

HELICOPTER LOADMASTER

THE ROLE



As a Helicopter Loadmaster you are a key member of a NH90 helicopter crew, within 3 Squadron, RNZAF. Your office is an advanced and agile aircraft designed to operate in a range of extreme environments all over the world. Your aircraft is capable of carrying up to 18 passengers and you will manage them and all cargo in the cabin. You will also operate the door guns, rescue hoist and underslung loads.

The types of tasks your crew will be involved in are wide ranging. You'll work with the pilots to ensure the mission is completed safely and effectively, whether it's delivering troops into an urban combat zone or aid to villages in the South Pacific. Your squadron supports the NZ Army, our allied militaries as well as the NZ Police and other government agencies.

Tasks are time critical in their execution, so you will be trained to quickly analyse the situation, determine a course of action and communicate it effectively to achieve the mission.

JOB ON BASE

The majority of your time will be spent on flying missions, but you will spend some time on base preparing for missions or carrying out training activities to enhance your trade knowledge and your core military skills (weapons drills, first aid, and survival escape and evasion techniques).

As a Helicopter Loadmaster you are required to maintain your technical knowledge of the aircraft and the way it is operated. You will also work on projects, and conduct secondary duties required to keep the Squadron running effectively. You will be based at RNZAF Base Ohakea, which is near Bulls in the central North Island. There is time for exercise and sports to maintain your fitness.

You will spend some time on call, and this means being prepared to report to work at any time. Should a national emergency, or search and rescue task occur that requires 3 Squadron assistance, you could find yourself anywhere in New Zealand in a matter of hours helping others in need.

Every day as a Helicopter Loadmaster is different, you could be on a task in the local area, or further afield somewhere in New Zealand, or you could be on an operational deployment overseas.

JOB ON DEPLOYMENT

If 3 Squadron is deployed overseas, you will perform the same duties within your crew and you will use all the skills you develop at home in training to carry out your responsibilities in different environmental and more intense conditions.

You and your crew will contribute towards the overall NZDF mission, with the medium utility NH90 helicopter being used to its full capability - from tactical transport operations such as delivering troops to the battlefield, or resupplying them with rations and ammunition; to non tactical operations such as delivering food or aid to disaster zones, or evacuating sick or injured people. You may find yourself flying around the South Pacific at 260kph and 50ft above ground, being the 'eyes and ears' for the pilots both to keep the aircraft and crew safe, and to search for people in need of rescue.

CAREER PROGRESSION

You will be required to complete initial recruit training at RNZAF Base Woodbourne, then soon after a promotion course for Non Commissioned Officers, before moving onto leadership training and specialist aircrew courses. These will teach you escape and evasion techniques in survival situations, aviation medicine, principles of flight, and mathematics - all crucial skills for your Helicopter Loadmaster role. On completion of this initial training you will progress to Helicopter Basic Course to learn the basics on the A109 helicopter and earn your brevet.

After the Helicopter Basic Course you will be streamed into working as aircrew for either the A109 or NH90 aircraft, and you'll undertake the appropriate 'operational conversion' training. Now you begin your career as an operational Helicopter Loadmaster. Later in your career, you may be selected as an instructor where you will be able to develop and train new Helicopter Loadmasters as they join.

About five years after graduation you may be promoted to Sergeant, and from there further promotions are based on merit. There is also an option to become a Commissioned Officer.

PAY & BENEFIT DETAILS

Careers in the Air Force are well-rewarded, as well as being diverse and exciting. As you become more experienced and move up through the ranks, gaining additional skills and qualifications, you will see your salary rise accordingly.

While undertaking initial Recruit Course you will be paid as a Recruit (see attached [pay table](#)). On completion of your Recruit Course you will be paid as an Aircraftsman and your pay will continue to increase as your career progresses.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- You must be at least 17 years of age.
- Meet the [citizenship & security](#) requirements to gain **SV security clearance** for this trade.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

You must have achieved NCEA level 2 with a minimum of 12 credits in level 2 Science, English and Maths.

[Find out more about the NCEA levels and certificate requirements](#)

FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

- You must be medically fit for service.
- Colour perception restrictions may apply.

TRAINING

BASIC TRAINING

(12 weeks) Location: RNZAF Base Woodbourne

Upon successful enlistment into the Air Force you will be posted to RNZAF Base Woodbourne (near Blenheim) for your Recruit Course. Here you will do 12 weeks of basic military training to find out if you've got what it takes to be in the Air Force, and learn various subjects including:

- Organisation and Administration
- RNZAF Customs and Protocol
- Drill and Parades
- Military Field Skills and Weapon Training
- First Aid, and Search and Rescue Techniques
- Physical Fitness
- Teamwork and Self Discipline

JOB TRAINING

CORPORAL PROMOTIONAL COURSE

(4 weeks) Location: RNZAF Base Woodbourne

Following basic military training you'll be required to pass the Corporal Qualifying Course. This promotion course, conducted at Command and Recruit Training Squadron, is designed to assist RNZAF personnel in a smooth transition to the responsibilities associated with the rank of Corporal.

Corporal Qualifying Course is part of the continuum of RNZAF training. It builds on the experiences and training from the previous ranks, and prepares, not only for the new rank, but also for future promotions that may lie ahead.

NON COMMISSIONED OFFICER AIRCREW COURSE

(8 Weeks) Location: courses are available at RNZAF Base Ohakea and RNZAF Base Auckland.

This course includes a wide variety of topics including Aviation Medicine and Human Factors, Principles of Flight, and the basics of being RNZAF Aircrew. The two week survival course will see you test your limits in the sea and bush environments

HELICOPTER BASIC COURSE

(6 Months) Location: RNZAF Base Ohakea

You will begin with the A109 ground school, with maintenance specialists to learn the technical aspects of the aircraft. Then the Helicopter Loadmaster instructors will take over and teach you ground theory, flying orders and operating procedures crucial to helicopter aircrew.

Your flying phase will be intense and challenging. You will have the support of the Helicopter Loadmaster on 3 Squadron along with your course mates to get you through.

The course has mostly practical elements, with one on one instructor time working as part of a crew. You will be taught how to give direction to manoeuvre the aircraft within confined areas, operate the rescue hoist, wear night vision systems and carry underslung loads. Through hard work and determination you will earn your coveted brevet and be recognised as a Helicopter Loadmaster posted to 3 Squadron.

NH 90 CONVERSION COURSE

(4 Months) Location: RNZAF Base Ohakea

This course will expand on your Helicopter Loadmaster basic skills, to become a NH90 Helicopter Loadmaster in the operational context. You will learn specialist trooping, search and rescue skills, and everything the Squadron does to operate this advanced medium utility aircraft.

ONGOING TRAINING

To remain competent you will regularly conduct training in all aspects of the NH90's capabilities. Along with the Helicopter Loadmaster training, you will conduct specific training in helicopter underwater escape, advance first aid and rescue techniques. You will continually be provided with the skills to be a successful serviceperson, both within your specialist trade and as a member of the NZDF.

LOCATION DETAILS

Following your training you will most likely be posted to 3 Squadron at RNZAF Base Ohakea (near Bulls in the central North Island).

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