

## Pararescue Overview

By expressing an interest in Pararescue (PJ) you are taking a big step into a job with high demands, but strong rewards. Wearing the maroon beret is a distinction bestowed on very few men. It recognizes dedication to training and personal sacrifice. A trainee must prove he can be trusted to perform the mission no matter what the difficulty or personal risk. To deviate from this requirement puts the lives of many at risk. We demand the best from our force. In making your decision about becoming a PJ, carefully consider the following:

- Analyze why you want to be a PJ. If the challenge of parachuting, SCUBA diving, outdoor life, and a fast paced lifestyle appeals to you, then you will probably be successful in this career. However, if you desire prestige and money - then you're making the wrong choice.
- You must understand the role played by your distinctive career choice. We support critical missions with a relatively small force. This environment demands your understanding that, "the mission comes first", often causing sacrifices to personal desires and interests.
- It is essential your family understands why you are coming into PJ and what it means to you. You will be away from your family off and on for over a year during training and routinely throughout your career. Gaining their understanding and encouragement is vital.
- The most important asset a trainee can have is positive attitude. People say our training program is 20% physical and 80% mental, that is true! Even the strongest individual will fail if he has the wrong attitude. You must have a positive "can do" attitude.
- Adaptability and flexibility are important. You must be capable and willing to adapt to diverse mission requirements, environments, and working hours. You must be flexible and rapid to change. Change and crisis management are a part of this lifestyle.
- Physical fitness is crucial to the successful accomplishment of the PJ mission. Physical conditioning will be stressed during training and throughout your career. Strive to get into excellent shape. Be consistent and dedicated to your training program.
- You must be comfortable living outdoors. A great deal of our work is done in the field.
- You must develop strong military bearing and discipline. You must learn informal and formal leadership techniques, and know how/when to use them.

- You must become a team member and work well with your teammates. Your team is your life's blood; they could mean the difference between life and death during operational missions. Being a team member requires you to be sympathetic to your team's needs as well as your own. It also requires you to develop followership to effectively meet the expectations and demands of your leaders.

### **Pre-requisites to enter Pararescue**

1. Be a volunteer
2. Be a US Citizen
3. Be a male (based on current Department of Defense policies)
4. Have a general score of at least 44 on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test
5. Have vision of best eye 20/70, worst eye 20/100; correctable to 20/20. (No Radial Keratotomy..)
6. Have normal color vision
7. Meet specific physical fitness standards
8. Be a proficient swimmer
9. Be a High School graduate or have a GED
10. Able to obtain a SECRET security clearance
11. Successful completion of the PAST test
12. Minimum physical profile (PULHES) of 111111 (no problems)
13. Pass an Initial flying class III physical qualification of aircrew, parachute, and maritime diving duty
14. Strength aptitude standard of "K" for retention of AFSC

### **Mandatory Requirements**

1. Physiological training qualification for aircrew duties
2. High altitude high opening (HAHO) parachuting qualification
3. Qualification for aviation service
4. Volunteer for hazardous duty, parachute duty, and diving duty

#### **1. PARARESCUE MISSION.**

Regardless of their command, the primary mission of Pararescue is personnel recovery specialist with emergency medical capabilities in peacetime and combat environments. They deploy by air-land-sea tactics into forward, non-permissive environments and provide the trauma medical care for injured personnel and may act as aircrew gunners and/or scanner on both fixed and rotary wing aircraft. They participate in search and rescue (SAR), combat search and rescue (CSAR), recovery support for NASA and conduct other operations as appropriate.

## **2. SPECIAL TACTICS TEAMS.**

When assigned to the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), Pararescuemen are combined into highly trained special tactics teams. A special tactics team frequently operates with Navy SEALs, Army Rangers, and Green Berets in "direct action," airfield seizure and personnel recovery missions in hostile territory. Operating in all climates, day or night, special tactics operators maintain the highest standards of physical fitness and proficiency in the use of light weapons.

## **3. TECHNICAL EXPERTISE.**

Pararescuemen are highly technical skills that use a variety of special employment techniques. Pararescuemen are among the most highly trained emergency trauma specialists in the DOD. They must maintain an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Intermediate or higher qualification throughout their careers. With this medical expertise and their deployment capabilities, Pararescuemen are able to perform life-saving missions in the world's most remote areas.

## **4. EMPLOYMENT CAPABILITIES.**

Pararescuemen must be capable of deploying by the most advantageous means into their mission areas. For this reason, a variety of deployment techniques are used by both specialties. The level of training you receive in certain deployment methods will be dependent upon the unit you are assigned. However, most of these deployment capabilities will be taught during initial training.

Parachute operations (Jumpmaster directed spotting for accuracy)

Static line (low altitude)

With combat equipment

With SCUBA equipment

Into forested areas

Into vast bodies of water

High Altitude Low Opening (military free fall)

With combat equipment

With oxygen

High Altitude High Opening (cross country canopy flight)

With combat equipment

With oxygen

Waterborne Infiltration's

SCUBA/Draegger

Submarine lock-outs

Aircraft boat drops

Rubber Raiding Craft operations

(surface) swimming

Mountain Operations  
Rock/ice climbing  
Rappelling  
High angle evacuations

Helicopter Operations  
Rappelling  
Fast rope  
Rope Ladder  
Hoist operations  
Gunner/scanner

Overland Movement  
Motorcycles  
All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)  
Motor vehicle  
Team navigation

Arctic Operations  
Cross country skiing  
Downhill skiing  
Skijoring  
Snowmobiles  
Snowshoes  
Akhio

## **6. INCENTIVES.**

There are a lot of incentives for becoming a Pararescueman. These incentives include: education, distinctive uniforms, travel, and several additional pays.

## **7. Education.**

By completing Pararescue training, you have earned college credits with the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). Currently, technical and upgrade training is worth over 32 semester hours towards an Associates Degree in Applied Science or Survival and Rescue Operations.

Distinction

Pararescuemen wear the distinctive maroon beret with flash.

PJs are highly recognized throughout the DOD for their special operations capabilities and expertise.

Travel. Pararescuemen travel extensively in support of the Air Force's global mission. You will support sister service components, allied forces, humanitarian relief efforts, and other commitments.

## **8. DUTY LOCATIONS RESERVE PARARESCUE**

Portland IAP, OR  
Patrick AFB, FL  
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ

## **9. THE TRAINING PIPELINE.**

Your training will take approximately 15-24 months. It includes eight schools for each specialty. You will be offered to take leave at some point during training, but this cannot be guaranteed. Students travel from school to school as a class, with the ranking student in charge. Training consists of the following schools:

### **The Pararescue/Combat Rescue Officer Indoctrination Course.**

10 weeks, Lackland AFB, TX. The mission of the Indoctrination Course is to recruit, select and train future PJs and CROs. At this school you will participate in extensive physical conditioning with lots of swimming, running, weight training and calisthenics. This course helps prepare you for the rigors of training and the demands of these lifestyles. Other training accomplished at this course includes physiological training, obstacle course, rucksack marches, dive physics, dive tables, metric manipulations, medical terminology, dive terminology, CPR, weapons qualifications, history of PJs, and leadership reaction course. Graduation of this course is "your ticket to ride" the pipeline and begin learning those special skills that make PJs highly regarded special operators.

### **U.S. Army Airborne School.** 3 weeks, Fort Benning, GA.

Here you learn the basic parachuting skills required to infiltrate an objective area by static line airdrop. This course includes ground operations week, tower week, and jump week where you make 5 actual parachute jumps. Personnel who complete this training are awarded the basic parachutist rating and are allowed to wear the coveted parachutist's wings.

### **U.S. Air Force Combat Dive Course.**

6 weeks. Pensacola FL. The course is divided into four blocks of instruction: (1) Diving Theory, (2) Infiltration/Exfiltration Methods, (3) Open Circuit Diving Operations, and (4) Closed Circuit Diving Operations. The primary focus of AFCDC is to develop Pararescuemen/Combat Rescue Officers and Combat Controller/Special Tactics Officers into competent, capable, and safe combat divers/swimmers. The course design provides Commander's with divers/swimmers capable of meeting worldwide Personnel Recovery and Special Operations waterborne mission taskings. AFCDC provides diver training through classroom instruction, extensive physical training, surface and sub-surface water confidence pool exercises, pool familiarization dives, day/night tactical open water surface/sub-surface infiltration swims, open/closed circuit diving procedures, underwater search and recovery procedures, and the training culminates with a waterborne field training exercise (WFTX).

**U.S. Navy Underwater Egress Training.**

1 day, Pensacola NAS, FL. This course teaches how to safely escape from an aircraft that has ditched in the water. Instruction includes principles, procedures, and techniques necessary to get out of a sinking aircraft. Training requires personnel to actually experience water entry in a training device and perform underwater egress.

**U.S. Air Force Basic Survival School.**

2.5 weeks, Fairchild AFB, WA. This course teaches basic survival techniques for remote areas--using minimal equipment. This includes instruction of principles, procedures, equipment, and techniques, which enable individuals to survive, regardless of climatic conditions or unfriendly environments, and return home.

**U.S. Army Military Free Fall Parachutist School.**

5 weeks, Ft. Bragg, NC. and Yuma Proving Grounds, AZ. This course instructs free fall parachuting (HALO) using the high performance ram air canopy. The course provides wind tunnel training, in-air instruction focusing on student stability, aerial maneuvers, air sense, and parachute opening procedures. Each student receives a minimum of 30 free fall jumps including 2 day and 2 night jumps with supplemental oxygen, rucksack, and load bearing equipment.

**Pararescue EMT-Paramedic Training**

22 Weeks, Kirtland AFB, NM. This course teaches how to manage trauma patients prior to evacuation and provide emergency medical treatment. The course consists of two phases. Phase I is 5 weeks of Emergency Medical Technician Basic (EMT-B) training. Phase II consists of 17 weeks of instruction in minor field surgery, pharmacology, combat trauma management, advanced airway management, and military evacuation procedures are taught. Upon graduation, an EMT-Paramedic certification is awarded through the National Registry.

**Pararescue Recovery Specialist Course.**

20 weeks, Kirtland AFB, NM. Qualifies airmen as Pararescue recovery specialists for assignment to any Pararescue unit worldwide. Training includes EMT-paramedic certification, field, mountaineering, combat tactics, advanced parachuting, helicopter insertion/extraction, and qualifications. At the completion of this course, each graduate is awarded the maroon beret.