

**Change 135**  
**Manual of the Medical Department**  
**U.S. Navy**  
**NAVMED P-117**

**30 Oct 2009**

To: Holders of the Manual of the Medical Department

1. **This Change** Completely revises Chapter 15, Section IV, Article 15-107, Explosives Motor Vehicle Operator and Explosives Handler Examinations and Standards.

2. **Summary of Changes.** Change 126 of the NAVMED P-117 eliminated the 5-year periodic physical examination for active duty members that had served as the basis for the Explosives Handler and Explosives Motor Vehicle Operator Examination examinations. The major revisions are listed below.

a. **Explosives Motor Vehicle Operator Examination**

(1) Clarifies this examination's basis is the 49 CFR 391.43, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (DOT), qualification standards. Members passing this examination are qualified to operate a commercial motor vehicle on public byways to transport explosive materials. This is the basis for subsequent risk-management criteria.

(2) Periodicity differs for civilian workers and active duty members as provided for in 49 CFR 383.3. Civilians have a 2-year interval, but active duty are exempt. The consensus was that the CFR was adopted when DoD conducted a 5-year periodic examination on all active duty members. That interval is therefore used for this qualification.

(3) The 49 CFR 390.5 defines who can conduct the examination and includes a person who is licensed and/or registered following a State's laws to perform physical examinations. For Department of Navy (DON) this is interpreted to include physicians, physicians assistants, and advanced practice nurses.

(4) Other Special Duty examinations that are comprehensive in content may serve as the basis for this examination as long as the examination's findings meet the standards of this program.

(5) DON cannot waive a DOT standard thus the policy directs the provider to 49 CFR 391.47 where a civilian worker's private physician disputes the findings of the examiner.

b. **Explosives Handler**

(1) This examination has been separated from the constraints of the DOT-based 720 exam to allow differences in periodicity, examiner, and waiver authority.


(2) Consensus from the Naval Ordnance Safety and Security Activity (NOSSA) and Fleet Type Command (TYCOM) Surgeons is that Independent Duty Corpsman can conduct and qualify active duty members for explosive handler duties.

(3) Periodicity is 5 years until age 60, then annually for active duty and civilian workers.

(4) Waivers can be granted by the member's command but are only valid during employment at that command.

3. **Action**

- a. Remove pages 15-94 and 15-95 and replace with revised pages 15-94 through 15-95b.
- b. Record this Change 135 in the Record of Page Changes.

  
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(b) Diabetes mellitus controlled without the use of insulin will be considered for a waiver. Waiver package submissions must include documentation of a current medical regimen, a current hemoglobin A1C level, and current documentation of the presence or absence of any end organ damage.

(5) Disorders of sleep and wakefulness are disqualifying only after submission of neurological and pulmonary medical specialty consultation that a bona fide disorder exists, documentation of impact on daily duty assignment by the disorder, and documentation of failure of behavioral sleep hygiene treatment.

(6) Metabolic syndrome (hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and glucose intolerance) is disqualifying. Waivers will be considered when the syndrome is under good control. Good control is evidenced by:

(a) Blood pressure readings consistently below 140 systolic and 90 diastolic.

(b) Hemoglobin A1C of 6.5 or less without the use of insulin.

(c) Low density lipoprotein (LDL) of 160 or less.

(3) **Special Studies.** In addition to the special studies required in article 15-5, also perform a standard chest x-ray on initial accession and when clinically indicated.

(4) **Periodicity.** Medical examinations for submarine duty will be conducted at least once every 5 years from the date of initial examination.

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*Note. All waiver requests for disqualifying medical and physical conditions noted above should follow the submarine chain of command to NAVPERSCOM via the Director, BUMED Undersea and Special Operations. Accession requests for submarine duty arising outside of submarine force which would require a waiver, because of existence of above medical and physical conditions, should be directed to NAVPERSCOM via the Director, BUMED Undersea and Special Operations.*

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## 15-107

### Explosives Motor Vehicle Operator and Explosives Handler Examinations and Standards

(1) **Background.** Military personnel were previously exempt from the requirements of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986, and, in particular, from the requirements of 49 CFR Part 383 regarding physical examination requirements to obtain a commercial drivers license. However, due to recent changes in the scope of the periodic examinations for military members, military personnel are no longer considered exempt based on periodic physical examination requirements. Civilian and military explosive motor vehicle operators are now required to meet physical qualifications as listed in 49 CFR 391, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations.

(2) **Scope.** These special duty certification examinations are required for active duty and civilian personnel assigned as explosive motor vehicle operators and explosive handlers. The applicant must have a current physical examination per 49 CFR 391, FMCSA regulations. Certain military personnel are exempt from this standard based upon mission and/or command requirements. Administrative mission and/or command requirement exemptions from this standard required review via the waiver process established by Naval Ordnance Safety and Security Activity. It is important to note the separation of the two qualifications as explosive motor vehicle operator and explosive handler. Those qualified under the explosive motor vehicle operator are automatically also qualified as explosive handlers. Explosive handler qualification does not imply qualification for explosive motor vehicle operator.

(3) **Periodicity.** The Explosives Motor Vehicle Operator (720) examination for civilian workers is required every 2 years (or as directed by 49 CFR 391 based upon medical factors) to age 60, then annually thereafter. Active duty members with a comprehensive history and physical examination will follow a 5-year periodicity as provided by 49 CFR 383.3. Examiners using another comprehensive

Special Duty examination, such as a Special Duty examination contained in MANMED Chapter 15, Section IV, as the basis for this explosives motor vehicle operator qualification shall review the findings against the standards of this program, e.g., qualification for submarine duty does not automatically imply qualification for explosives vehicle operator as vision in both eyes is not a requirement for submarine duty, but is required for explosives motor vehicle operator/FMCSA standards. For Explosives Handlers (721), the examination interval is every 5 years for active duty and civilians until age 60, then annually thereafter.

(4) Personnel who are explosives motor vehicle (commercial vehicles or equivalent) operators shall comply with the physical examination requirements in 49 CFR 391 (and other Department of Defense instructions as applicable), via completion of a physical examination as specified in the NMCPHC-TM OM-6260, Occupational Medical Surveillance Procedures Manual and Medical Matrix, latest edition, for Explosives Motor Vehicle Operators/DOT (720), and Explosives Handlers (721) programs. Civilian contract personnel need only be qualified per 49 CFR 391 and FMCSA standards and present applicable certificates to the command program coordinator. Medical examinations are not provided for civilian contractor personnel unless dictated by contract terms or agreements.

(a) **Explosives Vehicle Operators/DOT (720)**. The purpose of this program is to ensure that medical examinations of explosives motor vehicle operators are conducted in a manner allowing assurance that civilians and military members who operate vehicles or machinery which transport explosive or other hazardous material are physically qualified. This examination requires the signature of a licensed medical examiner.

(1) Personnel who are medically qualified as explosive vehicle operators under this section meet the 49 CFR 391 and FMCSA standards shall be issued a Medical Examiner's Certificate (OPNAV 8020/6).

(2) Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit assigned personnel must also meet the requirements of article 15-102 (Diving Duty) as well as 49 CFR 391.

(3) Personnel assigned within jurisdiction of United States Marine Corps (USMC) commands must additionally meet requirements of Marine Corps TM 11240-15, Motor Vehicle Licensing Official's Handbook, current edition.

(4) Personnel assigned to duties as explosive operators are responsible to report to their supervisor or the medical department personnel any physical or mental condition, or any change in their medical status, which may pose a health or safety hazard to self, coworkers, or the public. Supervisors are responsible to direct such personnel to the appropriate medical department for evaluation. 49 CFR § 391.41, Subpart E, Physical Qualifications and Examinations set the qualification and disqualification standards for these exams to include:

(a) A person shall not drive as an explosives motor vehicle operator (commercial or equivalent) or handle explosives unless he or she is physically qualified to do so. An explosives motor vehicle operator must have on his or her person the original, or a photographic copy, of the appropriate completed medical examiner's certificate that he or she is physically qualified.

(b) A person is physically qualified as an explosives motor vehicle operator if that person:

1. Has no loss of a foot, a leg, a hand, or an arm, that impairs performance of assigned duties.

2. Has no impairment of:

a. A hand or finger which interferes with prehension or power grasping.

b. An arm, foot, or leg which interferes with the ability to perform normal tasks associated with operating a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent) or any other significant limb defect or limitation which interferes with the ability to perform normal tasks associated with operating a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent).

3. Has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of diabetes mellitus currently requiring insulin for control.

4. Has no current clinical diagnosis of myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, coronary insufficiency, thrombosis, or any other cardiovascular disease of a variety known to be accompanied by syncope, dyspnea, collapse, or congestive heart failure.

5. Has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of a respiratory dysfunction likely to interfere with his or her ability to control and drive a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent) safely.

6. Has no current clinical diagnosis of high blood pressure likely to interfere with his or her ability to operate a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent) safely. Follow guidelines contained in 49 CFR 391.43 for those with elevated blood pressures (over 140 systolic or 90 diastolic) on examination. Shorter qualification intervals apply to both civilians and active duty.

7. Has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of rheumatic, arthritic, orthopedic, muscular, neuromuscular, or vascular disease which interferes with his or her ability to control and operate a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent) safely.

8. Has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of epilepsy or any other condition which is likely to cause loss of consciousness or any loss of ability to control a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent).

9. Has no mental nervous, organic, or functional disease or psychiatric disorder likely to interfere with his or her ability to safely drive a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent).

10. Has distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in each eye without corrective lenses or visual acuity separately corrected to 20/40 (Snellen) or better with corrective lenses, distant binocular acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in both eyes with or without corrective lenses, field of vision of at least 70° in the horizontal Meridian in each eye, and the ability to recognize the colors of traffic signals and devices showing standard red, green, and amber.

11. First perceives a forced whispered voice in the better ear at not less than 5 feet with or without the use of a hearing aid or, if tested by use of an audiometric device. Does not have an average hearing loss in the better ear greater than 40 decibels at 500 Hz, 1,000 Hz, and 2,000 Hz with or without a hearing aid.

12. Substance use:

a. Does not use a controlled substance or drug identified as *Schedule I*, an amphetamine, a narcotic, or any other habit-forming drug.

b. *Exception.* A driver may use such a substance or drug, if the substance or drug is prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner who:

- Is familiar with driver's medical history and assigned duties.

- Has advised the driver that the prescribed substance or drug will not adversely affect the driver's ability to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle (or equivalent).

13. Has no current clinical diagnosis of alcoholism.

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*Note. Additional specific quantifiable parameters for certain medical conditions can be found in the FMCSA medical program guidelines (<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/administration/medical.htm>) and NMCPHC-TM OM-6260, Occupational Medical Surveillance Procedures Manual and Medical Matrix, latest edition, for Explosives Vehicle Operators/ DOT (720) program.*

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(b) **Explosives Handlers (721) programs.** The purpose of this program is to ensure that medical examinations of civilian and active duty explosive handlers are conducted in a manner allowing assurance that those who handle explosives, including those who handle ammunition and explosives with industrial material handling equipment, are physically qualified. This examination can be conducted and signed by any Navy medical provider. For the purposes of this exam, a Navy medical provider includes, but is not limited to, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and independent duty corpsmen.

(1) Explosives handler personnel must meet the qualifications for retention per section III of this chapter, for active duty members, and the standards outlined above for civilians. A non-FMCSA "Handler Only" Medical Examiner's Certificate (OPNAV 8020/2) will be issued to qualified members.

(2) Navy EOD unit assigned personnel that do not meet the medical qualification criteria of the Explosive Operator (720) examination must also continue to meet the requirements of MANMED article 15-102 (Diving Duty).

(3) Personnel assigned within jurisdiction of United States Marine Corps (USMC) commands must additionally meet requirements of Marine Corps TM 11240-15, Motor Vehicle Licensing Official's Handbook, current edition.

(4) Per the guidance in NAVSEA OP 5, civilian explosives handlers must meet the general standards for employment as provided by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the standards for qualification in 49 CFR 391.

(5) Personnel assigned to duties as explosive handlers are responsible to report to their supervisor or the medical department personnel any physical or mental condition which may pose a health or safety hazard to self, coworkers, or the public. Supervisors are responsible to direct such personnel to the appropriate medical department for evaluation.

(5) ***Waivers of medical standards or physical requirements.*** For civilian Explosive Motor Vehicle Operators (720), if the member is found not qualified on examination, but provides conflicting information from their private physician, 49 CFR 391.47 provides

criteria for submitting documents to Director, Office of Bus and Truck Standards and Operations at the Department of Transportation for determination of qualification. For active duty members, for Explosives Motor Vehicle Operator (720), due to the significant safety and legal ramifications associated with these programs, an occupational medicine physician should be consulted. A waiver for an active duty member to operate a vehicle only on-base may be considered and is granted by the member's command with an endorsement by the installation's safety department. For Explosives Handler (721) duty, the case where either a civilian or active duty member has been found Not Physically Qualified (NPQ) shall be reviewed by a provider familiar with the job's physical and safety requirements. Due to the significant safety and legal ramifications associated with these programs, ideally an occupational medicine physician should be consulted. The provider will analyze the member's job tasks to determine whether the employee's medical condition would affect performing the essential functions of the job without harm to self or others. If the worker fails to meet the standards, but the permanent medical condition will not reasonably interfere with safe performance of the job's requirements, then the worker is considered "NPQ, but waiver medically recommended." If the permanent medical condition is such that sudden or unexpected subtle or complete incapacitation is probable, then the worker is considered "NPQ and waiver not medically recommended." This finding will be maintained in the worker's medical record, with a copy submitted to the worker's supervisor and the worker. Waivers of medical standards or physical requirements are granted by the worker's commander, according to criteria under the authority of the Navy Personnel Ammunition and Explosives Handling Qualification and Certification Program.