1.
- c. Qualified educationally NAMET 3:3.
- d. Passed the RM Battle Swimming Test.
- e. Over the age of 19 and under the age of 28 on commencement of Aircrew Flying Training (AFT).
- f. Successful completion of flying grading.

RM aircrewman training

5. On completion of Flying Grading, successful candidates will be called forward by the RM drafting desk to commence Flying Training which will consist of:

- a. Basic Flying Training (BFT) - seven weeks at the Defence Helicopter Flying School (DHFS), Shawbury, Shropshire.
- b. Advanced Flying Training (AFT) - four weeks at Culdrose.

c. Operational Flying Training (OFT)- 15 weeks at Yeovilton.

6. The RMAC training syllabus has been trialled, and the results of validation will be incorporated into the course structure. Special emphasis will be placed on the core requirements of:

- Navigation
- Flight planning and
- Load lifting.

Certificate of Competence

7. Training will be consolidated by On Job Training (OJT) with a Front Line Sqn. On completion of the OJT Task Book, RMAC will be awarded a Certificate of Competence (CofC), considered to be Cdo Acmn qualified, awarded the adqual 'CDOAIR', and promoted to Cpl.

Training Failures

8. RM students who are suspended from flying training will be referred to the Naval Aircrew Advisory Board (NAAB). Confirmation of a failure will result in withdrawal from flying training and reversion to source specialisation.

Return of Service

9. RMAC will be required to give a minimum of three years return of service from completion of OFT in accordance with BR 8748 Article 0219.1.e.

Specialist Qualification One (SQ1) awards

10. The award of SQ1 is dependant upon passing the special qualifying course (equivalent to the current Petty Officer's Professional Qualifying Examination [PQE]), possession of the Cdo Acmn CofC, and flying standard assessment of Average or above.

11. The future RMAC promotion structure, based upon current RM structures, is at the ANNEX.

Transition Arrangements

12. RN Cdo Acmn will continue to serve until at least the completion of their current engagement. They will be replaced, in normal course, by RMAC as the RMs grow through the specialisation. Routine transfer from the ASW to the Cdo sub-specialisation has ceased for Naval ratings and, henceforth, only RM other ranks will normally be recruited.

RN Commando Aircrewmen

Promotion/advancement

13. In future, RN Cdo and ASW Acmn will be segregated for advancement and promotion purposes and for selection for 20E. Once the pure Cdo Acmn have been separated, there will be more CPOs and POs than are strictly required by the RN Schemes of Complement; clearly this is unsupportable in the long term. Therefore,

there will be an initial requirement to bring the Bearing into line with the Requirement by rate. Thus, advancement and promotion for RN Cdo Acmn in the early years of transition will be slower than before. Similarly, the opportunity for 20E will be restricted to those ratings who can genuinely be employed in the long term.

14. Promotion of RN and RM Acmn will be maintained on current Service rules and regulations. An independent selection board convened by DGNM and consisting of DNMRRM, DNMXAV and a third member from either FONA, HQRM or CND will sit in the event that two candidates, one RM other rank, and one RN rating, of similar merit are in competition for a single promotion slot.

Reversion to ASW

15. In recognition of the fact that some ratings may see their aspirations for promotion or 20E reduced there will be a limited period during which they can request to transfer, permanently, back to the ASW specialisation. Any transfer will be subject to the requirements of the Service and dependent upon their employability as an ASW Acmn in their current rate. For those ratings who apply, and are accepted, there will be no option to return to the Cdo sub-specialisation.

16. Transfer requests may be forwarded up to 1 Jan 98 through normal administrative channels - thereafter there will be no further opportunity to transfer. Requests will only be granted if judged to be in the Service interest. Requests will remain extant until either the rating leaves the Service or he decides to withdraw the request. Ratings may withdraw the request at any time.

Timescales

17. The overall timescale for the transfer of responsibility for the provision of Cdo Acmn from RN to RM personnel is not expected to be fully complete until 2009.

Shortfalls

18. Further transfer of ASW Acmn to the RN Cdo Acmn subspecialisation after branch transfer has commenced is only likely in the event that the RM are unable to meet the manning requirement for RMAC.

Implementation Working Group

19. A Working Group has been formed under the chairmanship of DNM(RM) to monitor recruiting, training, promotion, and the maintenance of operational effectiveness, whilst the transfer of responsibility takes place. This group consists of (CHOTS addresses):

DNMRRM (Chairman)
DNMXAV
FONA/SOCH

CND/D3A
HQRM/CDO
NMASEC1A

Related Regulations

20. A Copy of this DCI is to be retained within the covers of BR 1283 (Royal Marines Instructions) and BR 1066 (Advancement Regulations) until incorporated at the next amendments.

ANNEX

RMAC - Branch and promotion structure

Corporal Commando Aircrewman qualified
(Requirement - 24 Billets)

Pass Senior Command Course

Qualified RMAC1

Selection by Promotion Board

Sergeant
(Requirement - 17 Billets)

Selection by Promotion Board

Colour Sergeant
(Requirement - Five Billets)

Qualified Educationally for Warrant Officer (QEWO)

Passed Advanced Command Course

Selection by Promotion Board

Warrant Officer 2nd Class
(Requirement - Two Billets)

Selection by Promotion Board

Warrant Officer 1st Class