

WARFARE TACTICS INSTRUCTOR

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Applications

Q: Who is eligible to become a WTI?

A: SWOs (1110/1117) in the paygrades of O1 through O4 are eligible to qualify as a WTI, and must be SWO qualified to be accepted into the program. Surface LDOs and CWOs are also eligible, and do not require a SWO pin. Officers from other Navy designators (e.g., aviators), other US armed services (e.g., USMC), and allied nations (e.g., Royal Australian Navy) have been admitted on a case-by-case basis. O5 and senior may audit the course (either the entire course or a portion thereof) but will not receive the WTI additional qualification designator (AQD)

Q: Can SWO Nukes (SWO(N)) apply for WTI?

A: Yes!

Q: Does one have to commit to service as a Department Head / sign DHRB to be a WTI?

A: No!

Q: What warfare specialty areas are available within the WTI program?

A: WTIs specialize in Anti-Submarine and Surface Warfare (ASW/SUW), Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD), Amphibious Warfare (AMW), and Mine Warfare (MIW). Completion of each program results in the award of a distinct AQD – KW1 for ASW/SUW, KW2 for IAMD, KW3 for AMW, and KW4 for MIW.

Q: Where can I get an application template, and to whom should I submit it?

A: Please contact the WTI Management Cell (WTI MC) at SWO_WTI@navy.mil for an application template. This is also where you submit your application once completed. When submitting, please ensure you receive an acknowledgement message from the WTI MC team within one business day.

Q: What are some common mistakes on applications and how do you avoid making them?

A: The best applications are ones that are complete and specific with regards to your background, qualifications, and experience. Please ensure all quals you have earned are listed and not just the ones with tactical relevance, since you may not have had the chance to earn a tactical qual but earning another advanced qual (e.g., EOOW) shows you have the potential to successfully complete WTI. Likewise, be specific when listing your roles in supporting operations and exercises – what billet you filled, what watches you stood, etc.

Administratively, please do not include a photo with your bio (as we have to follow standard Navy practice for our applications process), ensure your application is one PDF file and not sent in multiple parts – and be sure to sign your personal statement!

If you want specific feedback on your application, please reach out to us to request a review at least two weeks prior to the submission deadline, and we'd be happy to review your package and give you specific pointers.

Q: When are WTI applications due?

A: As we hold WTI selections boards every other month, applications are due by COB on the second Friday of odd-numbered months. (Jan, March, May, July, Sep, Nov).

Q: Can I apply to more than one program?

A: Yes, you can apply for one, two, three, or all four of the programs! The application template will ask you to rank them in order of preference.

Board Process

Q: How are WTI boards conducted?

A: WTI selection boards are comprised of five WTIs (at least one of each patch type), a recorder, and a board chair (a SMWDC O6 or post-command O5). All applications are briefed and voted on by the board members, excluding the recorder. Each applicant will be voted on in each individual warfare area for which they apply based on overall performance, experience, and potential to succeed as that flavor of WTI.

Q: When and how are selection board results released?

A: All applicants will receive an email or phone call from the SMWDC Commander. Results are typically released by the end of the month in which the board was conducted. If orders are contingent on selection, PERS will be notified immediately following board approval.

Q: What happens once I am selected?

A: Once selected, you are awarded the KWS (WTI selectee) AOD and you are eligible to attend the WTI COI(s) for the warfare area(s) for which the board selected you. The WTI MC will then work with you and your detailer on specific plans to attend a WTI COI that best fits in your career path.

Q: How long will the KWS AOD be on my record?

A: The KWS AOD will be on your record for 18 months and can be extended up to 18 additional months if you send your FITREPS covering the time since you were accepted to SWO_WTI@navy.mil to show sustained performance since being selected.

Q: What happens if I am not selected?

A: If you are not selected, please reach out to the SWO_WTI@navy.mil distro to ask why you were not selected, as they have the authority to share general board comments about non-selections. You may reapply at any point, but the WTI MC will give you a recommendation on what portions of your package need to be made stronger or they may recommend waiting for additional FITREPS to show sustained performance required of the WTI program.

Course Attendance and Timing

Q: Where can I find course dates and locations?

A: CANTRAC is the best source for current COI convening dates and locations.

Q: When is it best for me to attend a WTI COI?

This depends on individual circumstances. It is often easiest to attend the WTI COI as part of PCS orders when one is going immediately into a Production Tour ashore.

Attending the WTI COI in between sea tours as part of a PCS is also possible in some cases, but early coordination is required with PERS since other billet-specific training is required. Some training tracks

(LCSs, SWO(N)s attending Power School and Prototype enroute a CVN) are too long to accommodate WTI training in between sea tours.

Additionally, PERS will not renegotiate orders based off of selection into the WTI program. If you are interested in WTI, please let your detailer know as soon as possible, specifically when you submit your application to us.

It is also possible to attend the COI via TAD orders at any point your command can support your attendance. Funding is available via the TYCOM in the event your command needs a TADTAR augment.

The WTI Community Brief lists several points in the SWO career path where attending the WTI COI makes most sense.

The Red Chip Program

Q: What is the Red Chip program and who is eligible?

A: The Red Chip program allows a ship's Commanding Officer to nominate one SWO-qualified DIVO per calendar year to automatically be selected for the WTI program of their choice. The officer will automatically be awarded the KWS AQD, and the WTI MC team will immediately begin working with them to schedule them for a COI. No application is required!

WTI Production Tours

Q: What is a Production Tour (PT)?

A: A PT is a tour in any billet that requires a WTI-qualified officer and which supports one or more SMWDC Lines of Effort – TTP development, Advanced Tactical Training, Operational Reachback, Research and Development, and WTI Production.

Q: Is a PT required?

A: Yes, a production tour is required for qualified WTIs, ideally as close to the time you qualify as your career path supports.

Q: What PTs are available and where are they located?

A: PTs are available both within SMWDC as well as elsewhere in the Navy's advanced tactical training community. These include CSGs 4 and 15, Tactical Training Groups Atlantic and Pacific (TTGP/L), Expeditionary Warfare Training Groups Atlantic and Pacific (EWTGPAC/LANT), Afloat Training Groups (ATGs), Surface Warfare Schools Command (SWSC), Surface Combat Systems Training Command (SCSTC), and other Warfare Development Centers.

Please email the WTI MC at SWO_WTI@navy.mil for the latest list!

Q: How do I slate for a production tour?

A: For Division Officers rolling ashore, your shore slate will list required AQDs next to billet titles. As a WTI select or qualified WTI, you are eligible to fill billets coded with a WTI AQD (KW1-KW4).

For Department Heads, the process is similar when looking at the downstream fills (DSF) list for reconciliation. PT billets are WTI coded, and will list a WTI AQD alongside the billet title and command.

As with anything, early and frequent communication with your detailer is key. Also, please reach out to the WTI MC if you are coming up on slating and would like SMWDC to advocate for you!

Graduate Education for WTIs

Q: Can I be a WTI and still do grad school as a post-DIVO LT ashore?

A: Yes!

Q: What sort of graduate degree programs are open to WTIs?

A: All Navy graduate education programs (and other talent management programs) are available to WTIs, though all are dependent on individual career timing. For some, it may make more sense to complete a graduate degree via talent management prior to service as a WTI, for others it may work better to serve as a WTI first and then complete graduate school (or attend part time while serving in a PT billet).

Q: What is the WTI Scholars program?

A: The WTI Scholars program reserves several seats at NPS for qualified WTIs to complete a full-time, in-person graduate degree through NPS while ashore in their PT. If accepted, they will PCS to Monterey to execute a short (12-18 month) degree program, usually in a field that is associated with their WTI specialty (e.g., Space Systems). As this program involves fully-funded graduate education, DHRB is required for post-DIVOs.

SMWDC will release a notice annually (usually each Winter) with that year's WTI Scholars program specifics and application timelines. Selectees are usually notified in April and can begin their degree programs as soon as the upcoming fall term at NPS.

Q: Does working at SMWDC support earning a graduate degree part-time?

A: Yes! SMWDC leadership will work with WTIs to balance workload and operational commitments to afford WTIs to attend school in-person one day each week.