

FOREIGN FLYING TRAINING IN TAC'S F-5

By

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The purpose of this article is to review the F-5 courses available for foreign flying training. In general, the courses are designed for pilots whose primary duty will be to fly the F-5. In some cases, however, pilots of other weapons systems can benefit from the training we offer. Appropriate disclosure restrictions must be satisfied before courses can be taught to a country which does not operate the F-5. Most courses can be funded through FMS or IMET.

There are four courses offered, with some variants for each course. The four are conversion, advanced fighter, instructor and weapons instructor. Each will be described in more detail here. Specific questions should be referred to Tactical Air Command Security Assistance Office (TACSAO), Langley AFB VA, 23665 (AV 432-3262). The chart in Figure 1 summarizes pertinent details.

Conversion courses are designed to teach a pilot how to fly the F-5. Besides basic transition and instrument training, there is detailed instruction on aerial and surface attack. The aerial attack module includes basic fighter maneuvers, intercepts, 2 versus 1 attack and defense, and live gun attacks on a towed airborne target. Surface attack includes high and low angle munition deliveries, low level navigation and tactical target acquisition. Before entering training, a pilot must have completed fixed wing Undergraduate Pilot Training or its equivalent.

For the UPT graduate, there are two tracks which we call track A and track B. The track A course is longer and includes extra training in instruments and advanced and night surface attack. The track B course is the basic conversion course which we recommend as more appropriate for most countries. In both A and B tracks, the course consists of three modules, all priced separately. To complete track A, a student flies modules 1, 5, and 10. To complete track B, modules 2, 5, 11 are flown instead. The Military Articles and Service List (MASL) identifies these modules as D116090, D116093, D116095 for track A. Track B includes D116091, D116093 and D116096.

There is a third conversion course available for pilots with 500 hours or more in another fighter. That is track D. It assumes the pilot has acquired basic fighter flying skills and only needs to learn the unique characteristics of the F-5. Track D includes modules 4, 8, and 13 (MASL D116092, D116094, and D116097). It is often taught as a prerequisite course for the Instructor or Weapons Instructor courses when the pilot is not previously F-5 qualified.

Advanced Fighter training course teaches pilots the skills needed to become a flight leader. Besides improving flying skills, the pilot learns how to design a mission to meet specified training objectives, how to brief the mission, and what to emphasize in mission debriefing. Academic instruction is

often concurrent with the Fighter Weapons School courses, and students receive detailed training in advanced fighter maneuvering concepts. Air-to-air includes missions at the 2v2 level. Air-surface includes pop-up and curvilinear attacks. The basic entry prerequisite is 250 hours of F-5 time, though with 500 hours of other jet fighter time, a student will require only a brief conversion course before entry. The MASL number is D116079. The pilot will fly a minimum of 34 sorties and log 35.0 flying hours. The course requires approximately 15 weeks.

Instructor Pilot courses concentrate on teaching a qualified pilot how to be an instructor in a tactical fighter. The F-5 courses are quite a bit more expensive than T-38 Pilot Instructor Training (PIT) because the F-5 course concentrates on weapons training. The graduates are capable of teaching not only transition, instruments, and formation, but also beginning and advanced air combat maneuvering. We have found that a country often expects PIT graduates to have these skills, but the PIT course does not go beyond transition, instruments, and formation. A qualified fighter instructor pilot requires much more sophisticated training than can be done at PIT.

There are two foreign instructor "FI," courses conducted in the F-5. We call them "FIA" and "FIB." Instructional content is the same for both -- only the course length differs. The FIA course (MASL D115059) requires approximately 20 weeks and is designed for a pilot who comes from an operational F-5 unit with 500 hours of fighter time. It is longer because it includes Williams AFB local area orientation and mission orientation during which the pilot flies each mission type as a student before flying as an upgrading instructor. The FIB course (MASL D115060) is shorter, about 12 weeks, because it is only scheduled immediately after track D conversion training. Because of this scheduling, the student needs no area orientation and little mission orientation. The content of the practice instructional sorties is the same for both long and short courses.

Fighter Weapons Instructor Courses (FWIC) are the most advanced training offered. This is the only course in which students from the USAF and foreign countries enroll in the same class. The FWIC takes experienced instructor pilots (minimum high performance fighter time 750 hours, minimum fighter instructor pilot time, 100 hours) and teaches them how to become weapons officers. The graduate will be able to design and execute unit tactical training programs and joint exercises, and will be capable of evaluating munition effects and requirements for extended tactical operations.

The flying and academic schedule FWIC demands is unusually challenging. Students often work 12-14 hour duty days and then study long into the night. Prospective students should possess very strong flying skills and be well above average in English language proficiency. Even exceptionally talented pilots sometimes fail to meet training standards.

The FWIC course is scheduled in two modules -- air-to-air and air-to-surface (MASL D115021 and D115023). Both are required for successful completion. Some countries prefer to send a pilot to only one segment or the other, but we discourage this. The course takes about 19 weeks to complete.

For all the F-5 courses, certain prerequisites are required. These prerequisites must be added to course lengths mentioned previously to

determine total training time. English comprehension level of 80 must be met, and specialized English terminology is required for flying training. Students must be medically qualified for flying and must have completed physiological training at a USAF approved facility. If a pilot has not flown the F-5E, he must also complete the pilot familiarization course in aircraft systems taught by the field training detachment (MASL D149002).

FIGURE 1

Course Type	MASL	Duration	Prerequisites*	Graduate Capability
Conversion				
Track A	D116090 D116093 D116095	26 Weeks	UPT	F-5 Wingman
Track B	D116091 D116093 D116096	21 Weeks	UPT	F-5 Wingman
Track D	D116092 D116094 D116097	13 Weeks	UPT Plus 500 hrs fighter time	F-5 Qualified
Advanced	D116079	15 Weeks	250 hours F-5 or 500 hours other (plus track D)	F-5 Flight Lead
Instructor				
short course (FIB)	D115060	12 Weeks	Track D recently plus 500 hrs ftr time	F-5 IP
long course (FIA)	D115059	20 Weeks	500 fighter hrs	F-5 IP
FWIC				
Air-to-Air Air-to-Surface	D115021 D115023	19 Weeks	100 hrs fighter IP 750 hrs fighter 100 hrs F-5	F-5 Weapons Instructor

* Prerequisites listed here do not include the general ones such as language training, physiological training, etc. Contact FMTAG/FAP for details. The F-5 prerequisites have some variations and exceptions. Contact TACSAO for details.

The Foreign Military Training Affairs Group (FMTAG) at Randolph Air Force Base schedules all the prerequisite training and works closely with TACSAO to achieve F-5 training schedules which will accommodate the greatest number of students.

Currently, sortie availability limits the number of F-5 pilots we can train. While we cannot guarantee any particular course will be available when you want it, if it looks like it would be appropriate, then by all means request the training. The worst we can do is to say we can't accommodate you this year, but often we will be able to find a way to do it, or suggest an alternate course of action.

More than 2,500 F-5s have been sold worldwide. As the fleet matures, the experience level of user countries also matures. We are aware of this, and have continually revised and updated our courses to provide realistic and relevant training. The review process is unending -- next one due is a revised set of conversion courses. We'll keep you posted.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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