**THE HOMING PIGEON**

### **1. Purpose**

This manual provides instructions for proper breeding, care, and training of the homing pigeon, and for the selection and training of pigeoneers. With certain changes this information can be used by all pigeon teams.

### **2. Methods**

The methods prescribed in this manual are based upon experience. Accordingly, if any new procedures are found by experience to improve pigeon communication they should contact the Chief Signal Officer for consideration.

### **3. Origin and History**

The homing pigeon used by the Army for signal communication (referred to in this manual as “pigeon,” “homing pigeon,” and “bird”) is a distinct variety created through careful cross-breeding to obtain maximum distance and speed in controlled and directed flight. Homing pigeons are grouped in ‘families’ or ‘strains’ usually identified by the names of the ‘pigeon fanciers’, who bred them for many generations to develop certain characteristics of performance and appearance. When the several varieties of pigeons used to breed the modern homing pigeon actually originated is not certain. It is known, however, that the following varieties existed in England and Belgium before the nineteenth century, although the exact percentage and order of their blend have not been determined: Smerle, Horseman, Cumulet, Dragoon, Carrier, and Owl.

### **4. Nature**

The principle of using homing pigeons as messengers is based on their natural need to return to their home whenever they are removed some distance and released. They will do this even with an attached message or other light article. This desire to return is largely based on natural urges of hunger and reproduction. Because the pigeon has only one mate they have a strong connection to return home.

### **5. Utility**

The pigeon’s usefulness to the Army is measured by the reliability and speed with which it returns to its loft. Speed and reliability are largely determined by the pigeon’s strain, physical condition, training, and treatment. Therefore any lowering of standards for these factors will be a serious handicap. Further handicaps are discussed in *e* below. Section V sets minimum ability standards for properly-trained, well-bred, healthy birds to be used by combat units as message carriers.

# Questions:

# MCQ Questions

DBCD

CBCA

ADDC

CCA

| **#** | **Type** | **Question** | **Results** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1  Fact finding | This manual provides instructions for proper breeding, care, and training of the homing pigeon, and for the selection and training of pigeoneers. | Which one options below is not mentioned as the purpose of the manual?   1. How to breed pigeons properly 2. How to train pigeons properly 3. How to care for pigeons properly 4. **How to choose a team for the pigeons properly** | Ziyan 0  Sophia 1 |
| 2  vocab | The manual is for the person who deals with pigeons. Also in english, we had ‘er’ to someone who does something. Ie teacher, footballer, seller | From the way it has been used in the text, what does “pigeoneers” mean line 2?   1. A special pigeon 2. **Someone who trains the pigeons** 3. The team of pigeons 4. A pigeon going through training. | Ziyan 0  Sophia 1 |
| 3  phrases |  | What does “The methods prescribed in this manual are based upon experience” mean?   1. The methods in the manual have been created from scientific experiments 2. People who have hardly worked with pigeons have made the manual 3. **People who have spent years working with pigeons have made the manual** 4. The methods in the manual have not been tested enough | Ziyan 0  Sophia 1 |
| 4  Fact finding |  | Why would someone need to contact the Chief Signal Officer?   1. For them to know if you make changes to the manual 2. To tell them you have found a new procedure 3. To tell them about your experience with the pigeons 4. **For them to consider a new procedure that might need to be added to the manual** | Ziyan 0  Sophia 1 |
| 5  Fact finding |  | How many different ways are there to refer to the homing pigeon?   1. 1 2. 2 3. **3** 4. 4 | Ziyan 1  Sophia 1 |
| 6  t/f | Homing pigeons are grouped in ‘families’ or ‘strains’ usually identified by the names of the ‘pigeon fanciers’ who bred them for many generations to develop certain characteristics of performance and appearance. | Which one of these statements is true?   1. The homing pigeon has been carefully cross-bred so that it can find any location 2. **There are different groups of homing pigeons** 3. Homing pigeon strains are given the name of the characteristic they were bred for 4. The homing pigeons are used by members of the public for signal communication | Ziyan 1  Sophia 1 |
| 7  Fact finding |  | How many varieties of homing pigeons are known to have existed before nineteenth century?   1. 4 2. 5 3. **6** 4. 7 | Ziyan 1  Sophia 1 |
| 8  Fact finding | When the several varieties of pigeons used to breed the modern homing pigeon actually originated is not certain | What piece of information is not mentioned?   1. **When homing pigeons came from** 2. Why pigeons are carefully cross-bred 3. What homing pigeons are grouped by 4. Different types of the first homing pigeons | Ziyan 0  Sophia 1 |
| 9  Fact finding | The principle of using homing pigeons as messengers is based on their natural need to return to their home | Why homing pigeons used as messengers?   1. **They have a strong desire to get back home** 2. They are trained to come home 3. They have an internal signal that shows them the way home 4. All animals are able to find their way home | Ziyan 0  Sophia 0 |
| 10  t/f | They will do this even with an attached message or other light article | Which one of these statements is false?   1. The pigeon only has one mate 2. Pigeons return home to be with their mate and eat 3. Cumulet is a variety of homing pigeon 4. **Homing pigeons will return home with messages or heavy parcels attached to them** | Ziyan 0  Sophia 0 |
| 11  Fact finding | The pigeon’s usefulness to the Army is measured by the reliability and speed with which it returns to its loft. | How do we measure how useful a homing pigeon is?   1. By measuring how fast it can fly at top speed 2. By seeing whether it will fly away by itself 3. By weighing how much it can carry 4. **By measuring how often it will return back home safely** | Ziyan 1  Sophia 0 |
| 12  Vocab |  | What is another word for ‘handicap’ line \_\_\_\_\_\_?   1. A glove 2. A disaster 3. **A disadvantage** 4. A competition | Ziyan 0  Sophia 0 |
| 13  phrases |  | Complete this statement with the explanation that fits best.“Pigeons’ natural need to return home means that…”   1. They have an uncontrollable feeling to return home 2. The desire to return home is too strong 3. **Pigeons are born with the urge to return home** 4. It is natural to return home |  |
| 14  vocab |  | Based on the information in the text, complete the sentence. It will be a disadvantage if the standards of pigeon training is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.   1. Blocked 2. Decrease 3. **Reduced** 4. Unstructured |  |
| 15  phrases |  | What does ‘distinct variety’ suggest about homing pigeons?   1. **They differ greatly from other birds** 2. They have distinctive marks and characteristics 3. They differ even among other homing pigeons 4. They have to be treated entirely different from normal birds |  |
| 16 | Evidence: We do not need to use homing pigeons anymore | Using evidence, explain how you know this was written a long time ago. (3 marks) |  |
| 17 | Answers: Where the homing pigeon came from, who uses pigeons, how they are different to other birds, how we bred pigeons to get homing pigeons, their history, homing pigeons behaviour, how to determine whether a homing pigeon is good or not.  At least 4 of these 8 for full marks. | In your own words and using full sentences, summarise what you learn from this training manual (4 marks). |  |