

ROYAL AIR FORCE

A.M. PAMPHLET 96
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MEMBERS OF AIRCRAFT CREWS— CONDITIONS OF ENTRY AND SERVICE

1. **Introductory.**—During the war the normal method of providing flying personnel for the R.A.F. will be by enlistment in the ranks of the R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve for training as a member of an aircraft crew, i.e., as a pilot, an air observer or a wireless operator (air gunner). As vacancies occur for commissions in the General Duties branch they will be filled by promotion from the ranks. Direct appointments to commissions for flying duties will be made only in exceptional circumstances.

The duties of pilots and wireless operators (air gunner) are self-explanatory. The duties of air observers include navigation, gunnery, bombing, signalling, photography and look-out, and vary to some extent according to the type of squadron with which the observer is for the time being serving.

A candidate may express a preference for training as a pilot, air observer or wireless operator (air gunner), and while consideration will be given as far as possible to his preference, he will not be allotted to or continued in training in a category of crew employment for which he is not considered to be suitable, and he will be liable to be allocated for training and to be remustered in any of the categories of crew employment in accordance with service requirements. Should he prove unsuitable for every form of crew duty he will be allowed to remuster to any R.A.F. trade for which he is qualified or to aircraft-hand, general duties, with a view to training should the opportunity occur in a trade for which he may be suitable.

A candidate who is selected for training as a wireless operator (air gunner) and who fails to qualify as a wireless operator may, if suitable, be trained as an air gunner.

2. **Qualifications.**—(i) The limits of age are :—

Pilots—must have reached their 18th and not have attained their 31st birthday.

Air observers	} must have reached their 18th and not have attained their 33rd birth- day.
Wireless operators (air gunner)				

(ii) **Educational.**—No prescribed educational standards are laid down, except for elementary mathematics. All candidates appearing before selection boards (see (v) below) are given a simple test in elementary mathematics. Those who do not pass (but are otherwise suitable in all respects) can be given instruction to bring them up to the required standard at no expense to themselves. They can, for this purpose, be attested and placed on deferred service. During the period of deferred service they can continue in their ordinary civilian occupations, but in their spare time are required to attend courses of instruction, arranged for them by Local Education Authorities. Candidates for wireless operator

(air gunner) must be able to do simple arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) and to write legibly at a reasonable speed. Information regarding the minimum standard of education required can be obtained from Recruiting Officers.

- (iii) **Medical.**—Candidates must pass a special medical examination.
- (iv) **Period of Service.**—The period of service will in all cases be for the duration of the present emergency.
- (v) **Selection.**—Candidates must be adjudged suitable by an Aviation Candidates Selection Board.

Candidates whose ages exceed those stated, but who possess special qualifications (e.g., flying experience), may be considered exceptionally if recommended by a selection board.

3. Subsequent selection for training as pilot.—After a period of service in an operational unit observers, wireless operators (air gunner) and air gunners, irrespective of rank, will have an opportunity of being recommended for training in another air crew category.

4. Selection for advancement to commissions.—A provisional recommendation for selection for a commission will be made by the selection board on acceptance. This recommendation will be confirmed or modified by the commanding officer of the initial ground training school. The final recommendation for appointment to a commission will be made by the commanding officer of the service school at which the airman completes his training as pilot or air observer and subject to the approval of the Air Ministry such appointments will be operative as from the day following the date of completion of training.

Airmen under training as pilots or air observers who are not recommended for commissions at the conclusion of the course of training may be recommended after a subsequent period of service in a unit.

Wireless operators (air gunner) and air gunners will have opportunities of being recommended for appointment to commissions after a period of service in units.

5. Pay during training.—Candidates selected as suitable for training as wireless operator (air gunner) will be entered as aircrafthand, group V, for training as wireless operator (air gunner), receiving pay as aircraftman 2nd class at 2s. 0d. a day until they complete their training as wireless operator, when they will be remustered to wireless operator, group II, receiving the daily rate of pay in accordance with the classification attained (i.e., aircraftman 2nd class 3s. 6d., aircraftman 1st class 4s. 3d., leading aircraftman 5s. 0d.). On commencing actual flying training at a Bombing and Gunnery School wireless operators (air gunner) in a classification below that of leading aircraftman will be reclassified leading aircraftman for the purpose of pay, and will receive flying instructional pay at the daily rate of 1s. 0d. An airman who, under para. 1 above, is selected for training as an air gunner, will similarly, on commencing flying training, be eligible for the classification of leading aircraftman for the purpose of pay, but in group V (4s. 0d. a day), and for flying instructional pay at the daily rate of 1s. 0d.

Those selected for training as pilot or air observer will undergo an initial course of ground training at an Initial Training Wing, during which they will be mustered as aircrafthand, group V, for appropriate training, receiving pay as aircraftman 2nd class at 2s. 0d. a day. On the successful completion of the initial course they will be reclassified leading aircraftman and placed in group II for the purposes of pay (i.e., 5s. 0d. a day). Those selected for training as pilot will receive in addition flying instructional pay at 2s. 0d. a day from the date of commencing actual flying training at a Flying Training School and during the continuance of such training. Those selected for training as air observer will receive flying instructional pay at 1s. 6d. a day from the date of commencing training at an Air Observer Navigation School and during the continuance of such training.

6. Remustering, promotion and pay.—Airmen who successfully complete the prescribed course of training will, unless they are selected for advancement to commissioned rank (see para. 4), be remustered to the air crew category for which they have qualified, and promoted to the rank of sergeant with effect from the day following the date of completion of training. Promotion of pilots and air observers to warrant officer and flight sergeant, and of wireless operators (air gunner) and air gunners to flight sergeant, is by selection to fill vacancies. To be eligible for consideration airmen must have completed six months service in an air crew category in the next lower rank, and be recommended by their commanding officer. The daily rates of pay are as follows :—

Rank	Airman pilot		Air observer		Wireless operator (air gunner)		Air gunner	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Sergeant	12	6	12	6	7	9	7	0
Sergeant (over 4 years) ...	13	6	13	6	—	—	—	—
Flight sergeant	15	0	15	0	9	0	8	0
Flight sergeant (over 4 years) ...	15	6	15	6	—	—	—	—
Warrant officer	16	6	16	6	—	—	—	—

7. War Pay.—In addition to the rates of pay stated in paras. 5 and 6 above, airmen receive war pay at the rate of 6d. a day.

8. Airmen also receive free accommodation, food and clothing (or money allowances instead) and medical attendance.

9. Family allowance (see King's Regulations and Air Council Instructions, para. 3348, etc.).—Family allowance is payable in respect of the wives and children of married airmen, provided the airmen are not separated from their wives by estrangement. The present rates of family allowance for a wife only are :—

Sergeants and below	18s.	0d.	a week
Flight sergeants	20s.	6d.	a week
Warrant officers	24s.	6d.	a week

An additional allowance of 3s. 6d. a week is payable to airmen's families resident in the London Postal Area.

Allowances are payable for children who are below the school leaving age, or who are continuing full time education beyond that age; the weekly rates are at present as follows :—

1 child	7s.	6d.
2 children	13s.	0d.

and 4s. extra for each additional child.

As a condition of the issue of family allowance, an airman is required to allot a proportion of his pay to his family, and family allowance, together with the allotment, is paid direct to the family. The rate of allotment varies from 1s. to 4s. a day according to the airman's rate of pay.

Family allowance cannot be paid until the airman obtains from and submits through his Accountant Officer a claim on Form 850 (obtainable at units) which is to be supported wherever possible by the appropriate marriage certificate, and, where there are children, by birth certificates. If certificates or other acceptable evidence in lieu cannot be produced, **the claim must still be made at once** or the allowance will not be payable till a later date.

10. Dependants' Allowance.—Dependants' allowance is payable to the dependants of airmen under conditions which are, broadly, as follows :—

- (a) The airman must have made a substantial contribution towards the support of the dependant before his enlistment.

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