



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER NAVAL AIR FORCES
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COMNAVAIRFORINST 3510.4
N45
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COMNAVAIRFOR INSTRUCTION 3510.4

Subj: NAVAL AIR TRAINING AND OPERATING PROCEDURES
STANDARDIZATION (NATOPS) AND INSTRUMENT FLIGHT
QUALIFICATION PROGRAMS

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 3710.7 (Series)

Encl: (1) Unit NATOPS Evaluation Requirements

1. Purpose. This instruction provides guidance for Commander, Naval Air Forces (COMNAVAIRFOR) Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization (NATOPS) Program. It also sets forth policy and procedures governing the issuance and maintenance of instrument flying qualifications for assigned Naval Aviators and Naval Flight Officers (NFO's). The purpose of the NATOPS Program is to increase combat readiness and improve flight safety. This instruction amplifies the provisions of reference (a) and sets forth NATOPS policy, organization, and requirements. This is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. COMNAVAIRPACINST/COMNAVAIRLANTINST 3510.4M.

3. Scope. This instruction is applicable to all units with COMNAVAIRFOR as the Cognizant Command. All aircrews are required to follow policy set forth in reference (a) and procedures set forth in applicable T/M/S NATOPS publications, instructions and local standard operating procedures.

4. Organization. COMNAVAIRFOR is delegated responsibility for overall management of the NATOPS program. COMNAVAIRFOR (N455) is the NATOPS program administrator responsible for daily administration and management of NATOPS policy. All current T/M/S specific NATOPS points of contact and NATOPS publications can be accessed and are listed at the following NAVAIR website: <https://airworthiness.navair.navy.mil>. CNATRA is the designated Instrument Flight Syllabus Manager (IFSM).

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5. Discussion. The Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization (NATOPS) program is a positive approach towards improving combat readiness and achieving a substantial reduction in aircraft mishaps. Routine interpretation and procedural questions should be referred to type/wing command NATOPS offices for resolution prior to referral to COMNAVAIRFOR. Where the need arises, special instructions or waivers will be issued by COMNAVAIRFOR.

a. The essential elements of the NATOPS Program are thorough knowledge of all aircraft systems and adherence to approved operating procedures. To be effective, such a program must be responsive to the requirements of the users and readily changeable. To this end, users have a responsibility to maintain a constant program of review and updating. It is the users' obligation to ensure that NATOPS publications are current and correct. All routine, priority and urgent changes shall be submitted via the following website to the maximum extent possible: <https://airworthiness.navair.navy.mil>

b. Compliance with NATOPS is mandatory; however, nothing contained therein shall prevent aircrews from taking actions they may deem necessary to safeguard life and property when unusual conditions or emergencies occur.

c. NATOPS publications are issued for the purpose of standardizing ground and flight procedures, and do not include tactical doctrine. Although it is not intended that NATOPS manuals duplicate or replace other publications, such as tactical manuals and Naval Warfare Publication series, some conflict may occur. NATOPS will govern should conflict exist between the training and operating procedures found in NATOPS publications and those found in other publications. All NATOPS publications can be accessed at the following website: <https://airworthiness.navair.navy.mil>

d. Implementation of the NATOPS Program is a command responsibility at the unit level. The success of NATOPS depends in large measure on the active support of all Commanding Officers (COs).

6. Assignment of Responsibilities.

a. Cognizant Command (COG) is an advisory group member responsible for specific portions of the NATOPS program as

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designated by COMNAVAIRFOR. COG command assignments are delineated in the NATOPS status report posted on the NAVAIR Airworthiness Web site (<https://airworthiness.navair.navy.mil>). They are responsible for the management and coordination of the NATOPS Program and shall represent COMNAVAIRFOR at NATOPS advisory group meetings. They shall call on operating units for technical assistance as necessary, and shall maintain liaison with Model Managers, Evaluation Units, Naval Air Stations and operating activities.

b. Type Wings shall:

(1) Closely monitor all programs under their cognizance and be responsible for the coordination and scheduling of unit evaluations by the Model Manager or by Evaluation Units.

(2) Maintain and supervise the instrument training units for formal instruction of aviation personnel.

(3) Be authorized to grant special instrument rating waivers per reference (a).

(4) Ensure instrument training examinations drafted by their subordinate commands are revised annually and copies forwarded with an updated training syllabus outline to CNATRA.

c. Local Standardization Boards shall be established by cognizant Type Wing Commanders for specific aircraft models as practicable. The Standardization Board will normally be comprised of the evaluators and inspectors from each unit operating their Type/Model/Series (TMS) aircraft, and will meet quarterly, or as directed. The function of the Standardization Board is to review proposed changes to the applicable NATOPS flight manual and associated publications, to review aircraft accident and incident reports in model pertinent to NATOPS, and exchange general information regarding the NATOPS Program. Minutes of the Standardization Board meetings will be forwarded to members, other interested COMNAVAIRFOR units, and appropriate NATOPS Cognizant Command(s).

d. The Model Manager shall:

(1) Assign pilot/NFO/crew evaluators/instructors.

(2) Review the initial draft of the NATOPS flight manual and pocket checklist for new model aircraft when required.

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(3) Ensure timely updating of NATOPS publications.

(4) Perform all Evaluation Unit duties

(5) Review priority and urgent interim change recommendations and forward finalized recommendations to the appropriate COG and NATOPS advisory board.

(6) Collect, review and compile recommended routine changes to the NATOPS publications for which responsible.

(7) Recommend the convening of review conferences to appropriate NATOPS Coordinator and COG per reference (a).

(8) Conduct NATOPS evaluations and ensure standardization of units within a specific aircraft model or aviation-related system per reference (a), listed in <https://airworthiness.navair.navy.mil>, as scheduled by Type Wing Commanders.

(9) Head the local Standardization Board for T/M/S.

e. NATOPS Evaluation Units are responsible for ensuring all individuals and units operating that T/M/S aircraft receive NATOPS evaluations, have NATOPS responsibilities listed per reference (a) and shall:

(1) Assign pilot/NFO/crew evaluators/instructors.

(2) Have direct liaison with fleet and training squadrons and units and encourage submitting change recommendations via <https://airworthiness.navair.navy.mil> as needed.

(3) Conduct NATOPS evaluations per enclosure (1) and ensure standardization of units listed in <https://airworthiness.navair.navy.mil> as scheduled by Type Wing Commanders.

(4) Head the local T/M/S Standardization Board.

(5) Represent COMNAVAIRFOR units at review conference as required.

f. All personnel assigned NATOPS Evaluator duties will have them as their primary duty and will be available to COMNAVAIRFOR

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for additional duty relating to NATOPS matters. The NATOPS Evaluator shall report directly to the CO of the squadron or Air Station to which they are assigned, and is authorized direct liaison with squadrons or units within their designated areas of responsibility. The NATOPS Evaluator billet is designated primary and shall not be assigned collateral duties that would interfere with NATOPS functions. A squadron should not designate a NATOPS Evaluator as NATOPS instructor also. Fleet Readiness Squadron (FRS) pilot/NFO's and crewman evaluators should be used as instructors in order that they may maintain a high level of proficiency. NATOPS Evaluators will be certified annually by the CO of the Evaluation Unit/Model Manager. For aircraft that have a single NATOPS Evaluator, the designated evaluator shall report to COMNAVAIRFOR.

g. Aviation activities shall designate pilot/NFO and aircrew NATOPS instructors. Pilots/NFOs and aircrew designated as NATOPS instructors shall be among the most highly qualified in the unit. NATOPS instructors shall be designated by their CO in writing and receive initial and subsequent NATOPS evaluations from the appropriate NATOPS Evaluator. In unusual circumstances, this annual requirement for a Model Manager/Evaluation Unit check may be waived up to six months by the Model Manager/Evaluation Unit. However, the requirement for an annual NATOPS check may not be waived. Commands shall limit the number of NATOPS instructors to the minimum required to conduct NATOPS evolutions.

h. COs shall designate assistant NATOPS instructors as required to assist squadron NATOPS instructors in performing assigned duties, including administering annual NATOPS evaluation checks. Assistant NATOPS instructors will be designated in writing by the CO and receive initial and subsequent NATOPS evaluations from an appropriate NATOPS Evaluator or the unit NATOPS instructor.

7. Individual NATOPS Evaluation.

a. Individual NATOPS evaluation shall be conducted, evaluated, recorded and reported annually per reference (a).

b. Failure to attain a rating of "qualified" or "conditionally qualified" will require a re-evaluation within 30 days. A maximum of 60 days may elapse between the date the initial ground evaluation commenced and the date the flight evaluation is satisfactorily completed. Failure to successfully

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complete a re-evaluation will result in a recommendation to the unit CO that the pilot/NFO appear before a Field Naval Aviator Evaluation Board. Flight personnel other than pilot/NFOs will be considered for removal from flight status by the most appropriate means.

c. Activities other than squadrons that do not have personnel suitable for designation as NATOPS instructors shall make arrangements for their pilots/crews to obtain individual NATOPS evaluations at the nearest Naval activity or unit that has a NATOPS Evaluator or instructor qualified to check pilots/crews in the appropriate T/M/S. Particular attention must be given to ensure that pilots and crews performing passenger transport missions in other than designated transport squadrons receive adequate standardization training and evaluation checks.

8. Unit Evaluation. An annual Unit NATOPS evaluation shall be conducted by the appropriate NATOPS Evaluator per reference (a). Normally, the NATOPS Evaluator will provide a written summary of the evaluation to the CO of the unit being evaluated. In instances where an unsatisfactory level of unit adherence to NATOPS is uncovered, an appropriate description of the discrepancies shall be forwarded by the Evaluator to the applicable COMNAVAIRFOR NATOPS Coordinator via the CO of the unit evaluated and Type Wing Commander. Type Wing Commander's endorsement to TYCOM should include plan and timeline for resolution of unit discrepancies.

9. Waivers. COMNAVAIRFOR units may request waivers from NATOPS procedures and requirements to permit the development or evaluation of improved and more effective methods, or when local or unusual circumstances render compliance with NATOPS impracticable.

a. Waivers in cases not specifically addressed in the NATOPS publication may be authorized IRT reference (a).

b. Requests for waivers shall be in writing, stating the deviation, reasons for the deviation, and a definite time period for the waiver.

c. Waivers for the purpose of developing new procedures should not be extended indefinitely. After a reasonable trial period, the unit shall either submit a NATOPS change

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recommendation or revert to compliance with the NATOPS manual. Rejection of such a NATOPS recommendation will normally terminate related waivers.

d. A copy of all waivers shall be forwarded to those activities listed in reference (a), the COG, the respective Type Wing, and the Model Manager or COMNAVAIRFOR Evaluation Unit.

10. Reports. Reports shall be submitted per instructions contained in reference (a).

11. Instrument Flight Qualification Programs. CNATRA is the designated Instrument Flight Syllabus Manager (IFSM). As such, they are responsible for overall coordination of the Instrument Flight Qualification Program. They are also responsible for reviewing instrument examinations submitted by Fleet commands for content, quality and compliance with reference (a) and other governing directives.

(a) CNATRA will designate instrument training commands as needed per aviation community. Instrument training commands are responsible for the administration of formal instrument training and the preparation of written examinations for their designated or similar TMS aircraft. CNATRA maintains the current list of instrument training commands.

(b) The concept of stressing International Civil Aviation Organization procedures when administering instrument written examinations for Western Pacific aircrews is essential to safety of flight operations, and is in keeping with the spirit and intent of reference (a) and this instruction. Remotely located units where attendance of a CNATRA approved instrument ground syllabus is not feasible may initiate and submit their own examinations with CNATRA and COG approval. If collocated with an authorized unit flying similar aircraft, remotely located units may use that unit's examination with CNARTA approval.



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UNIT NATOPS EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Purpose. The technical data and standard operating procedures prescribed in the NATOPS Flight Manuals represent the optimum manner of operating various aircraft and related equipment. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess unit knowledge of, and compliance with, standardized training and operating procedures and instructions outlined in reference (a) and the respective T/M/S NATOPS manual.

2. Responsibility. Unit NATOPS evaluations will be coordinated and scheduled by the cognizant Type Wing commander for all assigned units operating models for which NATOPS evaluators are designated.

3. Unit NATOPS Evaluation. Unit NATOPS evaluations shall be conducted by the appropriate NATOPS evaluator for the T/M/S aircraft assigned. NATOPS evaluators shall be designated by the model manager and maintain annual NATOPS currency. The unit NATOPS evaluation shall follow procedures delineated in reference (a). Additionally, the unit NATOPS evaluation shall be administered as follows:

a. It shall include one or more individual NATOPS evaluations for each crew position (ground evaluation and an evaluation flight) and be administered to flight crewmembers selected at random by the evaluator to measure overall adherence to NATOPS procedures.

b. The unit commander shall be informed in writing of the results of the evaluations and the effectiveness of the NATOPS program within the command. These results may be forwarded and briefed to the immediate superior in command of the unit commander upon request.

c. In instances where an unsatisfactory level of unit adherence to NATOPS is uncovered, the NATOPS evaluator shall forward an appropriate description of the discrepancies to the applicable aviation TYCOM via the Cognizant Command, Model Manager, Unit Commander and normal chain of command along with a copy to COMNAVAIRFOR (N455).

d. NATOPS unit evaluations are valid for a period not to exceed 18 months. The 18-month evaluation cycle may be extended to a maximum of 24 months by the NATOPS model manager for

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circumstances such as extended deployments, but only for units whose previous evaluations indicated a high degree of NATOPS program effectiveness.

e. Additional requirements to be accomplished during the evaluation are:

(1) NATOPS Unit evaluator shall provide initial briefing to unit pilots/crews on inspection requirements and procedures. Any new developments in the NATOPS Program may also be discussed at this time.

(2) NATOPS Unit evaluator shall administer brief closed and open book examinations on NATOPS procedures, emergency procedures, etc., to as large a cross-section of unit pilots/crewmembers as practicable.

(3) NATOPS Unit evaluator shall review unit NATOPS records; spot check of unit NATOPS manuals for appropriate change incorporation.

(4) NATOPS evaluator shall complete annual NATOPS evaluation of each available person designated as a unit NATOPS instructor.

4. Critique. A critique will be held following completion of the unit evaluation to be attended by the unit commander. The critique will be informal, with the inspected unit offered adequate opportunity for questions and comment.

5. Unit Evaluation Report. The report of the evaluation will be prepared by the inspecting evaluator. The report will be submitted to the Commanding Officer of the unit inspected and will include:

a. Brief description of inspection procedures; conduct of inspection.

b. Statistical results of the inspection.

c. Any significant standardization deficiencies noted.

d. Brief comment on overall effectiveness of the unit NATOPS effort and command support of the NATOPS Program. This report shall be as objective as possible and will not contain names of individuals evaluated.