



Improved Officer Selection/Tracking System

OE Watch Commentary: As prestige toward military service has improved over the past several years, Russian defense officials have become more selective in choosing the best cadets for officer training. As the accompanying excerpt from the pro-Kremlin daily *Izvestiya* points out, “as well as passing the YeGE (the Russian equivalent to the ACT/SAT), future cadets will have to undergo special professional selection tests in real time.” As the article explains, even if they have high marks in the YeGE, prospective cadets will not be admitted if they do not pass the special professional selection tests.

“The new professional selection system will make the management of human resources in the Armed Forces a great deal more effective...”

These special military tests are also designed to determine “a candidate’s aptitude for particular classes of military specialism,” which are divided into three categories: “those suited to serving in subunits directly involved in military action -- the VDV (airborne), spetsnaz, and so forth; the second category means having administrative abilities: Such candidates may in time occupy important command posts. Those in the third category can serve in all positions except those envisaged by the first two. In other words as technical specialists, engineers, or staff or rear services officers.”

The article quotes a military expert who suggests this “new professional selection system will make the management of human resources in the Armed Forces a great deal more effective.” This expert goes on to point out that “back in the nineties there was practically no selection, and people sometimes became officers who were unsuited to military service,” which “did not reflect well on the situation in the Armed Forces.” Another expert who supports tracking officers according to their strengths, remarks that “the Armed Forces people have always quietly divided their fellow service personnel into officers ‘for war’ and officers ‘for peacetime,’” and that since “officer training costs the state a great deal,” it makes sense “to use people as effectively as possible.” Ultimately, the article shows how the Russian military continues to develop policies and procedures to strengthen its personnel system. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**

Source: Roman Kretsup, Aleksey Ramm, and Bogdan Stepovoy, “Каждому по боеготовности: Минобороны перепроверит ЕГЭ абитуриентов (To Each According to His Abilities. Defense Ministry To Re-Test Applicants With Single State Examination Pass),” *Izvestiya*, 8 February 2019. <https://iz.ru/842706/roman-kretcul-aleksei-ramm-bogdan-stepovoi/kazhdomu-po-boesposobnosti-minoborony-pereproverit-ege-abiturientov>

The Defense Ministry is to increase the requirements for entering military vuzes [higher educational establishments] to a major extent. As well as passing the YeGE [Single State Examination] future cadets will have to undergo special professional selection tests in real time...

...Sources in the military department have told Izvestiya that the Defense Ministry has introduced a new system of tests for the professional selection of service personnel: It will start to operate this year. The tests have been developed by specialists at the General Staff Military Academy. The criteria will be used to test not only military vuz applicants: In the future they will also be applied to select candidates for contract service. A candidate who fails to pass professional selection will not be admitted to a military vuz even if he achieves pass marks in the YeGE and in physical training.

There are already tests for military vuz applicants. But they are mainly focused on determining a candidate’s aptitude for particular classes of military specialism: Now there will be three rather than seven. The first category will encompass those suited to serving in subunits directly involved in military action -- the VDV [Airborne Troops], the spetsnaz, and so forth. Suitability for the second category means having administrative abilities: Such candidates may in time occupy important command posts. Those in the third category can serve in all positions except those envisaged by the first two. In other words as technical specialists, engineers, or staff or rear services officers....

The new professional selection system will make the management of human resources in the Armed Forces a great deal more effective, Aleksandr Perendzhiyev, a member of the Officers of Russia expert council and senior lecturer at the REU [Russian Economics University] named for Plekhanov, told Izvestiya. This should help to minimize situations in which the state spends a lot of time and money on training an officer who proves unable to serve in his specialized field because of his psychological attributes.

“There are people who are not good at paperwork, dealing with documents or analyzing information,” Aleksandr Perendzhiyev said. “It is better for them to work with the personnel. And there are those whose psychological type does not enable them to lead. When they are appointed to command, both the men and the discipline suffer as a result....”

...Back in the nineties there was practically no selection, and people sometimes became officers who were unsuited to military service, the expert recalls. And that did not reflect well on the situation in the Armed Forces.

“It is important to use people as effectively as possible, so any sensible system for improving the quality of the selection of future officers is only to be welcomed,” military expert Vladislav Shurygin told Izvestiya. “Using tests to separate future officers into those capable of showing their qualities either in combat or in command positions makes good sense. In the Armed Forces people have always quietly divided their fellow service personnel into officers ‘for war’ and officers ‘for peacetime.’ It could not be said that any of them were bad. It was simply that not everyone could show composure or take the initiative under extreme conditions. At the same time, away from frontline conditions many such officers became, for example, excellent teachers. Officer training costs the state a great deal, so discarding such personnel is at the very least senseless and wasteful.”