

# Birth Certificate of Army Aviation

WDGCT 320.2 (2-5-42)

June 6, 1942

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY GROUND FORCES:

Subject: Organic Air Observation for Field Artillery.

1. Reference is made to letter War Department, February 25, 1942, AG 320.2 (2-5-42) MT-C, subject: Service Test of Organic Air Observation for Field Artillery, and 1st Indorsement thereto.

2. Your recommendation that organic air observation units be included in Field Artillery organizations is approved.

3. It is desired that you take immediate steps to effect the necessary changes in organization, equipment and training entailed by this action.

The following will govern:

### a. Organization:

(1) Liaison airplanes will be authorized for Field Artillery units at the rate of 2 per light and medium Artillery Battalion, 2 per Division Artillery Headquarters and Headquarters Battery or Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Battery.

(2) Personnel will be authorized at the rate of 1 pilot and ½ airplane mechanic for each liaison plane authorized.

(3) The required changes in T/Os and T/BAs will be submitted as soon as practicable.

### b. Procurement and Maintenance:

(1) The Commanding General, Army Air Forces will be responsible for the procurement and issue of airplanes, spare parts, repair materials and the necessary auxiliary flying equipment required by this program. The airplanes will be commercial low performance aircraft of the "Piper Cub" type.

(2) All maintenance other than that requiring the facilities of base shops will be accomplished by the Army Ground Forces.

(3) Maintenance requiring the facilities of base shops (customarily referred to as 3d echelon maintenance in the Army Air Forces) will be a responsibility of the Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

(4) It is desired that you confer with the Commanding General, Army Air Forces regarding the number of aircraft required under the 1942 Troop Basis, the anticipated delivery rate, the estimated requirements of spare parts, repair materials and auxiliary equipment, as well as the procedures and policies regarding their issue and delivery.

### c. Personnel:

#### (1) Qualifications:

Recommendations for the detailed qualifications and specifications for both commissioned and enlisted personnel will be submitted for approval. These will fall into two general categories: a pilot capable of piloting the liaison-type airplane as well as assisting in normal maintenance; and a mechanic qualified to service the airplane and perform repairs incident to 1st and 2d echelon maintenance.

#### (2) Sources of personnel:

(a) Pilots: Volunteers, now under your control, who are qualified to pilot liaison-type airplanes will be utilized to the maximum as pilots. Additional pilots needed to fill requirements of the 1942 Troop Basis will be made available by the Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

(b) Mechanics: Mechanics will be procured from sources under your control.

#### (3) Extra compensation and ratings:

(a) Pilots will be authorized additional compensation for participation in frequent and regular aerial flights. A rating generally similar to that of a liaison pilot will be established for pilots.

(b) Appropriate ratings for mechanics may be Technician, Grade 3, or lower.

### d. Training:

(1) The basic flight training of pilots (exclusive of those under your control already qualified) will be a responsibility of the Commanding General, Army Air Forces. This training will be limited to that necessary to enable safe operation of low performance aircraft and qualify a student according to standards established for liaison pilots.

(2) You are authorized to organize at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, or other stations selected by you, a course of instruction for the operational training of pilots, mechanics and observers in the tactical employment of organic air observation in Field Artillery units.

4. Changes in training literature will be prepared at the earliest practicable date.

5. A copy of the directive to the Commanding General, Army Air Forces is attached hereto. The Commanding General, Army Air Forces has been furnished a copy of this letter.

By order of the Secretary of War:

I. H. EDWARDS,  
Brigadier General,  
Assistant Chief of Staff.