



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON, TN 38055-0000

BUPERSINST 1500.62F
PERS-434B
1 Jul 2025

BUPERS INSTRUCTION 1500.62F

From: Chief of Naval Personnel

Subj: TEST PILOT SCHOOLS

1. Purpose. To publish courses of instruction information offered at the United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS), United States Air Force Test Pilot School (USAFTPS), British Empire Test Pilots' School (ETPS), and the French Test Pilot School, École du Personnel Navigant d'Essais et de Réception (EPNER). Major revisions to this instruction include updates to curriculum details, eligibility requirements, enrollment procedures, and various updates to terms and acronyms.

2. Cancellation. BUPERSINST 1500.62E.

3. Scope and Applicability. This instruction is applicable to designated active-duty naval aviators, naval flight officers (NFOs), and aerospace engineering duty officers (AEDO) through the grade of lieutenant commander.

4. Background

a. Naval Air Warfare Center (NAWC), Aircraft Division (Patuxent River, MD) and NAWC Weapons Divisions (China Lake and Point Mugu, CA), including their subordinate test wings and squadrons are responsible for test and evaluation (T&E) of airborne weapons systems. USNTPS is responsible for training experienced fleet naval aviators, naval flight officers (NFOs), and project engineers to lead teams through T&E activities.

b. The Navy has test pilot school (TPS) exchange programs with the United States Air Force and the British and French Ministries of Defense. USAFTPS is located at Edwards Air Force Base, CA; ETPS at Boscombe Down, Salisbury, England; and EPNER at Istres, France.

c. Assignment of TPS graduates is based on the needs of the Service. Graduates of USNTPS, USAFTPS, ETPS, and EPNER should expect a 24- to 36-month follow-on tour at a U.S. Navy activity requiring test pilots or test NFOs.

5. Discussion

a. The duration of courses of instruction is approximately 1 year.

b. Academic study in aerodynamics, stability and control, power plant analysis, airborne systems, and related engineering subjects are included at all four test pilot schools.

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c. The flight curriculum at each school is designed to provide actual experience in T&E of modern aircraft and airborne systems, including test planning, execution, analysis, and reporting to higher authorities. The particular focus is given to risk management and relating engineering facts to mission impact.

d. USNTPS offers two curricula - fixed wing (FW) and rotary wing (RW), both of which include instruction in airborne and unmanned systems. FW and RW curricula prepare pilots, NFOs, and engineers to test airborne mission systems, unmanned systems, flying qualities, and performance. Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) civilian personnel are also eligible to participate in any curriculum as part of the flight test engineer syllabus offered through NAVAIR.

e. Fixed-wing pilots may expect to depart their current command approximately 5 months prior to their USNTPS class convening date to receive T-6B and T-38C preparatory training enroute.

f. Rotary-wing and tilt-rotor pilots may expect to depart their current command approximately 3 months prior to the USNTPS class convening date to receive UH-60L and UH-72A preparatory training enroute.

g. Typical classes are composed of approximately 10–12 RW pilot seats, 12 FW pilot seats, and 12 FW seats for flight officers and engineers. Candidates who are designated naval aviators may only screen for FW or RW pilot seats and they will complete the pre-arrival requirements for that curriculum, regardless of slated follow-on test tour assignment. This provision affords the naval air acquisitions community the latitude to employ these pilots in subsequent test tours involving either manned or unmanned flight test programs.

h. NFOs will receive all required preparatory flight training following check-in at USNTPS.

i. All USNTPS candidates may expect to receive a 3-day water survival course encompassing Class one through four survival training prior to class convening date.

j. USNTPS has a cooperative program with Purdue University wherein Purdue teaches pre-arrival and core engineering courses and some USNTPS courses are cross-listed with or accepted as transfer credits with Purdue. Candidates selected for USNTPS will receive directions for immediate enrollment in Purdue Online within 2 weeks of selection board results. Required pre-arrival coursework on foundational subjects (e.g., calculus and mechanics) will commence approximately 5 months prior to USNTPS class convene date and will run concurrent to the preparatory aircraft training described above.

k. Candidates enroute to ETPS and EPNER may expect aircraft and systems preparatory training at USNTPS. Additionally, candidates selected for EPNER may expect to attend the Defense Language Institute for 6 months and to complete the 3-month French Technical Language Course in France prior to class convening date.

1. Candidates selected for USAFTPS may expect pre-arrival training to begin approximately 2 months before class start date.

6. Convening Date

a. Classes are convened at USNTPS in the Summer and Winter of each year. Each class composition of aviators and NFOs will be determined by the TPS selection board based on current requirements.

b. USAFTPS convenes classes in January and July.

c. ETPS convenes classes in January of each year.

d. EPNER convenes classes in July.

7. Eligibility. Designated active-duty naval aviators (1310s), NFOs (1320s), and AEDOs (1510s) through the grade of lieutenant commander may apply. All applications will be reviewed by Navy Personnel Command and the Aerospace Engineering Duty Officers Distribution Branch (PERS-434B) to determine board eligibility. Applicants for TPS must meet the following minimum qualifications:

a. Bachelor of Science degree in engineering, physical sciences, mathematics, or other technical fields (e.g., computer science or data sciences). This requirement may be waived if requirements dictate and the applicant has completed college-level calculus and physics.

b. Recent experience in an operational squadron. It is desirable that applicants have over 1,000 hours of flight time (projected to class convening date). Candidates should have earned all tactical qualifications available to them and commensurate with their operational tours.

c. Career progression that allows for the completion of a 24- to 36-month test tour following graduation. Exceptions may be granted by the board, but in no case should officers with less than 24 months available post-graduation be considered, unless no other eligible candidates have applied.

d. Only fixed-wing pilots will be considered for USAFTPS. Only fixed-wing and rotary-wing pilots will be considered for ETPS and EPNER.

e. Applicants must be qualified for flight duties and have not been terminated from flying status.

f. An individual's anthropometric measurements and current weight must allow for the safe operation of the core USNTPS syllabus aircraft. Core aircraft include H-60, H-72, T-6, and T-38. T-6 and T-38 ejection seat weight limits are 103–245 lb. Applicants must be able to report to USNTPS pre-arrival training within the above weight limits. Applicants who

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have been anthropometrically or otherwise disqualified from a specific aircraft type, class, model, or series must include that information as part of their application package. Exceptions may be granted by the board if no other options exist.

g. Applicants may only apply for the fixed-wing or rotary-wing curriculum as test pilots and test NFOs. The flight test engineer curriculum is for NAVAIR civilian personnel and not available for naval officers.

h. Those officers who have previously declined selection to TPS are ineligible for future TPS boards.

i. Applicants must have a current Tier 5 investigation (T5) or Tier 5 reinvestigation (T5R) with eligibility for Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) before transferring to USNTPS. If the applicant does not have this eligibility, then the command supporting the applicant will initiate a request for eligibility, requesting interim TS/SCI eligibility and ensuring the eligibility request has been accepted and is being processed.

8. Selection. Selections will be made by the board approximately 8 months prior to the class convening dates, as follows:

a. The Winter selection board will select students for the Summer USNTPS and July EPNER class. EPNER class selection is every 3 years.

b. The Summer selection board will select students for the Winter USNTPS class, January USAFTPS, and January ETPS class.

9. Enrollment Procedures

a. Applications should be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the board convening. The deadline for receipt of applications is published in a Navy administrative message (NAVADMIN) announcing selection board convening date.

b. Applicants who are not selected will not automatically be considered by the next selection board. Application for subsequent boards needs only to include a current command endorsement, an updated flight hour report, and any other significant changes since initial submission which would affect selection.

c. Primary submission for applications will be PDF copies via encrypted e-mail at: cscselboard(at)navy.mil. Applications may also be submitted via mail addressed to MyNavy Career Center, FY-XX-X Test Pilot School Selection Board (Board ###), 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055-6300 and must include the following information:

(1) Total number of flight hours as of date of application (listed by hours and aircraft). Military and civilian flight hours totaled separately.

(2) Total number of flight hours projected to convening date of the class for which application is made. Military and civilian flight hours totaled separately.

(3) Number of day and night carrier, shipboard, or small deck landings as of date of application.

(4) Number of day and night carrier, shipboard, or small deck landings projected to convening date of the class for which application is made.

(5) Special mission and community qualifications to include total hours and date qualified, if applicable (e.g., P-3C PP/400 hours/JUN 01; E-2C CICO/100 hours/MAY 1; F/A-18 division leader/300 hours/DEC 1).

(6) Significant operational deployments (timeframe and duration).

(7) No later than start date for next career milestone tour in YYMM format. Applicants may address any timing considerations in their personal statement. This is usually an individual's projected department head tour and the no later than start date may be obtained from an individual's detailer.

(8) Anthropometric data measurement record and a current physical readiness test (PRT) and body composition assessment (BCA) detail report from Physical Readiness Information Management System (PRIMS). If the applicant has been disqualified from a specific aircraft type, class, model or series, that information must also be included in the application package.

(9) Current clearance level and the adjudication type/date.

(10) List of TPS programs for which applicant desires to be considered in ranked order (i.e., USNTPS, USAFTPS, ETPS, or EPNER).

(11) Agreement not to tender resignation while attending training. Agreement to serve on active duty for a period of 4 years after completion of training.

(12) Preference for test squadron assignment following graduation from TPS as an additional paragraph in application. Preference should be ranked and prioritized and should be based on availability and type, model, and series (T/M/S) applicability per the most recent NAVADMIN.

(13) Commanding officer's (CO) shore and afloat contact information (e-mail and phone), including phone numbers for selection notification.

(14) Any additional information about the applicant's background and experience that would be useful to the board in choosing those officers who would be best suited for selection.

(15) Education Background. Transcripts of courses completed, including pertinent postgraduate courses, are essential for selection and must be available to the board. Transcripts should reflect all conferred degrees. Applicants should provide a copy of transcripts with application if doubt exists that a transcript is in the individual's service record.

d. CO endorsement of the application must include an evaluation of the applicant's character, airmanship, temperament, and motivation. Only those officers who are truly outstanding and have the ability and desire to progress rapidly in aviation should be recommended. The CO must also review the applicant's projected flight hours; carrier, shipboard, and small deck landings; current and projected clearance status; anthropometric and PRT/BCA records; and special qualifications to ensure they are accurate and realistic projections. The command endorsement must also include a statement that the command will make the applicant available to begin training per the requirements specified in the applicable NAVADMIN. Applicants who are not available to start training by the specified dates may have their applications removed from consideration. Inability for the applicant to meet the dates specified in the NAVADMIN may be mitigated by conducting initial training in a temporary additional duty (TEMADD) status at the expense of the endorsing command. If this is required, it must be explicitly stated in the command endorsement that the endorsing command will provide TEMADD funds until the applicant can officially detach. If a transfer is expected prior to the TPS board convening date, an endorsement from the gaining CO discussing availability must be included. See the most recent NAVADMIN for additional instructions.

10. Declination. Selectees who elect not to attend TPS must notify PERS-434B by digitally signed e-mail or official letter as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days after selection notification.

11. Follow-on Duty Assignment. Tentative squadron assignments are normally issued nearing the midpoint of the USNTPS course of instruction. Such tentative assignments may change and should not be considered a guarantee of follow-on assignment squadron or location.

12. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned for the standard subject identification codes (SSIC) 1000 through 13000 series per the records disposition schedules 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>.

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b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact your local records manager or the DON/AA DRMD program office.

13. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, PERS-32 will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for ten years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph nine.



M. W. BAZE
Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via BUPERS web site, <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/BUPERS-Instructions/>