



Submarine Officer Advanced Course

Congratulations on screening for Department Head. As a prospective Submarine Department Head, you will attend the prestigious Submarine Officer Advanced Course (SOAC), which convenes at Naval Submarine School in Groton, Connecticut.

SOAC is a graduate level course in Submarine Operations. You can expect lectures and readings that ensure you are grounded in the reference material, and then you will participate in an array of trainer scenarios that test the limits of your knowledge. Successful Department Heads are the ones who know the references, and how to properly apply them to complex situations. You should expect that during your time here you will be challenged with scenarios that do not always fit neatly into the black and white. You are expected to think, apply the references, and then make a decision about how best to manage the risks associated with complex scenarios. You will not be given pre-canned answers to every scenario.

SOAC is designed to achieve three main Objectives:

1. Verify you are a safe Officer of the Deck
2. Make you ready to certify as Navigator
3. Make you an experienced Combat Team Member (WCC, FCC, Battlestations OOD)

To achieve these objectives, the course schedule is divided into four phases, primarily aligned with the Phases of War:

Leveling Phase (Wks 1 – 5): Evaluated periscope depth ascents, periscope skills scenarios, and surfaced ship handling scenarios in the bridge.

Phase 0 (Wks 6-9): Primarily focused on Navigation (Piloting, Surfaced, and Submerged).

Phase 1 (Wks 10 – 17): Primarily focused on Anti-Submarine Tracking (AST) and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR).

Phase 2/3 (Wks 18 – 22) : Primarily focused on Combat Operations.

Other: 1 Week of Leadership with the Naval Leadership and Ethics Center. 1 Week of Final DH preparations.

Executive Coaching: Executive level coaching sessions provided by Submarine Force Psychologists / Medical Officers.

Your qualifications as a Submarine Officer are earned; however, it is recognized that every officer will not have similar experiences and OOD time at sea. Thus, the Leveling Phase over the first five weeks will be used to bring everyone up-to-speed with the doctrine and skill level expected of a capable OOD. Your initial assessments early in this phase will be used to focus on identified weak areas with additional practice sessions and dedicated feedback prior to proceeding on to the subsequent SOAC phases. Ultimately, you are required to pass by the end of the Leveling Phase in week five.

Any self-study you are able to accomplish prior to your arrival will greatly assist you in being successful. We understand that not everyone has access to all of these publications, and there is some time set aside for you to study once you get here. The following references are a recommended starting point:

Rules of the Road

- Several online applications (that can be accessed on your personal phone) exist to prepare you for the USCG Rules of the Road examination

Contact Management Manual

- **Focus on**
 - CH. 4 – Collision Avoidance Funnel, Rules of the Road Flow Chart
 - CH. 5 – Sections 5.1-5.3, 5.4.1,5.4.2
 - CH. 8 – Preparations for Periscope Depth
 - CH. 10 – Changes since DIVO Tour
 - CH. 11 – Changes since DIVO Tour

Periscope Depth Operations and Sensor Employment Manual

- **Focus on**
 - CH. 3 – Sections 3.3, 3.4, 3.6
 - Appendix A
 - Appendix B

APB-17 Consolidated Employment Manual

- **Focus on**
 - CH. 2
 - CH. 4

The course will consist of classroom periods including a number of lectures, seminars and various trainer sessions designed to improve your system employment knowledge, sharpen your tactical and mariner skills, and build on your operational planning toolbox by executing an array of different scenarios.

Be prepared for a demanding workday. Classes are nominally scheduled from 0730 to 1630 Monday through Friday. Study periods are built into the schedule in conjunction with practice trainer time, so you will need to prioritize your time. Expect to have trainers in the morning and the afternoon, this makes off watch time exceedingly valuable. Most students bring their lunch for the duration of the course, as time is limited. There are amenities such as a refrigerator, freezer, microwave, coffee pot, and water cooler/heater available for your use.

Medical/Dental. Your orders will have specific medical requirements, such as Operational Duty Screenings and Overseas Screenings, as required. All students will have to complete a PHA regardless of their current PHA status within 90 days prior to transfer. Make sure that you verify your IMR status on BUPERS Online and start correcting any medical issues you have as soon as possible. Any major changes in your medical status that may jeopardize your ability to be a fully screened, at-sea submarine officer should be reported to your detailer and all attempts should be made PRIOR to SOAC to have these issues adjudicated. Anything that cannot be completed at your present duty station should be scheduled as early as possible once you get here. The medical process can sometimes be long and involved and appointments need to be scheduled weeks or months in advance. You must take early action to complete any medical requirements. SOAC is not designed to allow significant time to adjudicate voluntary or long-standing medical issues. You are expected to be medically ready to go to sea as a submarine officer when you report to SOAC.

PFA. Being physically fit is demanded of our leaders. Upon reporting you will be provided a body composition assessment (BCA) to assist you in assessing your physical readiness. Since SOAC is a 6-month course, most classes will have to complete a PFA during their time here. Ensure that you are physically fit and that your PHA is up to date.

Leave. Although leave is authorized during SOAC, students are not authorized to miss curriculum and therefore should not expect to take leave during workdays or scheduled lectures and events. If a student has a planned event that occurs during SOAC and intends to request leave, they shall make the SOAC Director aware of the requested dates as soon as possible upon reporting.

Early Graduation. The SOAC curriculum is established such you will be working and attending required events nearly until your graduation date. Students and perspective submarine crews should not expect early releases from SOAC.

Uniforms. The typical uniform of the day is NWUs. Graduations normally occur in either Summer Whites or Service Dress Blues, based on the time of year. Since SOAC is a PCS move, you should expect to have your full sea bag of uniforms available to you. As a reminder, official Navy PT gear is a uniform item. Additionally, depending on the time of year, you may have the opportunity to attend a formal event such as the Groton Area Submarine Ball. Although participation is voluntary, having your dress uniform prepared and available is expected.

Points of Contact

SOAC Training Pipeline Manager (Primary POC): (860) 694-3637

SOAC Director: (860) 694-2176

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SUBSCOL WEPS: (860) 694-2223

Congratulations on your assignment to SOAC and as a Submarine Force Department Head. You will find your tour both challenging and rewarding!