

**AM I ON THE RIGHT PATH?**  
**INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES INVITED FOR**  
**2021 DIRECT SHORT SERVICE COMMISSION INTO THE NIGERIAN**  
**AIR FORCE**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. *The enlistment/recruitment processes of the Nigerian Air Force have over the years evolved to produce qualified and suitable Nigerians to fulfill its statutory and obligatory roles. As part of enhancing and improving the recruitment processes, it has become necessary to provide relevant information to potential candidates to be recruited into the Nigerian Air Force. The essence is to motivate and inspire candidates to make informed career choices and critical decisions about the future.*

**OFFICERS' CAREER INFORMATION**

2. *It is important to state that a career in the Nigerian Air Force offers incredible career opportunities for both officers and airmen cadre. An officer is a person enlisted in the Nigerian Air Force (Armed Forces of Nigeria) who is holding a Presidential Commission. Every officer is trained for a specific job but this does not mean that he will not be given any other job/task which is not included in his ab-initio specialty or discipline. It is a respectable and selfless job because the operational preparedness of the Nigerian Air Force depends on the competence and morale of the officers and men who are the backbone of the Service. Accordingly, it is therefore important to understand the consequences of taking up a career in the Service.*

3. *As an aspiring military officer, you need to be disciplined and articulate, honest, efficient and able to work well under pressure,*

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*practical and adaptable and able to work well in a team. The working conditions as an officer will mandate you to:*

- a. Take part in combat operation and operate military equipment, including weapons, radios and vehicles.*
- b. Take part in ceremonial events such as parades.*
- c. Take part in peacekeeping operations.*
- d. Participate in wartime-scenario training exercises.*
- e. Help in search and rescue efforts and as part of disaster relief efforts in Nigeria and overseas.*
- f. Usually work regular hours (0800 – 1600hrs) but may be expected to work long or irregular hours during performance of exigent duties, training exercises or when on operational deployment.*
- g. Work/train in Nigerian Air Force facilities as well as other approved facilities/locations in Nigeria and abroad.*
- h. Work in all weather conditions and combat situations.*
- i. Spend long periods away from home when necessary.*

### **STATUTORY DUTIES AND BENEFITS OF ENLISTMENT INTO NIGERIAN AIR FORCE**

*4. Nigerian Air Force's existence like other arms of the Armed Forces encompasses deterrence against external aggression especially through the air and in situations where deterrence is inadequate; its responsibility remains to protect and secure the territorial integrity of the country. However, in the last decade, the organization and objectives of the Nigerian Air Force has undergone significant changes as a result of fundamental changes in national policy, interests and the changing nature of warfare and security. The constitutional responsibility of the Nigerian Air Force is best captured in its Mission Statement which states*

that **‘the primary responsibility of the Nigerian Air Force is the defence of the Nation and the protection of its vital economic interests by air’**. Further to this, the Legislative Act that established the Nigerian Air Force in April 1964 states that **‘there shall be established and maintained in and for the Federal Republic of Nigeria, an air force to be known as the Nigerian Air Force’**. It further states that the Nigerian Air Force shall be charged with the defence of the Federal Republic of Nigeria by air.

5. Enlistment into the Nigerian Air Force as officer is a good idea if you genuinely want to render quality service to your great country. Any person who is aspiring to become an officer should note that his essential welfare needs are well catered for by the Federal Government of Nigeria. In particular, the take-home pay and allowances are adequate to lead a dignified life. Enumerated below are some of the benefits that should motivate you to pursue officer career path in the Nigerian Air Force:

a. **Patriotism and Sense of National Duty.** Military service is a noble way to serve others before self. “There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow men. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak and there is no greater satisfaction than to have done it well”. When you serve in the NAF you are rendering quality service to defend the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

b. **Medical Benefits.** As an officer, you are entitled to full health care benefits for yourself and families. Such medical benefit extends into your years of retirement.

c. **Skill Acquisition.** Officer career path in the Nigerian Air Force provides technical skills in various fields and also offers opportunities of additional training for life after retirement. You can earn certifications professional qualifications and degrees which will advance your smooth transition back to civilian life.

d. **Leadership Opportunities.** Being an officer, you are exposed to leadership responsibilities as permitted by your cadre. The experience garnered in this respect will continue to enrich your profile within the Nigerian Air Force and beyond especially when seeking for job after leaving the Service.

### **TYPES OF COMMISSIONING AS AN OFFICER IN THE NIGERIAN AIR FORCE**

6. There are 6 types of commission that can be granted in the Armed Forces of Nigeria but only 5 types are applicable to the Nigerian Air Force. The order of their precedence is as follows: Regular Combatant Commission (RCC), Short Service Combatant Commission (SSCC) for Nigerian Army only, Direct Regular Commission (DRC), Direct Short Service Commission (DSSC), Executive Commission (EC) for Nigerian Army, Special Duty (SD) for the Nigerian Navy and Branch Commission (BC) for the Nigerian Air Force and Concessional Commission (CC). The 5 types of commission in the Nigerian Air Force are highlighted in the succeeding paragraphs.

7. **Regular Combatant Commission.** Regular Combatant Commission in the Armed Forces of Nigeria is open to Nigerians who are officers holding the SSCC for the Nigerian Army only, soldiers/ratings/airmen with appropriate qualifications and civilians with appropriate qualifications. In the case of soldiers/ratings/airmen and

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*civilians, they shall be required to undergo military training at an officer cadet training institution. Among the conditions that must be fulfilled for the grant of a RCC, the candidate must be between 18 and 21 years of age as at the date of commencement of training. A RCC officer's seniority counts from the date of commencement of his officer cadet training unless he suffers relegation, in which case his seniority counts from the date of commencement of training on the course to which he is relegated. The length of service applicable to regular combatant officers shall be eligible to apply to retire if he has served for at least 15 years of commissioned service subject to regulation in force or must have served for a maximum of 35 years after commission except as deemed fit by the Commander-in-Chief. An officer holding a substantive rank shall be retired on reaching the age limit for that rank.*

8. **Direct Regular Commission.** *The DRC in the Armed Forces of Nigeria is open to officers of the DSSC, professionals/University Cadets and soldiers/ratings/airmen who obtain relevant academic and professional qualifications. In order to be considered for a grant DRC, a candidate amongst others, must be between 20 and 35 years of age for Medical Consultants and 20 and 30 years of age for others.*

9. **Direct Short Service Commission.** *The grant of a DSSC in the Armed Forces of Nigeria is open to Soldiers/Ratings/Airmen with appropriate qualifications and civilians with appropriate qualifications. Since the focus of your interest is on the DSSC, detailed conditions of the requirements would be highlighted. In order to be considered for the grant of a DSSC, a graduate of a recognized university or holder of a recognized professional qualification must fulfil the following conditions:*

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- a. *Be between 20 and 30 years of age for both serving personnel and civilians. However, Medical Doctors (consultants) could be between 25 and 40 years of age.*
- b. *Medically fit in accordance with the Medical Standards for the Services.*
- c. *Be a Nigerian citizen by birth.*
- d. *Possesses a degree or higher diploma from a recognized university or a higher institution of learning or a recognized professional qualification.*

*All those selected for a DSSC of any Service shall undergo an orientation course in basic military training at a designated military school of the Service. On successful completion of training, cadets will be commissioned to the rank of Lieutenant (Lt) for Nigerian Army, Sub-Lieutenant (SLt) for Nigerian Navy and Flying Officer (Fg Offr) for Nigerian Air Force with no advantage of seniority except for medical consultants.*

10. **Executive/Special Duty/Branch Commission.** *The Executive/Special Duty/Branch Commission is strictly a promotion outlet for soldiers/ratings/airmen who by their experience and ability are fit for a commission in the particular field for which they are qualified.*

11. **Concessional Commission.** *Concessional Commission (CC) is granted to outstanding soldiers, ratings and airmen who possess exemplary leadership qualities but are above the age limit provided. The purpose is to reward hard work, enhance the retirement benefits of the beneficiaries and to recognize their meritorious service to the nation. It*

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also serves as a motivation to non-commissioned officers to aspire for such elevation. Candidates will be commissioned to the rank of Captain (Capt) for Nigerian Army, Lieutenant (Lt) for Nigerian Navy or Flight Lieutenant (Flt Lt) for Nigerian Air Force and seniority on commission shall be determined subject to the decision of the Service Council/Board.

**RANK AND EQUIVALENT AND TIME ON RANK**

12. Time on Rank is the expected period for an officer to stay on a rank before promotion to the next high rank. The progression as an officer with the time period varies across the various ranks as highlighted

<b>Nigerian Air Force</b>	<b>Nigerian Army</b>	<b>Nigerian Navy</b>
<b>Pilot Officer</b>	Second Lieutenant	Midshipman
<b>Flying Officer</b>	Lieutenant	Sub-Lieutenant
<b>Flight Lieutenant</b>	Captain	Lieutenant
<b>Squadron Leader</b>	Major	Lieutenant Commander
<b>Wing Commander</b>	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander
<b>Group Captain</b>	Colonel	Captain
<b>Air Commodore</b>	Brigadier General	Commodore
<b>Air Vice-Marshal</b>	Major General	Rear Admiral
<b>Air Marshal</b>	Lieutenant General	Vice-Admiral
<b>Air Chief Marshal</b>	General	Admiral
<b>Marshal of the Air Force</b>	Field Marshal	Admiral of the Fleet

Table 1. Military Ranks in The Nigerian Air Force and Equivalent of Other Services

The appropriate age ceiling for the various types of commission in the Armed Forces of Nigeria is highlighted below:

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Serial	Rank	Time on Rank	Type of Commission		
			RC/SSC	DSSC/DRC	EC/SD/BC
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1.	Lt/SLt/Fg Offr	5	39	39	49
2.	Capt/Lt (NN)/Flt Lt	5	47	47	52
3.	Maj/Lt Cdr/Sqn Ldr	6	52	52	55
4.	Lt Col/Cdr/Wg Cdr	5	54	54	57
5.	Col/Capt (NN)/Gp Capt	5	56	56	-
6.	Brig Gen/Cdre/Air Cdre	4	58	58	-
7.	Maj Gen/R Adm/AVM	5	60	60	-
8.	Lt Gen/V Adm/Air Mshl	-	61	-	-
9.	Gen/Adm/Air Chief Mshl	-	62	-	-

**Table 2. Time on Rank & Age Ceiling for Various Type of Commission**

**LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR DIRECT SHORT SERVICE COMMISSION**

13. The following conditions shall govern the length of service of an officer granted a DSSC:

- a. Fifteen years for an initial period of 8 years service, renewable yearly for another period of 7 years, once or more years at a time except for medical consultants.
- b. Shall be on probation for the first 3 years of service.
- c. Application for extension shall be made through the officer's Commanding Officer/Commander at least 6 months before his current commission is due to terminate.
- d. Acceptance of an application for extension is dependent on the requirements of the Service and the recommendation of the Commanding Officer/Commander. A shorter period of service than that which the officer applied for may be granted to him.
- e. Application for extension of service shall be referred to the Service Council/Board for approval.



**CONVERSION FROM DSSC TO DRC**

14. *Officers granted a DSSC wishing to convert to DRC must note the following:*

- a. Not be more than 39 years of age at the time of application except for medical consultants.*
- b. Have served for a period of not less than 3 years as a commissioned officer.*
- c. Have 2 good Performance Evaluation Reports preceding the time of application for conversion.*
- d. Be medically fit.*
- e. Have passed Physical Training Test in the last 2 years.*
- f. Be recommended by his Commanding Officer/Commander.*
- g. Attend and passed a Conversion Board Interview.*
- h. Officers who fail to convert within 15 years of their service shall be compulsorily retired except for medical consultants.0*
- i. In the Nigerian Air Force, a maximum of 3 attempts is allowable for the conversion.*

**ADDICTION AND DRUG ABUSE**

15. *The nature of military duties and combat environments automatically place the personnel at risk of developing symptoms of post*

*traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse disorders as well as other physical and psychosocial problems. While post traumatic stress disorder is a psychological reaction to traumatic experiences, use/abuse of drugs are often employed as a maladaptive strategy for coping with the devastating effects of post traumatic stress disorder on affected persons. Thus, post traumatic stress disorder and drug abuse often go hand in hand. There is therefore the need for candidates to understand these phenomena to be able to help themselves. It is **also pertinent to know that the Nigerian Air Force has zero tolerance to drug abuse and addiction.***

### **SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE**

16. *The Nigerian Air Force respects and recognizes the institution and sanctity of marriage and encourages all Nigerian Air Force personnel to uphold it. An officer must obtain the permission of his Commander before getting married. Also, it is important to note that pilot officers are on probation are not allowed to marry. Meanwhile, female officers and airwomen are only allowed to marry or get pregnant after 3 years of initial military Service. Again, female officers or airwomen shall not be pregnant while undergoing basic military training. Where this happens, they shall be withdrawn from the training and face disciplinary action. Further terms and conditions with respect to marriage are highlighted below:*

- a. **Marriage of Officers to Airmen/women.** *If an offr marries a soldier/rating/airman/airwoman under any of the existing ordnances, the offr or the soldier/rating/airman/airwoman will be given the option to leave the Service from the date of such marriage. It is an offence for an offr to conceal his/her marriage to*

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*soldier/rating/airman/airwoman for the purpose of preventing such from leaving the Service. This essence is to foster discipline.*

b. **Marriage of Female Personnel to Civilians.** *All female personnel married to civilians may wish to live with their civilian husbands in the barracks provided they abide by the rules and regulations concerning barracks life. This is to avoid breach of security in the barracks. The offspring of the marriage are also entitled to all benefits just as the offspring of their male counterparts.*

c. **Marriage to Foreigners.** *No officer is allowed to marry a foreigners or nationalized Nigerian.*

### **RESTRAINT FROM POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

17. *Serving military personnel are not to participate in the affairs of any political organization or party. All forms of political activities, including political meetings and speeches, are prohibited in the barracks and Service establishments. However, military personnel are allowed to obtain information through the mass media, exercise their civic rights, and vote for political parties of their choice. However, they are to be in mufti while exercising their voting rights.*

### **POLICY ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIAN**

18. *Social media are very effective tools in information sharing and media operation that are utilized by both friendly and enemy forces. To avoid compromising operation security by misrepresenting the Armed Forces of Nigeria or divulging vital information, a policy has been put in*

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*place to streamline how members of the Armed Forces of Nigeria use social media platforms both for official and personal purposes. The Policy would therefore ensure that they present themselves in a professional and responsible manner on social media platforms. As a prospective officer, it is essential you get acquainted with this before committing yourself to the Service. Action on Social Media considered as offences by this policy include the following:*

- a. Unauthorized disclosure of operational information through social media.*
- b. Breach of protocol applicable when acting as a representative of the AFN.*
- c. Making comments on the AFN or member of the AFN without necessary approval from ASA.*
- d. Unauthorized disclosure of official security information through social media.*
- e. Posting videos and picture in which personnel are found in compromising position.*
- f. Posting operational pictures thereby compromise troops' locations to the adversary.*
- g. Posting pictures of personnel Kill-in-Action/Wounded-in-Action//Missing-in-Action.*
- h. Flouting rules and regulations guiding marriages by posting compromise pictures and videos taken in uniform before, during and after the wedding ceremonies.*

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*i. Being friends with social media accounts linked with disgruntled elements of the state, terrorist organization, terrorist sympathizers, criminals and advance fee fraudsters.*

*j. The above stated actions are liable to prosecute and punishments as contained in the Armed Forces Act 2015.*

### **CONCLUSION**

*19. The information provided herein is to guide and motivate prospective candidates seeking enlistment into the Nigerian Air Force as a commissioned officer. An officer is a person enlisted in the Nigerian Air Force who is holding a Presidential Commission. Every officer is trained for a specific job but this does not mean that he will not be given any other job/task which is not included in his ab-initio specialty or discipline. As an aspiring military officer, you need to be disciplined and articulate, honest, efficient and able to work well under pressure, practical and adaptable and able to work well in a team. Amongst other things, working conditions as an officer will mandate you to participate in wartime-scenario training exercises, work in all weather conditions and combat situations and spend long periods away from home when necessary.*