USNA THIRD-CLASS MIDSHIPMAN (3/C) PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT (PCA) PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE

SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED 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. 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.

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. 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!

Questions

1. What is the primary function of the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye?

A. Airborne anti-submarine warfare

B. All-weather airborne early warning and command control

C. Medium lift logistics support

D. Mine countermeasures

2. Which ships are considered Service Support USNS ships?

A. Fleet Ocean Tugs, Hospital Ships, and Cable Laying Ships

B. Only armed patrol vessels

C. Civilian commercial vessels for Army logistics

D. Container ships for transporting civilians

3. Which IC agency supports military forces in operational planning?

A. National Security Agency

B. Department of Energy

C. Defense Intelligence Agency

D. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

4. What is the function of Electronic Warfare Support (ES)?

A. To plant explosives in enemy territory

B. To search for and identify sources of EM energy for tactical advantage

C. To provide direct leadership in combat scenarios

D. To conduct offensive strikes on enemy positions

5. What type of helicopter is the MH-60R Seahawk classified as?

A. Transport helicopter

B. Multi-mission combat helicopter

C. Reconnaissance helicopter

D. Heavy lift helicopter

6. What is one of the Navy's interests in environmental stewardship?

A. Increase waste production management

B. Exploit marine resources more efficiently

C. Comply with solid waste management regulations

D. Ignore hazardous waste cleanup efforts

7. What percentage of the naval force is represented in the Naval Reserve?

A. 10%

B. 20%

C. 30%

D. 40%

8. How is the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) primarily involved in engineering?

A. By overseeing combat operations

B. By providing environmental and construction support

C. By conducting research on military strategy

D. By managing naval aviation logistics

9. In Expeditionary Mine Counter Measures, what is the main task of Navy EOD?

A. Building naval bases

B. Conducting hostage rescues

C. Detecting armed underwater ordnance

D. Training other military units

10. What is the call sign of the sea combat commander?

A. _Z

B. _P

C. _K

D. _T

Answers

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

Explanations

1. What is the primary function of the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye?

A. Airborne anti-submarine warfare

B. All-weather airborne early warning and command control

C. Medium lift logistics support

D. Mine countermeasures

The primary function of the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye is to provide all-weather airborne early warning and command control. This aircraft is designed to detect and track enemy aircraft and missiles, making it essential for maintaining situational awareness in a combat environment. By utilizing advanced radar systems and onboard sensors, the E-2D can gather and disseminate vital information to other aircraft and ground forces, enhancing their operational capabilities. Additionally, the E-2D serves to coordinate and manage air operations, ensuring that friendly forces can conduct their missions effectively and safely. It acts as a command and control platform, working in conjunction with other assets to integrate various components of the air and naval forces within a theater of operations. Its ability to operate in adverse weather conditions further contributes to its role as a reliable and vital component of both defensive and offensive operations in naval warfare.

2. Which ships are considered Service Support USNS ships?

A. Fleet Ocean Tugs, Hospital Ships, and Cable Laying Ships

B. Only armed patrol vessels

C. Civilian commercial vessels for Army logistics

D. Container ships for transporting civilians

Service Support USNS ships are specifically designed to provide essential support to naval operations, which includes a variety of logistical and medical capabilities. Fleet Ocean Tugs, Hospital Ships, and Cable Laying Ships play crucial roles in maintaining naval readiness and operational sustainability. Fleet Ocean Tugs are vital for towing and assisting vessels, particularly in times of crisis or during complex operations. Hospital Ships are equipped to provide medical assistance and care to service members and, in some instances, civilians, which is critical during humanitarian missions or in areas affected by conflict. Cable Laying Ships are used to install and maintain undersea cables, which are important for communications and data transfer across naval and commercial networks. These ships collectively enhance the Navy's operational flexibility by ensuring that support and specialized services are available as needed during missions, training, or disaster relief operations. Other options listed, such as armed patrol vessels, civilian commercial vessels, or container ships for transporting civilians, do not fulfill the specific roles associated with Service Support USNS missions. Hence, the inclusion of Fleet Ocean Tugs, Hospital Ships, and Cable Laying Ships as Service Support USNS ships emphasizes their importance in supporting the broader naval mission.

3. Which IC agency supports military forces in operational planning?

A. National Security Agency

B. Department of Energy

C. Defense Intelligence Agency

D. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) is specifically tasked with providing intelligence support for military operations and operational planning. It plays a crucial role in analyzing and disseminating intelligence necessary for the Department of Defense and others involved in military activities. The DIA produces assessments that aid in understanding potential threats and operational environments, which are critical for effective planning and execution of military missions. While other agencies like the National Security Agency (NSA) and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) provide valuable intelligence, their primary functions differ. The NSA is primarily focused on signals intelligence and cybersecurity, whereas the NGA specializes in geospatial intelligence, which provides critical mapping and imagery support but is not primarily focused on operational planning for military forces. The Department of Energy has responsibilities related to energy policy and nuclear security, which does not align with the core mission of supporting military operational planning.

4. What is the function of Electronic Warfare Support (ES)?

A. To plant explosives in enemy territory

B. To search for and identify sources of EM energy for tactical advantage

C. To provide direct leadership in combat scenarios

D. To conduct offensive strikes on enemy positions

The function of Electronic Warfare Support (ES) is primarily to search for and identify sources of electromagnetic (EM) energy to gain a tactical advantage over adversaries. This involves gathering intelligence about enemy communications and radar capabilities to enhance situational awareness and enable effective countermeasures. By identifying these sources, military forces can better understand enemy operations, predict movements, and exploit vulnerabilities, ultimately enhancing their operational effectiveness. Options concerning planting explosives, providing direct leadership, or conducting offensive strikes do not accurately reflect the specific purpose of Electronic Warfare Support. These activities fall under other operational categories, such as demolitions for sabotage, command and control in combat scenarios, or direct attack roles, none of which encapsulate the focused intelligence-gathering aspect of ES.

5. What type of helicopter is the MH-60R Seahawk classified as?

A. Transport helicopter

B. Multi-mission combat helicopter

C. Reconnaissance helicopter

D. Heavy lift helicopter

The MH-60R Seahawk is classified as a multi-mission combat helicopter, which reflects its versatile capabilities as a maritime aircraft. It is specifically designed to conduct a wide range of missions including anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, search and rescue, and logistical support. The designation "multi-mission" highlights its ability to switch between different roles and adapt its functions based on operational needs. This helicopter's design incorporates advanced technology and systems, such as sonar and radar, making it effective in combat scenarios while also being suitable for support roles. This adaptability allows the MH-60R to perform various tactical missions efficiently, which is essential for modern military operations. The other classifications, like transport, reconnaissance, or heavy lift, do not accurately capture the full spectrum of its capabilities nor its primary intended function within naval operations.

6. What is one of the Navy's interests in environmental stewardship?

A. Increase waste production management

B. Exploit marine resources more efficiently

C. Comply with solid waste management regulations

D. Ignore hazardous waste cleanup efforts

Compliance with solid waste management regulations is a crucial aspect of the Navy's interest in environmental stewardship. This commitment reflects the Navy's recognition of its responsibility to manage waste effectively while minimizing the environmental impact of its operations. By adhering to these regulations, the Navy not only ensures legal compliance but also demonstrates its dedication to protecting natural resources and maintaining a sustainable operational environment. This approach is aligned with broader environmental initiatives, as properly managing solid waste supports goals related to pollution prevention and resource conservation. The Navy actively works to reduce waste generation, promote recycling, and ensure that waste disposal methods meet or exceed environmental standards. This reinforces the importance of sustainability in military operations, highlighting the need to balance operational readiness with environmental considerations. The other options are less reflective of environmental stewardship values and do not align with the Navy's objectives to promote sustainable practices and responsible resource management.

7. What percentage of the naval force is represented in the Naval Reserve?

A. 10%

B. 20%

C. 30%

D. 40%

The correct percentage of the naval force represented in the Naval Reserve is indeed 20%. This reflects the significant role that reservists play in augmenting the active-duty forces while also providing essential support and operational readiness. The Naval Reserve serves as a crucial component of the overall naval strategy, enabling flexibility and the ability to quickly mobilize skilled personnel during times of need without maintaining a large active-duty force at all times. This 20% representation highlights the balance the Navy strives to achieve between full-time active duty personnel and part-time reserve members, who train regularly and are prepared to deploy as necessary. The synergy between the active and reserve components ensures that the Navy can meet its mission requirements effectively, particularly during major operations or crises. Understanding the structure of the naval force, including the contributions of reservists, is vital for comprehending the overall military readiness and capabilities of the Navy.

8. How is the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) primarily involved in engineering?

A. By overseeing combat operations

B. By providing environmental and construction support

C. By conducting research on military strategy

D. By managing naval aviation logistics

The primary involvement of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) in engineering stems from its critical role in providing environmental and construction support. NAVFAC is responsible for the planning, design, and construction of facilities necessary for the Navy and Marine Corps' operations. This encompasses a wide range of engineering activities, such as infrastructure development, environmental stewardship, and facility maintenance. NAVFAC's engineering functions are crucial for ensuring that military installations and bases are built to meet the demands of military readiness, provide safe working environments, and comply with environmental regulations. By facilitating construction projects and addressing environmental issues, NAVFAC supports the overall mission of the Navy, enabling effective operations and maintaining vital infrastructure. The other options, while related to military operations, do not align with the core mission of NAVFAC. The oversight of combat operations, research on military strategy, and management of naval aviation logistics are functions that fall under different areas of military command and organization, rather than the specific engineering focus of NAVFAC.

9. In Expeditionary Mine Counter Measures, what is the main task of Navy EOD?

A. Building naval bases

B. Conducting hostage rescues

C. Detecting armed underwater ordnance

D. Training other military units

The main task of Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) in Expeditionary Mine Counter Measures is to detect armed underwater ordnance. This involves identifying, locating, and safely disposing of various types of explosive devices, which may include mines and underwater ordnance left in maritime environments. The proficiency in handling these explosives is critical to ensuring safe navigation for naval operations and protecting maritime assets from the hazards posed by such ordnance. The operations of Navy EOD require specialized training and equipment, enabling personnel to operate effectively in complex environments where underwater mines may be present, thus safeguarding sailors and vessels. In contrast, while other tasks like building naval bases or conducting hostage rescues may fall under the broader spectrum of military operations, they do not specifically align with the expertise and functions associated with Navy EOD's primary responsibilities regarding mines and underwater ordnance. Similarly, while training other military units can be an aspect of force readiness, it is not the focal function for EOD units in the context of mine countermeasures.

10. What is the call sign of the sea combat commander?

A. _Z

B. _P

C. _K

D. _T

The correct call sign of the sea combat commander is represented by the letter "_Z". This designation is part of a standardized system used to facilitate communication in maritime operations, where call signs play a critical role in ensuring clarity and efficiency. The call signs are chosen based on established protocols and may represent various command or operational functions within naval operations. Understanding the specific call signs, such as that of the sea combat commander, is essential for midshipmen as they prepare for leadership roles in the Navy, where accurate communications can significantly impact mission success. The other options may represent different commanding positions or roles within the naval structure but are not associated with the sea combat commander's designation.

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!