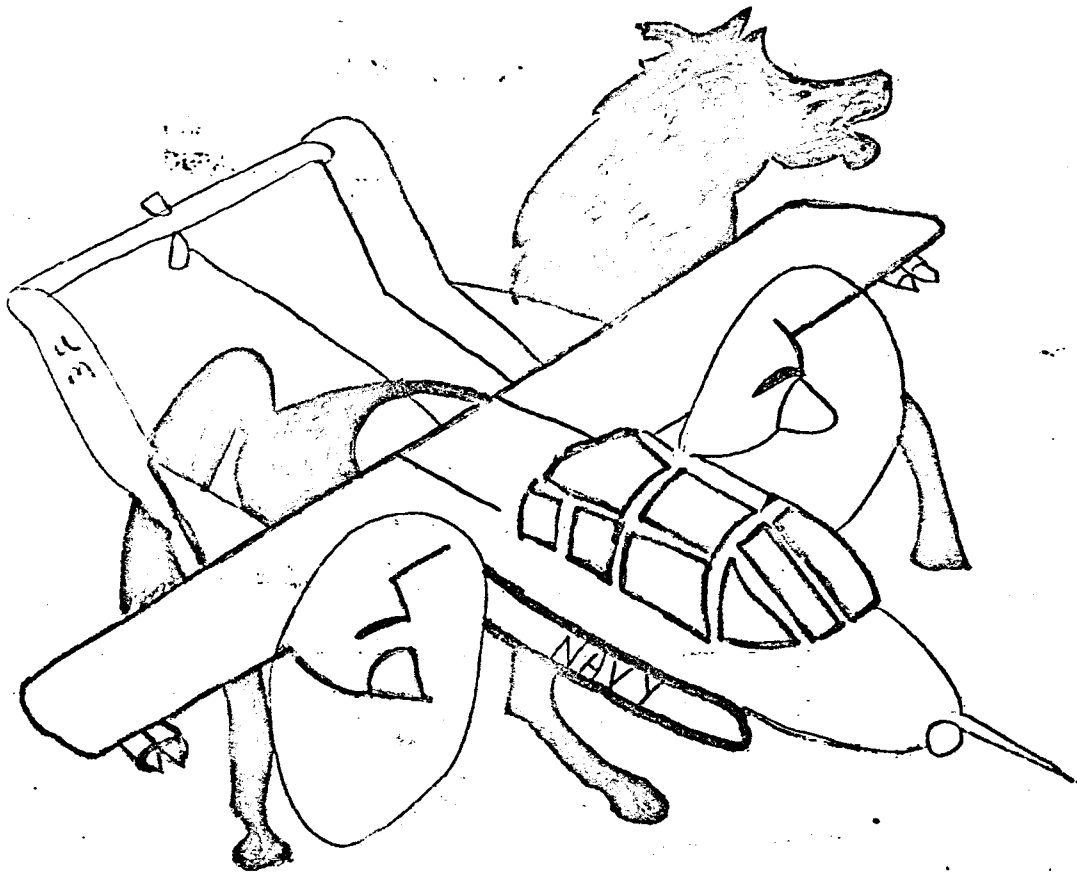


OV-10A (BLACK PONY) INFORMATION SHEET

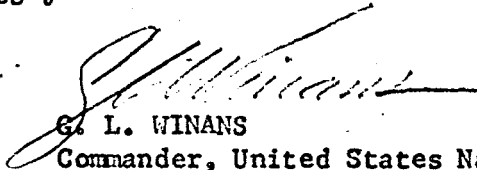


THE OV-10A "BRONCO"

September 1969

OV-10A (BLACK PONY) INFORMATION SHEET FOR PBR DRIVERS, SWIFTIES, SEALS,  
STAFF PLANNERS, ETC

The Navy OV-10A "BRONCO" aircraft was sent to the Mekong Delta to provide an in-house Navy asset of fixed wing air support for river operations in III & IV Corps CTZ. We of Light Attack Squadron FOUR (VAL-4) hope that this information pamphlet will assist you in understanding and using the "Black Ponies".

  
G. L. WINANS  
Commander, United States Navy  
Commanding Officer  
Light Attack Squadron FOUR

THE OV-10A BRONCO

VAL-4 began forming in the States in late 1968, was commissioned 3 January 1969, and arrived in-country and commenced combat operations in April 1969. The "BRONCO" is a twin engine fixed wing aircraft and easily identified by the twin booms and high tail. We emphasize fixed wing because there is considerable difference between "BRONCO" flying and the helicopter flying of the "Seawolves" of HA(L)-3. The "BRONCOS" of VAL-4 are painted dark green. On occasion you might see a grey OV-10A. The grey OV-10A's belong to the USAF and are used strictly as a FAC (forward air controller). They are not used in an attack role as are the "Black Ponies".

## TYPES OF MISSIONS

The "Black Ponies" fly three types of missions; (1) normal patrol, (2) overhead air cover, and (3) scramble alert.

a. Normal Patrol. The normal patrol, similar to a PBR patrol plan, is scheduled in advance and is flown throughout the day and night. During the patrol, the "Black Ponies" check-in by radio with the various NOC's (Naval Operations Centers) and Sector Advisors and look for a "ballgame" where some air support might be used. Pilots also VR (Visual Reconnaissance) the patrol route seeking intelligence and targets of opportunity. The patrols are scheduled in areas where intelligence reports indicate that there is a high probability of enemy activity. For this reason, you may make several PBR patrols and never see or hear a "Black Pony". We are probably patrolling what we hope to be a hotter area.

b. A second service that we provide the brown-water navy is the continual "on-station" or overhead air cover. This type of mission, normally scheduled in advance, places a "Black Pony" fire team overhead continually during operations. The overhead air cover is used when the boats patrol new areas and/or insert interdiction troops. Being overhead, on the spot, we can roll in immediately on any target. We can also VR canals, etc; and have in the past provided navigation assistance in areas where the charts are not up to date.

c. The third type of mission we fly, and probably our most important, is the "fireman" or scramble alert mission. We keep aircraft and crew on call, ready to scramble, 24-hours a day. The scrambles are initiated at the request of the user when the user believes air support will help his cause. Examples of scramble missions might include:

(1) PBR/PCF damaged and aground in high contact area, and air support will keep the enemy at bay until the boats are repaired-refloated

(2) Ground units in contact with enemy and air support has a good chance of inflicting casualties on the enemy

(3) Boats are ambushed up stream and have to pass through ambush site again to clear the area. Black Pony air support can help

(4) Other air support such as cover for downed aircraft, troop extractions, etc

Black Ponies are available through your nearest NOC.

## ORDNANCE LOADS

Lets talk about the "BRONCO" Sting, or the ordnance loads that the OV-10A carries on patrols or scramble, how it can be used and safety precautions for the aircraft and the water/ground units. The present ordnance load used by the Black Ponies include:

- a. The ZUNI or 5" folding fin aircraft rocket (FFAR)
- b. 2.75" FFAR
- c. Four M-60 7.62mm machine guns
- d. SUU-11 7.62mm gatling gun
- e. MK-4 20mm gun
- f. Flares for night work

Lets talk about each weapon:

a. ZUNI (5" FFAR). The Zuni is the big stick of the Black Ponies. It is a supersonic unguided rocket, and the reason that it is called a folding fin aircraft rocket (FFAR) is that the guiding fins are folded in the rocket and do not unfold for rocket stability until the rocket is fired. The Zuni is a very reliable rocket, but in the event a fin does not unfold, the rocket can go astray, and for this reason, the pilots add an additional safety factor when considering lateral distance to friendly positions.

The warhead on the Zuni weighs 48 pounds, and the "crack" sound you hear after a Zuni has been launched comes from the Zuni breaking the sound barrier.

The types of warheads/fuzes used on the Zuni fall roughly into three groups; (1) impact detonating, (2) delayed detonation, and (3) air detonation (VT). The impact detonating Zuni is a general all around rocket, and is good for busting up tree lines and structures. The second type, delayed detonation, allows the Zuni to penetrate the ground prior to exploding, and is excellent for dug in targets such as bunkers and tunnel complexes. The third type, the air burst (VT) explodes the Zuni about 50 feet in the air, thus scattering the blast and scrapnel over a large area. The VT fuzing is excellent for persomel in an open field and for sampans.

Each aircraft in the flight will normally have from eight to twelve Zuni's. Normal release altitude is about 2200 feet but it can be released as low as 1500 feet. For safety reasons, 200 meters from target impact to nearest friendly position is desired, although it can be worked as close as 75 meters when the friendlies are advised to keep their heads down, and the target is well marked or defined.

The Zuni is a potent weapon and provides a mighty punch in air support for the river forces.

b. 2.75" FFAR. The 2.75" rocket, with either a nine or sixteen pound warhead, is similiar to the rocket used by the Seawolves. The Black Ponies may carry up to 38 2.75" rockets. The 2.75 rocket is not as accurate as the Zuni, and is mainly used for marking targets and for H&I type fire. It is also used to put additional ordnance on target when working a good hot contact. The same safety parameters for the Zuni are used by the 2.75" rocket.

c. M-60 Machine Gun. Each OV-10A has four 7.62mm internal mounted machine guns, with 500 rounds of ball ammunition and tracers loaded per gun. The M-60s are used primarily for supression fire and for H&I type fire. The machine guns are accurate and can be worked as close as 40 to 50 meters from friendly positions. Unless absolutely necessary, pilots will not over fly the friendlies on straffing runs because the spent brass is ejected from the bottom of the airplane. We understand that spent brass falling on the boats tends to upset the crew. A straffing run normally commences at 1500 feet and stops at 800 feet.

d. SUU-11 Mini-gun. The SUU-11 mini-gun is a compact and beautiful weapons, and is the same mini-gun that Spooky, Shadow, and the Cobras have. It looks like a gatling gun with its six revolving barrels and shoots 7.62mm ammo at 6000 rounds per minute. The weapon is not as accurate as the M-60, but its great fire power is tremendous for supression of fire fights and for hosing down troops in an open area. Employment of the mini-gun is similiar to the M-60, and spent brass is also ejected over-board. The MK-4 gun pod shoots 20mm ammo at 400 rounds per minute.

e. Night Flares. During night operations, each OV-10A carries four pairs of parachute flares (for reliability, the flares are fired two at a time). Each individual flare burns over three minutes, and produces two million candle power. Our rules of engagement call for use to use flares during night operations. We realize that flares hurt night vision, and that the light of the flares may give away an ambush site. We will normally try to receive permission from the surface units prior to using flares. The use of flares is a matter of mutual agreement between the surface unit and the Black Pony flight leader. Of course, the flares are available to the surface unit if he needs a flare drop to illuminate a target area.

#### BRONCO TACTICS

The OV-10A's always fly in a flight of two for the same reasons the boat patrol with two; flexibility and self-protection. The fancy high-jinks you see the OV-10A perform when they roll in on a target are not copied from a John Wayne World War II movie. The maneuvers serve a definite purpose. Unlike the Seawolves who have flexible guns, all the guns and rockets in the OV-10A are fixed (non-moveable) and the pilot aims the airplane at the target with the aid of gunsight in the cockpit. He aims the airplane the same way one aims a gun. The fancy octa-flugeron at the beginning of the roll-in has two reasons. One, it confuses people and second it aims the aircraft at the target. Coming "down the chute" the pilot makes small corrections with the airplane to align himself with the intended target, releases his rockets, or shoots his guns, and pulls off target. The wingman normally rolls in right after the leader.

A second tactic used by the Black Ponies is the overhead circle. This is an air cover manuever where two OV-10As fly in a circle over a target area on opposite sides of the circle. This maneuver is used when continuous air cover of a target is desired, such as a boat aground, boats transiting a narrow waterway, or inserting/extracting troops. The airplanes are on the opposite side of the circle so that one aircraft is always in a position to roll in on a target.

#### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FIXED WING AND HELO OPERATIONS

There are several distinct differences between fixed wing operations and helo operations, and a short explanation of these differences hopefully will assist you in better using the air assets available to the brown-water Navy.

The helo, due to its design, does not need a runway to take off and land from, and for this reason can operate off LST's and unimproved areas. The OV-10A, being a fixed wing, needs a runway of considerable length in order to take-off with the heavy ordnance loads the Black Ponies carry. The helo can normally get airborne faster due to it not having taxi to take-off position. In a scramble situation, therefore, the helos will normally be on station first if both the Black Ponies and Seawolves were scrambled at the same time due to the more numerous Seawolves detachments and closer location to the target areas. The combination of helos and OV-10As working over a target is a pleasurable sight. The helos will normally work closer to the ground with flatter gunnery runs, while the OV-10As will work higher with steeper gunnery runs.

The OV-10A offers faster airspeed for quicker reaction time on distant targets, and has more staying on-station time plus heavier ordnance. Both weapons systems are here for use in support of ground units. But the differences should be noted. The helos will not overfly the target, but the OV-10As will due to the delivery technique necessary in fixed wing aircraft. The OV-10A does not have side door gunners, and depends on speed and maneuverability to stay out of enemy fire. The on-station time and heavy ordnance loads of the OV-10A allow the "Black Ponies" to hit and hold, hit and hold. This is particularly effective in chasing evading troops and multiple target areas.

#### HOW TO GET BLACK PONIES

The Ponies run patrols through out the Delta region. The patrols check-in with the NOCs first, and if there is no action in the NOC AO, they check-in with the Sectors. If you have a "ballgame" going and need air support, call the NOC and he will scramble the OV-10As. If you have a target worth zapping, but not worth a scramble, call the NOC and ask if a Pony Patrol will be in your area. If so, we'll be happy to come in your area and unload a bit.

#### TARGET IDENTIFICATION

Target identification and location of closest friendlies are two important items for any air strike. Daytime target identification is not too difficult, but friendly positions must be known. In the case of boats, its simple because you can see the boats. Often however, boats put troops ashore, and the ground troops must be able to identify their position. At night, any sort of illumination that will pinpoint the target such as flares, tracers, is appreciated. The name of the game is putting ordnance on THE target, and the more assistance you can provide, the better the results.

#### PONIES FOR YOU

We hope this little description helps you better understand the OV-10A "BRONCO" and its use by VAL-4's "Black Ponies". Any time you are in the area, drop by. We'll give you a closer look at the bird, and hopefully answer any questions. For further information, write:

Operations Officer  
Light Attack Squadron FOUR (VAL-4)  
NSA Binh Thuy  
FPO San Francisco 96627

THUMB NAIL SKETCH OF OV-10A

Wing span: 40'

Length: 40'

Height: 15'

Airspeeds: Cruise: 150 knots; scramble: 180 knots

Weight: At take-off with full ordnance: 13,500 lbs

Engines: Two T-76 Garrett Air-research counter-rotating turbo props  
715 shaft horsepower

Scramble times to target: Ten minutes from alert to airborne, three  
miles a minute to target

On-station time: For a fifty mile target, estimate two hours on station

Crew: Two Naval Aviators

Borgstrom File

COMMANDING OFFICER  
HELICOPTER ATTACK (LIGHT) SQUADRON THREE  
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96627

HA(L)-3:10:gf  
1700

Dear Captain BORGSTROM:

Please accept my warmest welcome to Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE. In time I know you will be as proud of the "Seawolves" as are those of us already here. You are joining a group of highly motivated and capable officers and men who will do their best to ease your transition into a new environment. Possibly you already have friends that you did not know were here, so we have enclosed a current squadron roster for your use.

You should take a look at BUPERS Instruction 1300.37 series. This Instruction will clarify some of the questions you may have concerning your tour in Vietnam.

Upon your arrival in San Francisco there are several ways to get to Travis AFB, some 40 miles north. One is by taxi, but the cost is prohibitive unless 3 or 4 people share it. You may ride the Greyhound bus or airport limousine; they are considerably cheaper and only take about an hour and a half to make the trip. Upon arriving at Travis, proceed to the Navy Air Transportation Coordinating Office (ATCO) counter and get your orders stamped showing your arrival time. Then proceed to the medical counter to get your shot card checked. After that, turn in your luggage and wait for your flight. The process is painless, unless you need a shot.

Your flight to Saigon will take approximately 18 hours. The northern route (Great Circle) is slightly shorter and goes through Alaska and Japan. The southern exotic route is with stops in Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippines. The food is excellent, the planes are comfortable and the stewardesses are beautiful and sociable. Take your last look because it will be a long time before you see something more beautiful than your O-in-C.

Upon arriving in-country, you should be met by a representative of the Naval Support Activity Saigon (NSA Saigon) at Tan Son Nhut Airport and you will be billeted at the Annapolis Hotel (BOQ/BEQ) for a one or two day period, for issue of fatigues, ration card and currency control card. While at the Annapolis you will also be scheduled for a personal response lecture. This is to acquaint you with Vietnamese customs and culture, and includes some pointers in personal dealings with the Vietnamese people. The phone number at the Annapolis is MACV 2482. Your flight to Binh Thuy will be arranged through the NSA Saigon Liaison Office located in the Annapolis Hotel. Should you want to advise the Squadron of your arrival, or if you have problems, call HA(L)-3 Administrative Office at Navy Binh Thuy (phone number Navy Binh Thuy 8-934-2719). Upon arrival at Binh Thuy VNAF (Vietnamese Air Force) or Can Tho AAF (Army Airfield) call HA(L)-3 Administrative Office for transportation



to the Squadron and check-in. Enclosed is a rough diagram of the Navy Binh Thuy complex which hopefully will aid you in finding your way around during the first few days.

We have requested the Naval Support Activity, Saigon, to issue three sets of jungle wear and two pairs of jungle boots to all personnel arriving there for assignment to HA(L)-3. Since the support activity cannot issue everyone several sets of fatigues, it is advisable to procure a few sets in the States. I recommend the jungle fatigues made of cotton poplin. They are light weight and considerably more comfortable than the heavy type fatigues issued you while going through SERE training. Cameras, radios, stereo gear, and toilet articles are available in-country at attractive prices. Cigarettes, liquor, cameras, watches and other items are sold on a limited ration card basis.

When packing your seabag for the trip here, the most important thought to keep in mind is not to bring too much. From our previous experience, you should be able to fit everything you bring into one large foot locker. The following is a fairly complete list of what you will find necessary:

1. Two tropical wash khaki long uniforms.
2. One tropical white long uniform (LCDR and above). This requires you to bring a combination cap.
3. Two Garrison caps.
4. One pair brown shoes.
5. One pair of white shoes (LCDR and above).
6. Eight sets of underwear (olive drab not necessary).
7. Eight pairs of socks for wear with jungle boots; suggest heavy olive drab socks procured from USMC small stores.
8. Six bath towels.
9. Two pairs civilian bermuda shorts (optional).
10. Two pairs civilian slacks (optional).
11. Two civilian shirts (optional).
12. One bathing suit (optional).
13. One pair casual civilian shoes (optional).
14. Any fatigues or jungle greens issued to you or purchased prior to your departure from the States.

15. Flight gear including helmet, excluding flying jacket.

No privately owned firearms will be allowed in-country.

Note: It is permissible, and you will find it convenient to shift into tropical wash khaki long with Garrison cap at Travis AFB for your trip to Vietnam.

Dry cleaning is not generally available; wash-and-wear clothing is therefore recommended. Civilian clothing for wear on R&R may be brought with you or purchased here in the exchange, if available. Uniforms are not authorized at most R&R facilities.

Following your check-in at Binh Thuy, you will attend three to five days of ground school covering area navigation, communications, survival equipment, safety/emergency procedures, tactics, and small arms weaponry. An area brief by the Air Intelligence Officer will be included along with lectures by the Flight Surgeon and Operations Officer. The last half-day will be spent at the rifle range. After ground school you will be transferred to a detachment or be assigned to duty at Headquarters Binh Thuy.

Additional training before designation as Helicopter Second Pilot, Attack Helicopter Aircraft Commander or Fire Team Leader will be provided while on operational deployment. Aside from a more comprehensive knowledge of the aircraft and tactics, the requirements for designation are as shown in the attached Qualification Requirement sheet. All first tour pilots can expect to remain at Binh Thuy for about three months prior to going to a detachment.

It is appropriate to mention some of the restrictions on money in the Republic:

1. American Express Banking facilities are available at the Air Force Base 2 miles away.

2. Pay checks and personal checks from the U. S. totaling not more than \$200.00 may be deposited in person or sent by in-country mail. Any other checks or cash totaling more than \$200.00 must be accompanied with a money certificate signed by the Commanding Officer. If you maintain more than \$100.00 in your account you will receive 5% interest.

3. You must have at least \$250.00 in your possession before departing on R&R.

4. You may not deposit or leave the country with over \$1,000.00 unless the total of your last pay received in-country exceeds that amount. You may get a treasury check when you depart country.

5. Money orders must be mailed at the time of purchase.

6. J Allotments (10% savings plan) - Deposits may be made through

Disbursing in \$5.00 increments. Deposits may not exceed your pay but you may deposit all of your earnings. You may not accumulate money prior to arrival in Vietnam for deposit in the J Allotment. It is illegal to exchange MPC for piasters at any commercial facility outside of a military installation. There are facilities in Saigon at the civilian airport to change green to MPC and vice versa. The regulations may sound confusing and they are, but they will be explained in further detail in your welcome aboard lecture.

The following information is for your edification and not for publication. Organizationally, we are a unit of Operation SEALORD. The primary mission of the Seawolves is to provide close air support for the River Patrol Force operating throughout the Mekong Delta, and to provide combat logistical support for various naval units in the III and IV Corps areas of Vietnam. Our UH-1B gunships are presently configured with the XM-21 weapons system consisting of fourteen 2.75 inch high explosive rockets, 3000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition fired from two flex-mounted mini-guns, and 4000 rounds of 7.62 ammo fired from door mounted M-60 machine guns. This system has been modified by replacing one door gun with a .50 caliber machine gun to increase the effectiveness of the fire team. Normally only the lead aircraft of each Light Helicopter Fire Team will be equipped with the .50 caliber configuration. Twenty per cent of the Squadron's aircraft are UH-1L unarmed Helicopters, used for logistical support of naval activities.

We presently have an allowance of 161 officers and 429 enlisted personnel. Gunship detachments are located throughout the Mekong Delta. Some detachments stage off LST's or YRBM's while others are land based. The cities the detachments are located at or near are Nha Be, Ben Luc, Moc Hoa, An Long, Chau Doc, Ha Tien, Rach Gia, Song Ong Doc and Nam Can. Binh Thuy, Squadron Headquarters, is at the geographical center of these cities and provides logistic and maintenance support for all of the detachments (map enclosed). Also located at Binh Thuy are the Squadron's UH-1L slicks which provide logistic support for Navy units in the Delta.

One note which should interest you is that the detachment pilots have been averaging 40 to 50 hours per month. Those at Binh Thuy have had a widely varying average depending on the number of pilots on board and current operations. Usual is about 30 to 40 hours. It has gone as high as 80.

An example of the mailing address for personal mail is shown below:

LT John A. DOE, USN, 945710/1315  
HA(L)-3  
FPO San Francisco 96627

Be sure to brief your dependents that the fastest means of emergency communications in all cases is via Navy Relief or the American Red Cross;

they have access to the Navy Communications System. Emergency leaves cannot be granted without Red Cross verification. Therefore, if an extreme circumstance requires your return on emergency leave, much time will be saved if initial contact is made via the Red Cross. Because of the distance and costs involved, we must be very careful with emergency leave. But, it is available for bonafied emergencies.

To bring you up-to-date on the more recent happenings in the Squadron, the latest issue of our WOLFGRAM is enclosed. To familiarize us with your own qualifications and preferences, it would be appreciated if you would complete and forward the enclosed questionnaire in order to better program your assignment.

Again, welcome to the Seawolves!



M. J. TWITE, Jr.  
Captain, U. S. Navy  
Commanding Officer

Enclosures

Attack Helicopter Aircraft Commander/Helicopter Aircraft Commander (AHAC/HAC):

1. 500 total flight hours
2. 150 flight hours rotary wing
3. 50 flight hours in UH-1
- \*4. Demonstrated ability to perform attack maneuvers set forth in the HA(L)-3 Tactics Manual
- \*5. Demonstrated ability to fly wing position in LHFT
- \*6. Demonstrated ability to operate flex system and rocket system
7. Possess a Standard/Special Instrument Card (Presently waived)
8. Demonstrated ability to command and train the officers and men of flight crew
9. Satisfactory completion of Squadron NATOPS check
10. Completed open book exam
11. Completed closed book exam
12. Completed oral exam

\*Not required for HAC

Fire Team Leader (FTL):

1. 600 total flight hours
2. Satisfactorily completed written exam on HA(L)-3 Tactical Manual
3. Satisfactorily completed written exam of Rules of Engagement
4. Satisfactorily completed flight check for FTL

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Helicopter Second Pilot (H2P):

1. 350 total flight hours
2. 50 hours in UH-1
3. Ground handling (air taxi)
4. Navigation
  - a. Cross-country (day/night)
  - b. Tactics - proficiency in remaining constantly aware of the aircraft's location and expeditiously fixing target coordination
5. Weight and balance - A/C loading
6. Proficient in voice procedures and operation of UH-1 communications equipment
7. Sound knowledge of local/area flight rules and regulations
- \*8. Sound knowledge of Rules of Engagement
- \*\*9. Afloat base qualified--day landings, 10; night landings, 6
- \*\*10. Proficient in the operations and inflight trouble shooting of the M-16 and M-21 weapon system
11. Has completed the H2P written exam
12. Has completed NATOPS evaluation
13. Recommended by Operations Officer or Detachment O-in-C

\*May be waived for H2P but required to AHAC

\*\*May be waived for H2P but required operating from afloat bases as AHAC  
or HAC

Co-pilot equals  
H2P -  
Responsible for  
Navigation of  
Five team