



The Navy SEALs Change Physical Tests

Published on 09/01/2026

The US Navy has initiated a targeted update of physical evaluations for the more “operational” profiles (combat arms), including communities like **Navy SEALs**, **Special Warfare Combat Crewmen (SWCC)**, **Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)**, and **fleet divers**. The underlying idea is to make the measurement of physical readiness more aligned with the real demands of the job: water, loads, endurance, and strength “under stress.”

The new scheme introduces two “tracks” of evaluation:

- **PFA (Physical Fitness Assessment)**: includes the **Body Composition Assessment (BCA)** and the Navy's standard physical readiness test (PRT).
- **CFA (Combat Fitness Assessment)**: includes the **BCA** and the new **Combat Fitness Test (CFT)**.

For **combat arms** personnel, the rule becomes, in practice, **one PFA and one CFA per year** (instead of just “standard” tests)

Inside the Combat Fitness Test: a “combat” trial in a single session

The **CFT** is designed as a specialized test to be conducted in a single session and combines swimming, weighted strength, and loaded running. As described in the guidelines and explanatory sheets, the sequence is:

1. **800-meter swim** (with fins) timed
2. **Weighted push-ups** with **20 lb**
3. **Weighted pull-ups** with **20 lb**
4. **1-mile run** with **20 lb** (vest/plate carrier/equivalent solution)

The “signature” element is the weight: the goal is to measure performance closer to operational contexts (moving, pushing, pulling, and running with equipment).

Scoring: “sex-neutral” standards and different thresholds for different communities

The system is presented as **sex-neutral** (same evaluation criteria regardless of gender) with adjustments for age group, in line with the Department of Defense's push towards uniform standards for combat roles.

While performing the same events, **SEAL and SWCC** are associated with **stricter** evaluation criteria compared to **EOD** and **fleet divers**, reflecting differences in mission and physical demands. Some journalistic reconstructions also indicate a scale that considers **45 points as “passing”** and **100 as “outstanding”**.

The implementation includes an initial **rollout** phase during which the US Navy can observe results, comparability, and benchmarks before fully consolidating the scoring and recording system.

News link: <https://thedefensepost.com/2026/01/08/us-combat-units-physical-test/>