

USNA Third-Class Midshipman (3/C) Professional Competency Assessment (PCA) Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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Questions

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- 1. What is the call sign of the Composite Warfare Commander (CWC)?**
 - A. _A**
 - B. _B**
 - C. _W**
 - D. _C**
- 2. What type of threats does the Department of Homeland Security assess?**
 - A. Natural disaster impacts**
 - B. Scope of terrorist threats**
 - C. Foreign intelligence operations**
 - D. Corporate espionage cases**
- 3. What does the N2 section of the Navy staff focus on?**
 - A. Logistics**
 - B. Intelligence**
 - C. Operations**
 - D. Communications**
- 4. Which classes of ships are known to utilize LCS mission modules?**
 - A. Independence class and Freedom class**
 - B. Arleigh Burke class and Ticonderoga class**
 - C. Nimitz class and Virginia class**
 - D. Zumwalt class and Whidbey Island class**
- 5. What topic does the Department of State specialize in within the IC?**
 - A. Counterterrorism strategy**
 - B. Geospatial data analysis**
 - C. Political and economic intelligence analysis**
 - D. Cybersecurity operations**

- 6. What is the mission of the Air Force?**
- A. To protect land territories from maritime threats**
 - B. To conduct combat operations solely in space**
 - C. To fly, fight, and win in air, space, and cyberspace**
 - D. To focus exclusively on ground forces battalions**
- 7. What strategy is part of the Navy's plan for environmental stewardship?**
- A. Enhance oil drilling operations**
 - B. Manage wildlife and endangered species**
 - C. Improve solid waste generation**
 - D. Develop harmful technologies**
- 8. Which agency is NOT part of the US Intelligence Community?**
- A. Central Intelligence Agency**
 - B. Department of Energy**
 - C. Federal Aviation Administration**
 - D. National Security Agency/Central Security Service**
- 9. What mission does the MH-60S Seahawk primarily support?**
- A. Counter-drug operations**
 - B. Surface and mine countermeasures**
 - C. Long-range surveillance**
 - D. Electronic support**
- 10. How does defensive Electronic Attack differ from Electronic Protection?**
- A. EP focuses on offensive actions against enemy capabilities**
 - B. Defensive EA is only concerned with protecting assets from non-lethal attacks**
 - C. EP protects from the effects of friendly or adversary EA actions**
 - D. Defensive EA is primarily concerned with managing the electromagnetic spectrum**

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. C
6. C
7. B
8. C
9. B
10. C

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Explanations

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1. What is the call sign of the Composite Warfare Commander (CWC)?

- A. _A
- B. _B**
- C. _W
- D. _C

The call sign of the Composite Warfare Commander (CWC) is designated as "_C". The CWC is responsible for coordinating the overall tactical operations of multiple units within a naval task force. The "_C" call sign signifies the leadership role of the CWC in composite warfare situations, where various mission areas and assets are integrated into a unified strategy for effective maritime operations. In this context, "_C" symbolizes the command and control function that the CWC exercises over allied and potentially hostile forces, establishing clear lines of communication and ensuring the task force can respond efficiently to evolving threats. The role is critical for managing complex maritime warfare environments, emphasizing the importance of having a designated and recognized call sign for coordination and operational clarity.

2. What type of threats does the Department of Homeland Security assess?

- A. Natural disaster impacts
- B. Scope of terrorist threats**
- C. Foreign intelligence operations
- D. Corporate espionage cases

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) primarily focuses on assessing the scope of terrorist threats as one of its core responsibilities. This entails evaluating the potential for terrorist attacks, understanding the motivations and capabilities of terrorist organizations, and determining the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure and public spaces. By focusing on this aspect, DHS can allocate resources more effectively to prevent, respond to, and recover from terrorist incidents, enhance national security, and improve overall community resilience. While other factors such as natural disasters, foreign intelligence operations, and corporate espionage are relevant to national security, they do not fall under the specific mandate of the DHS in quite the same way. The DHS is particularly concerned with mitigating risks related to terrorism and protecting citizens from violence resulting from extremist activities. This focus on the scope of terrorist threats allows the department to craft tailored strategies and develop preventive measures that directly address these dangers.

3. What does the N2 section of the Navy staff focus on?

- A. Logistics**
- B. Intelligence**
- C. Operations**
- D. Communications**

The N2 section of the Navy staff is primarily focused on intelligence. This area is crucial for gathering, analyzing, and disseminating information that supports decision-making at all levels of naval operations. Intelligence encompasses various functions, including threat assessment, operational planning support, and providing situational awareness to commanders and staff. Understanding the role of N2 is essential because effective intelligence directly impacts the Navy's ability to accomplish its missions and maintain situational advantage over adversaries. It is responsible for evaluating potential threats to national security and ensuring that the necessary information is available to support strategic and tactical operations. In contrast, logistics, operations, and communications pertain to different areas within the Navy staff operations. Logistics focuses on the planning and execution of supply chain management and resource distribution. Operations is related to the planning and directing of military activities. Meanwhile, communications handle the systems and processes necessary for conveying information within and outside of the naval forces. Each of these sections plays an integral role, but the N2 distinctly emphasizes intelligence gathering and analysis, making it the correct focus area in this context.

4. Which classes of ships are known to utilize LCS mission modules?

- A. Independence class and Freedom class**
- B. Arleigh Burke class and Ticonderoga class**
- C. Nimitz class and Virginia class**
- D. Zumwalt class and Whidbey Island class**

The classes of ships known to utilize Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) mission modules are the Independence class and Freedom class. These two classes of LCS are designed specifically to operate in shallow waters and to employ modular mission packages that allow them to perform various combat tasks. The mission modules can be swapped out depending on the specific operational needs, such as anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, or mine countermeasures. The Independence class features a trimaran hull design and focuses on integrating advanced technology with mission flexibility. On the other hand, the Freedom class has a monohull design and is similarly equipped to use interchangeable mission modules. This modularity is a key aspect of the LCS program, allowing these ships to adapt to different mission requirements quickly. In contrast, the other ship classes mentioned do not rely on LCS mission modules. The Arleigh Burke class and Ticonderoga class are destroyers and cruisers with their own suite of weapon systems, while the Nimitz class is an aircraft carrier, and the Virginia class is a nuclear submarine. The Zumwalt class, although innovative, has different operational goals, and the Whidbey Island class is a dock landing ship designed for amphibious operations, none of

5. What topic does the Department of State specialize in within the IC?

- A. Counterterrorism strategy**
- B. Geospatial data analysis**
- C. Political and economic intelligence analysis**
- D. Cybersecurity operations**

The Department of State specializes in political and economic intelligence analysis within the Intelligence Community (IC). This focus aligns with its primary mission to engage in diplomacy, represent U.S. interests abroad, and inform policy decisions based on geopolitical contexts. The Department collects, analyzes, and disseminates information relevant to international relations and economic conditions, which enables it to provide the President and other decision-makers with insights necessary for shaping U.S. foreign policy. Understanding political trends, economic conditions, and diplomatic relationships is critical for the Department of State, which relies on this intelligence to inform strategies and decisions that impact global engagement. In contrast, the other choices involve areas that typically fall under the purview of different agencies within the IC. Counterterrorism strategy, geospatial data analysis, and cybersecurity operations are better associated with organizations like the Department of Defense, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, or the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, each focusing on distinct aspects of national security and intelligence gathering.

6. What is the mission of the Air Force?

- A. To protect land territories from maritime threats**
- B. To conduct combat operations solely in space**
- C. To fly, fight, and win in air, space, and cyberspace**
- D. To focus exclusively on ground forces battalions**

The mission of the Air Force encompasses a broad range of responsibilities that involve operating in air, space, and cyberspace. This reflects the modern nature of warfare, where control of these domains is essential for strategic advantage and operational success. The focus on "fly, fight, and win" underscores the commitment to achieving air superiority and conducting various combat operations. This mission includes defending the nation, supporting joint and coalition forces, and ensuring readiness to address threats across all three domains. The other options do not accurately capture the comprehensive scope of the Air Force's mission. Protecting land territories from maritime threats relates more to naval operations, while focusing exclusively on ground forces battalions is outside the realm of the Air Force's core responsibilities. Additionally, conducting combat operations solely in space overlooks the critical functions that take place in the air and cyberspace domains. Together, these distinctions illustrate why the chosen mission statement effectively reflects the Air Force's multifaceted operational capabilities.

7. What strategy is part of the Navy's plan for environmental stewardship?

- A. Enhance oil drilling operations**
- B. Manage wildlife and endangered species**
- C. Improve solid waste generation**
- D. Develop harmful technologies**

Managing wildlife and endangered species is a critical strategy in the Navy's environmental stewardship plan because it emphasizes the protection of biodiversity and the sustainable management of natural resources. This approach aligns with broader ecological objectives to preserve ecosystems, provide habitat protection, and ensure that military operations do not negatively impact vulnerable species. By integrating wildlife management into their operational plans, the Navy demonstrates a commitment to balancing mission readiness with environmental conservation. Effective wildlife management includes monitoring species populations, protecting habitats, and mitigating any potential adverse effects from military activities. This ensures that the Navy can fulfill its responsibilities while also upholding environmental responsibilities and contributing to the overall health of the planet. In contrast, other strategies, such as enhancing oil drilling operations or developing harmful technologies, would typically conflict with environmental stewardship goals. Improving solid waste generation may refer to efficiency but does not capture the broader scope of protecting and managing wildlife and ecosystems.

8. Which agency is NOT part of the US Intelligence Community?

- A. Central Intelligence Agency**
- B. Department of Energy**
- C. Federal Aviation Administration**
- D. National Security Agency/Central Security Service**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is not part of the US Intelligence Community (IC). The IC is composed of various agencies and organizations that work collaboratively to gather, analyze, and disseminate intelligence to support national security. The primary purpose of these agencies is to understand foreign threats, assess risks, and provide informed insights to government decision-makers. In contrast, the FAA is primarily responsible for regulating civil aviation, ensuring flight safety, managing air traffic control, and overseeing aviation infrastructure. While the FAA may have occasional interactions with intelligence activities, particularly regarding aviation safety and security, it does not fulfill the primary intelligence-gathering and analysis roles that define agencies within the IC. In contrast, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS), and the Department of Energy (DOE) all have significant roles within the Intelligence Community. The CIA focuses on foreign intelligence and covert operations, the NSA/CSS specializes in signals intelligence and information assurance, and the DOE participates in intelligence through its expertise in nuclear security and energy-related issues, particularly concerning nuclear proliferation. Each of these agencies plays a critical role in the broader mission of national security, which sets them apart from the FAA.

9. What mission does the MH-60S Seahawk primarily support?

- A. Counter-drug operations**
- B. Surface and mine countermeasures**
- C. Long-range surveillance**
- D. Electronic support**

The MH-60S Seahawk primarily supports surface and mine countermeasures as it is equipped to perform a variety of missions related to naval operations. This variant of the Seahawk helicopter is primarily designed for operations in support of carrier strike groups, amphibious operations, and military forces. The helicopter is equipped with advanced sensors and weapons that enhance its capabilities in detecting and neutralizing underwater mines, thus ensuring safe passage for naval vessels. In addition to mine countermeasures, the MH-60S can also conduct anti-surface warfare, search and rescue, and logistical support missions. Understanding the role of the MH-60S within the broader context of naval operations helps establish its significance in enhancing maritime security and operational effectiveness in various mission profiles, particularly those that involve clearing mine threats from critical waterways.

10. How does defensive Electronic Attack differ from Electronic Protection?

- A. EP focuses on offensive actions against enemy capabilities**
- B. Defensive EA is only concerned with protecting assets from non-lethal attacks**
- C. EP protects from the effects of friendly or adversary EA actions**
- D. Defensive EA is primarily concerned with managing the electromagnetic spectrum**

The distinction between defensive Electronic Attack (EA) and Electronic Protection (EP) lies in their fundamental purposes and actions within the electromagnetic spectrum. Defensive EA strives to actively disrupt and neutralize enemy electronic systems, thereby safeguarding one's own assets and resources. In contrast, Electronic Protection is concerned with safeguarding systems and personnel from the effects of electronic attack—both those from adversaries and friendly forces, which could inadvertently interfere with operations. The correct answer highlights that EP's primary role is to ensure that military operations can be conducted effectively despite the potential use of electronic attacks by friendly or adversarial forces. This includes countermeasures and strategies implemented to mitigate or preemptively address the impacts of any form of electronic interference or attacks. Understanding this distinction is crucial for military operations as it informs strategic planning and coordination to ensure protection against a wide range of threats in the electromagnetic spectrum.