

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

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Don't worry about getting everything right, your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations, and take breaks to retain information better.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning.

7. Use Other Tools

Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly — adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

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Questions

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1. How does the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye detect threats?

- A. Through passive infrared systems**
- B. Using electronically scanned array radar**
- C. With visual identification**
- D. By acoustic detection methods**

2. What is the mission of the Army?

- A. To engage diplomatically with foreign nations**
- B. To deploy, fight, and win wars providing land dominance**
- C. To conduct air support operations exclusively**
- D. To manage naval operations in international waters**

3. What conditions does "River City" impose on communication?

- A. It allows unrestricted communication for creativity**
- B. It requires a control of outgoing communications for OPSEC**
- C. It encourages sharing information with local community**
- D. It mandates public disclosure of mission details**

4. Which of the following is NOT a function of geospatial engineering?

- A. Dissemination of geospatial information**
- B. Survivability assessments**
- C. Terrain analysis and visualization**
- D. Management of databases**

5. Which function is S6 responsible for in the USMC?

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

6. What is the primary role of the C-2A Greyhound?

- A. Medium lift logistics support**
- B. Airborne early warning**
- C. Submarine warfare**
- D. Carrier air defense**

- 7. Which of the following is NOT included in all domain access?**
- A. Battlespace awareness**
 - B. Assured command and control**
 - C. Naval intelligence sharing**
 - D. Integrated fires**
- 8. What is the goal of the dissemination and integration step in the intelligence cycle?**
- A. To gather data from multiple sources**
 - B. To provide timely information to appropriate consumers**
 - C. To evaluate and receive feedback on intelligence operations**
 - D. To maintain inventory of intelligence materials**
- 9. What does EMCON stand for?**
- A. Emergency Contact**
 - B. Emission Control**
 - C. Electronic Coordination**
 - D. Environmental Monitoring**
- 10. What action can the Officer in Tactical Command (OTC) take regarding the CWC?**
- A. Assign authority to the CWC**
 - B. Negate actions taken by the CWC**
 - C. Oversee asset management**
 - D. Provide intelligence reports**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. How does the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye detect threats?

- A. Through passive infrared systems
- B. Using electronically scanned array radar**
- C. With visual identification
- D. By acoustic detection methods

The E-2D Advanced Hawkeye detects threats primarily through the use of electronically scanned array radar, which is a key feature of this advanced airborne early warning and control system. This radar allows the E-2D to detect both airborne and surface threats at substantial distances and in diverse environmental conditions. The electronically scanned array radar system can automatically scan large areas and track multiple targets simultaneously, enhancing situational awareness for commanders. Additionally, it is capable of rapidly reorienting its beam to focus on specific areas of interest without the mechanical movement typically required by older radar systems. This enhances the speed and effectiveness of threat detection and tracking. Other methods like passive infrared systems, visual identification, and acoustic detection are generally not the primary means of threat detection used by the E-2D. While those methods may have their own applications in various contexts, they do not match the comprehensive capabilities offered by the electronically scanned array radar in terms of range, accuracy, and functionality for air and surface surveillance.

2. What is the mission of the Army?

- A. To engage diplomatically with foreign nations
- B. To deploy, fight, and win wars providing land dominance**
- C. To conduct air support operations exclusively
- D. To manage naval operations in international waters

The mission of the Army is fundamentally centered on deploying, fighting, and winning wars to ensure land dominance. This mission reflects the primary role of the Army as a ground force that is trained to engage in combat operations, secure territory, and provide stability and security in conflict zones. The skills and strategies developed within the Army are geared toward achieving objectives on land, which often complements the efforts of other branches of the military. The other options do not adequately represent the Army's core mission. Diplomatic engagement is primarily the responsibility of the State Department and other entities focused on foreign relations. Although air support operations can be part of an Army operation, they do not exclusively define the Army's mission, as this role is typically associated with the Air Force. Likewise, managing naval operations falls under the purview of the Navy rather than the Army. Thus, the focus on land dominance in the correct response encapsulates the essence of the Army's operational purpose and mission.

3. What conditions does "River City" impose on communication?

- A. It allows unrestricted communication for creativity
- B. It requires a control of outgoing communications for OPSEC**
- C. It encourages sharing information with local community
- D. It mandates public disclosure of mission details

"River City" is a term used in the military that involves specific restrictions on communications to protect sensitive information and ensure operational security (OPSEC). When "River City" is implemented, it limits the ability of personnel to communicate externally, effectively controlling any outgoing communications. This measure is taken to prevent the leakage of critical information that could compromise missions, personnel, or operational strategies. The emphasis on controlling outgoing communications highlights the importance of safeguarding sensitive data, which is vital for maintaining a tactical advantage and protecting national security interests. Thus, under "River City" conditions, communication is significantly restricted to enhance the integrity of military operations and protect against potential adversaries' access to information. Other choices do not align with the main purpose of "River City." Unrestricted communication for creativity, sharing information with the local community, or mandating public disclosure of mission details would contradict the fundamental principles of OPSEC that "River City" aims to enforce.

4. Which of the following is NOT a function of geospatial engineering?

- A. Dissemination of geospatial information
- B. Survivability assessments**
- C. Terrain analysis and visualization
- D. Management of databases

Survivability assessments are primarily focused on evaluating the resilience and protective measures for personnel, systems, and assets in potentially hostile environments. While these assessments may incorporate geospatial data, they do not represent a core function of geospatial engineering itself. In contrast, the other options clearly articulate functions that fall within the domain of geospatial engineering. Dissemination of geospatial information involves sharing and distributing maps, spatial datasets, and relevant geographic information to support decision-making. Terrain analysis and visualization pertain directly to the use of geospatial data to assess geographic features and their implications for operations, while management of databases relates to organizing and maintaining spatial data effectively. Collectively, these functions highlight the critical role of geospatial engineering in planning, operations, and strategic assessment, whereas survivability assessments extend beyond the traditional scope of this field.

5. Which function is S6 responsible for in the USMC?

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

S6 refers to the communication or signal function within a military context, particularly for the United States Marine Corps (USMC). This function encompasses a range of responsibilities primarily focused on maintaining effective communication systems. The S6 is critical in ensuring that units can communicate effectively, both within the organization and with external entities. The S6's duties may include managing communication equipment, overseeing signal operations, ensuring secure and reliable transmission of information, and maintaining situational awareness through communication networks. Strong communication capabilities are essential for operational success, as they enable coordination and command and control, which are vital in combat and support operations. In contrast, the other functions like logistics, operations, and intelligence are covered by different staff designations. Logistics (S4) focuses on supply chain management and material readiness; Operations (S3) deals with the planning and execution of training and combat operations; and Intelligence (S2) is responsible for gathering and analyzing information about enemy activities and capabilities. Thus, S6 specifically pertains to signal and communication operations.

6. What is the primary role of the C-2A Greyhound?

- A. Medium lift logistics support**
- B. Airborne early warning
- C. Submarine warfare
- D. Carrier air defense

The C-2A Greyhound is primarily designed for medium lift logistics support. This aircraft plays a crucial role in carrier onboard delivery (COD), which involves transporting personnel, mail, and supplies between aircraft carriers and land bases. The unique design of the C-2A, with its ability to operate from aircraft carriers, allows it to fulfill this mission effectively, ensuring that the fleet remains well-supplied and supported while at sea. In addition to its logistics capabilities, the C-2A Greyhound's design includes features that enhance its performance in delivering supplies and equipment, such as a large cargo area and the ability to carry oversized loads. This makes it an integral part of naval operations, facilitating the ongoing sustainment of naval forces. Other roles outlined in the other choices pertain to different aircraft or missions within the naval aviation community. Airborne early warning and carrier air defense, for instance, are missions typically assigned to different platforms like the E-2 Hawkeye and F/A-18 Super Hornet, respectively. Submarine warfare is also not a function of the C-2A Greyhound, as it is a transport aircraft rather than a combat or surveillance platform. The specific focus on logistics support emphasizes the C-2A's vital

7. Which of the following is NOT included in all domain access?

- A. Battlespace awareness**
- B. Assured command and control**
- C. Naval intelligence sharing**
- D. Integrated fires**

The concept of domain access encompasses various capabilities that ensure operational effectiveness in a military context. Battlespace awareness refers to the understanding of the operational environment, including situational awareness and information about enemy movements. Assured command and control is vital for maintaining effective communication and leadership across various units and operations, ensuring that forces can respond quickly and effectively to dynamic situations. Integrated fires involve synchronized use of weapons systems and other assets to achieve desired effects on a target, which requires coordination across different domains. Naval intelligence sharing, while critical for overall operational success, is not an intrinsic requirement for all instances of domain access. In some scenarios, forces may operate effectively without direct integration of intelligence from all naval assets, focusing instead on immediate operational needs or relying on alternative forms of intelligence. Thus, while it supports domain access, it is not a fundamental component universally necessary for domain access, making it the correct answer to the question.

8. What is the goal of the dissemination and integration step in the intelligence cycle?

- A. To gather data from multiple sources**
- B. To provide timely information to appropriate consumers**
- C. To evaluate and receive feedback on intelligence operations**
- D. To maintain inventory of intelligence materials**

The goal of the dissemination and integration step in the intelligence cycle is to provide timely information to appropriate consumers. This step is crucial because it ensures that the intelligence gathered and analyzed reaches the individuals or organizations that require it for decision-making purposes. Timeliness is essential in intelligence operations, as the context and relevance of information can change rapidly, and acting on outdated intelligence could lead to poor decisions. By focusing on providing the right information to the right people at the right time, this step enhances situational awareness and supports strategic and tactical operations. Integration further ensures that information is contextualized within the larger operational picture, allowing consumers to make informed decisions based on a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

9. What does EMCON stand for?

- A. Emergency Contact
- B. Emission Control**
- C. Electronic Coordination
- D. Environmental Monitoring

EMCON stands for Emission Control. This term is commonly used in military operations to refer to the practice of managing and reducing the electromagnetic emissions of a platform to avoid detection by adversaries. By controlling emissions, naval vessels and aircraft can operate in stealth mode, enhancing their survivability and operational effectiveness. Emission Control is crucial in scenarios where maintaining the element of surprise or avoiding enemy radar is essential. The other options do not accurately reflect this concept, as they pertain to different contexts unrelated to military operational tactics.

10. What action can the Officer in Tactical Command (OTC) take regarding the CWC?

- A. Assign authority to the CWC
- B. Negate actions taken by the CWC**
- C. Oversee asset management
- D. Provide intelligence reports

The Officer in Tactical Command (OTC) holds a significant position with the responsibility to ensure that tactical operations are executed effectively while maintaining overall command authority. In this context, the ability to negate actions taken by the Commander, Warfare Commander (CWC) is instrumental. If the OTC determines that a decision made by the CWC is not aligned with the strategic or operational objectives, or if the situation on the ground has changed, the OTC has the authority to step in and countermand those decisions. This ensures that command flexibility is maintained and that all tactical decisions support the broader mission objectives. In contrast, the other actions listed, such as assigning authority to the CWC or overseeing asset management, involve either delegating responsibility or managing resources, which fall more under the purview of the CWC rather than something directly within the OTC's role. Providing intelligence reports is also typically a function managed within the operations team, rather than direct authority exercised by the OTC. Through the ability to negate actions, the OTC retains ultimate command and control over the tactical decision-making process, enabling adaptive leadership in dynamic situations.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://usna3cpca.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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