



Watercraft Operator (88K)

Army operations aren't strictly limited to land. Ocean going harbor craft are often used to support operations throughout the continental United States and overseas. It's up to members of the Army watercraft team to navigate, pilot, and maintain these watercraft. Army watercraft soldiers have unique opportunities to embark upon specialized landing craft, gain valuable skills in vessel navigation, or be part of a tug boat crew, moving needed equipment on barges in local harbors or on longer open ocean voyages. Watercraft operators are part of a piloting team using electronic positioning systems, handheld navigation tools, and traditional watch standing procedures aboard many of the Army's watercraft. Watercraft Operators are primarily responsible for navigation, cargo operations and supervising other Soldiers on Army watercraft. Some of your duties as a Watercraft Operator may include:

- Navigating watercraft
- Consulting maps, charts, weather reports and navigation equipment
- Operating amphibious craft during troop landings
- Docking and undocking vessels
- Sending and receiving messages with radios, beacons and signal flags
- Operating and maintaining lifeboats and vessel fire equipment
- Securing all types of cargo using capstans, winches, hoists and davits
- Reporting navigational hazards to the vessel master while underway
- Identifying and interpreting single-letter international code signal flags
- Maintaining boats and deck equipment
- Dropping and weighing anchors
- Keeping ship logs

TRAINING

Job training for a Watercraft Operator consists of nine weeks of Basic Training, where you'll learn basic Soldiering skills, and six weeks of Advanced Individual Training, including practice in boat operations. Part of this time is spent in the classroom and part in the field. You'll learn:

- Boat handling techniques
- Watch standing procedures

Use of compasses, radar, charts, and other navigational aids
Ship structure
Log and message-handling procedures
Navigational mathematics

HELPFUL SKILLS

Helpful attributes include:

- An interest in the ocean, sailing and navigation
- An ability to work as part of a team
- Basic understanding of maps and trip planning
- An ability to work with mathematical formulas

ADVANCED RESPONSIBILITIES

Advanced level Watercraft Operators supervise and train the other Soldiers within the same discipline. As an advanced level Watercraft Operator, you may be involved in:

- Navigating watercraft to complete a variety of missions
- Voyage planning
- Beaching and retracting landing craft
- Towing vessels and barges in harbors and inter-coastal waterways
- Maintaining vessel charts, publications and orders
- Keeping the vessel logbook

RELATED CIVILIAN JOBS

The skills you learn as a Watercraft Operator will help prepare you for a civilian career in shipping, cruise, tugboat or ferry operation. You'll be able to consider a future as a pilot, harbor master or marine resource enforcement officer.

RELATED ARMY POSITIONS

- Bridge Crewmember (21C)
- Motor Transport Operator (88M)
- Watercraft Engineer (88L)

Information about this MOS provided by: www.goarmy.com

For further information visit: www.minnesotanationalguard.org