
CHALLENGES RELATED TO THE REGULATION OF THE STATUS OF AVIATION PERSONNEL IN THE POST-WAR REGULATORY LEGAL DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE ROMANIAN ROYAL AERONAUTICAL DIRECTORATE AND THE GENERAL INSPECTORATE OF AERONAUTICS

Cristian MANOLACHI

Human Resources Service, Air Force Staff, Romania

ORCID: 0000-0003-3181-8975

Jănel TĂNASE

”Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy, Braşov, Romania

DOI: 10.19062/1842-9238.2020.18.2.8

Abstract: *Even after the End of the First World War in the West, the Romanian people had to continue their struggle to achieve the goals for which they had decided to join the Entente in August 1916, namely to defend and impose – politically, diplomatically or by force – the decisions of the Plebiscite for National Union adopted by the governing bodies and the legitimacy of the Romanian Nation in Chisinau, Cernauti and Alba Iulia. The victorious campaign against Bolshevism in the East, North and West, together with the Decisions adopted by the Great Powers within the system of the Peace Treaties in Paris, agreed and recognized the new political-geographical reality of Greater Romania in the area designated roughly by the Danube and the Carpathians. And this great historical achievement had to be defended and consolidated, including by modernizing the Romanian Royal Aeronautics and perfecting the specific processes of training and developing human resources, able to set in motion the new operational challenges generated by the technological progress in air capabilities and new doctrines of use.*

Keywords: *Aeronautics, air weapon, aviation, air balloon, patent, air mission, air observer, pilot, flight.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the Romanian unitary National State at the End of the First World War, a war that brought on the stage of European History a new configuration of states, imposed on national bodies fundamental decisions to set in motion new economic and social realities, but also to strengthen the State in order to protect its fundamental values.

Within the extensive process of development and reorganization of the military body to face the new mission of defending the borders of the entire Romanian State, but also based on the conclusions resulting from participating in the fierce confrontations of World War I, the modernization of the Romanian Royal Air Force took a distinct place, due to the assertion of the special role as a combat weapon, in the configuration of the Romanian Armed Forces a process that took place in the interwar period in three distinct stages: the development of the command structure under the form of the General Inspectorate of Aeronautics in 1924, the establishment of the Under Secretariat of Air in 1932 and the independent functioning of the Land Forces, Air Force and the Navy, during 1936-1940.

2. FIRST REGULATIONS RELATED TO THE STATUS OF AERONAUTICAL STAFF ADOPTED AFTER THE WAR

After the demobilization of the Romanian Armed Forces following the victorious campaign in Hungary, the first post-war measures were adopted for the reorganization of the air weapon, but also for correcting its extremely critical situation regarding the endowment with aeronautical equipment and staffing. The process was managed by the Aeronautics Directorate, established in the midst of the World War II, which submitted to the Ministry of War, on April the 30th 1920, Report no. 806 which proposed accelerated measures for the commissioning of the weapon in the fullness of its vital components, organization, endowment and last but not least, the aeronautical personnel [1].

The complex situation of the aeronautical personnel was taken into account, which involved hiring different specialties for the operation of aircraft: air navigation personnel (pilots, observers, snipers, etc.), technical personnel (mechanics, craftsmen, electricians, etc.), meteorologists, photographers, and other specialties required by the development of the weapon, personnel with special servitudes who were trained as a result of a laborious, long process and who came mostly from the aeronautical reserve or assimilated from other weapons, with uncertain legal status, which of the most often headed for careers in basic branches or looking for advantageous aeronautical professions in developing aeronautical enterprises, in constant search of specialized personnel [1].

It was also proposed, taking into account the special reality of aeronautics, which had functioned since the war, through regulations issued by Central Military Authorities, especially the General Headquarters, including in the complex field of training and development of aeronautical personnel, to promote a legislative initiative, the organization and post-war operation of the weapon, also supported by the General Staff, a law that was more necessary as, given the difficult conditions generated by the war and the danger of its decomposition and dismantling, it could ensure proper functioning and training, even in Peacetime, for a possible future war [2].

Following these measures, simultaneously with the establishment of new units that were to be equipped with imported aeronautical equipment, with the one repaired and built in their own units or war capture, the structure of training and improvement of aeronautical personnel was reorganized.

Thus, Aviation Instruction Group 4, the first aeronautical education institution in Greater Romania, established in 1918, was developed and transformed into a new structure, also based in Tecuci, the Aviation Training Center established by the Command Order no. 21 of June 16, 1920 [3] and the Report of the Aeronautical Directorate no. 1910 of July 4, 1920 (stating that the students who had passed the exam conducted at the Bucharest Aeronautical Directorate to attend the Pilot School, were to begin classes at the Aviation Training Center in Tecuci, on July 20, 1920 [4]).

The mission of the Aviation Training Center was to achieve the standardization of the training and application of aeronautical regulations at the level of basic structures, groups and aviation squadrons and, fundamentally, the training of all specialties of air navigation and non-navigation personnel, for the classification of combat units [5].

In order to accomplish its mission, the Aviation Training Center was provided with the organizational, material and infrastructure conditions necessary for a performance training process, within the specialized structures that were to operate in its staff, Pilot Schools, Observatories, Bombing, Fighting and Shooting [5].

The 6-month Pilot School provides theoretical and practical flight training and piloting, following the graduation exam, of student officers and non-commissioned officers.

The school of observers and bombers trained airborne personnel in the specialties of aircraft observers and bombers. The training program was complex with theoretical and practical training internships at the center but also at specialized units, at the end of school, by exam, students being patented as an observer on the plane, respectively a bomber on the plane [5].

The School of Combat and Shooting had the mission of training licensed pilots, observers and bombers for combat. The students of this school went through a very rigorous selection process, based on the complete knowledge of the candidates, the results and the daily efforts as air navigation personnel within trainings, professional background and, very importantly, the moral and professional qualities. The school curriculum was diverse and complex, including theoretical and practical courses in the school or combat squadrons, training exercises in the real conditions of air combat actions, at the end of which the staff was evaluated by giving coefficients to the skills of flight, air shooting, in and out of the air.

The school of specialists was intended to train non-navigating staff by selecting candidates from the lower ranks in the specialties of aircraft mechanics, engine specialists, gunsmiths, firecrackers specialists, electricians, car mechanics, photographers, laborers and designers, meteorologists.

The Aviation Training Center also ensured the specialized training of the staff in case of equipping the aeronautical units with other categories of equipment, airplanes or engines, through training courses with variable durations, depending on the complexity of the specialty categories [5].

In addition to the training of active personnel, the Aviation Training Center also ensured the training of reserve personnel, from all categories of personnel and specialties, according to the regulations elaborated at the level of the General Staff and the Ministry of War [5].

The Aviation Training Center, during its period of operation, revived the development of aeronautical activities in our country, given that the formation of new staff and specialties was required, by selecting the most valuable elements of the Armed Forces, given the specificity of the aeronautical service which could not and should not be open to all, which posed special risks and required special moral and professional qualities for staff.

3. REGULATIONS ISSUED DURING THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSOLIDATION OF COMMAND AND COMBAT STRUCTURES, AND THE TRAINING OF THE ROMANIAN ROYAL AERONAUTICS PERSONNEL

With all these, the implementation of the Aeronautics Modernization Program approved by the senior military leadership forums also involved transforming the system to train, improve and ensure a thorough and motivating career for specialized personnel.

In 1924, a first step was taken to ensure the achievement of these goals, once established, at the proposal of the Secretary of State to the Department of War sent with Report no. 3336/1924, of the General Inspectorate of Aeronautics, by the High Royal Decree no. 2057 of June the 23rd, 1924. According to art. 1, the Inspector General of Aeronautics had the attributions of an Army General Inspector, in the other articles of the Decree being regulated some rights of the aeronautical officers, coming from other weapons, the rights and obligations of the officers sent to study abroad, measures for hiring civilian personnel from the engineering area, civil servants and craftsmen, the hierarchy of civilian craftsmen and military aeronautical foremen.

Challenges Related to the Regulation of the Status of Aviation Personnel in the Post-War Regulatory Legal Documents Issued by the Romanian Royal Aeronautical Directorate and the General Inspectorate of Aeronautics

After the establishment of the command bodies, following the reviews and reports submitted by the General Inspectorate of Aeronautics with no. 434, of November the 1st, 1924, General Staff with no. 2773, of September the 5th, 1924 and the Ministry of War, with no. 436, of November the 4th, 1924, by the High Royal Decree no. 3761 of November the 10th, 1924, King Ferdinand approved the establishment, on November the 1st 1924, of the Schools for the training and improvement of the Romanian Aeronautics personnel, respectively the Preparatory and Special Schools of Aeronautics, based in Bucharest, for the training of navigation and technical officers, active and reserve, Piloting and Training Schools, located in Tecuci, for the training of airborne Non-Commissioned Officers, Aeronautics Training Center, based in Băneasa, for the training of other aeronautical specialties, observers, radio telegraphers, aerial photographers, aeronautical staff, meteorologists, meteorologists, School of Air Shooting and Bombing, based in Mamaia, for the training of air navigation personnel for shooting and shooting in and from the air, Technical School of Aeronautics, based in Mediaș, for the training of various specialties of aeronautical technical personnel [6].

The efforts to develop interwar aeronautical education continued, so that, at the proposal of the General Inspectorate of Aeronautics submitted with Report no. 564b of October the 25th 1925, by the High Royal Decree no. 3983 of December, the 31st 1925, starting with January the 1st 1926, in the structure of the Romanian Royal Aeronautics was established the Command of the Schools and Training Centers of Aeronautics which subordinated the Preparatory and Special Schools of Aeronautics (Bucharest), the Piloting and Training Schools (Tecuci), the Center of Aeronautics (Bucharest-Băneasa), the Technical School of Aeronautics (Mediaș) and the School of Shooting and Bombing (Constanța) [6].

In the spirit of this trend of continuity and development, with Report no. 15184 of December the 13th 1927, the Ministry of War requested the High Regency to establish a specialized school for war pilots, located in Buzau. Based on the High Royal Decree no. 3578 of December the 13th 1927, was established, on October the 1st 1927, the Training School for warplane pilots, which aimed to complete the training of pilots for the use of warplanes and training as flight instructors [6].

Until the establishment of the Under-Secretariat of State for Air in 1932, the organization of aeronautics was legislated by the Law on the organization of the Army adopted by High Decree no. 1462 of April the 30th 1930 and by the High Decree no. 2041 of June the 7th 1930, the new Aeronautics Battle Order was approved, starting with June the 1st 1930. According to these regulations, in addition to the command and combat structures, the structure of aeronautics provided all the structures established after the war, respectively the Command of Schools and Training Centers of Aeronautics (Bucharest) with the Military Preparatory and Special Schools of Aeronautics "King Carol II -lea "(Bucharest), Aeronautics Training Center (Bucharest - Pipera), Military Flying School (Tecuci), Training School for warplane pilots (Buzau), School of Shooting and Air Bombing (Constanța - Mamaia), Technical School of Aeronautics (Mediaș) [6].

For the development of this rigorous ensemble of aeronautical personnel training, the national experience was exploited, but also the developments that took place in other states in Europe and in the world, which had created such aeronautical personnel training institutions, taking into account the evolution of technology requiring in-depth expertise and technical knowledge, training of personnel in other weapons for aeronautics requiring longer training times [7].

This system of education designed by the doctrine provisions concerning the use of the weapon, supported by the General Inspector of Aeronautics, Prince Carol the IInd, had as coordinates the special doctrine of the weapon, with the overwhelming role played by the superior combat technique, which required personnel technical training and perfect specialty, but also a scheduled career development path, especially of officers, by going through several mandatory stages.

In the first stage, the aeronautical personnel were admitted and trained within the Preparatory and Special Schools of Aeronautics, which, after graduation, performed for a period of at least seven years the functions at the base of the military aeronautical pyramid, pilot and aerial observer in aviation or air station units. At this stage, the officers became familiar with the use of air means in combat and took various training courses, aerial shooting, bombing, aerial combat, etc. at the Aeronautics Training Center. At the end of this stage, the officers were promoted, being able to upgrade to the rank of captain, with the position of squadron commander or an airline company.

This stage was completed after a minimum of six years, being necessary for the training and completion of officers in the tactical and technical management of the structures they commanded, participation in exercises and training with units from other categories of weapons to become familiar with their cooperation and support, according to the concept of using Aeronautics in war.

In order to advance to the rank of major, it was necessary for officers to complete the Information Course at the Aeronautics Training Center, in order to crystallize and systematize the knowledge required of a senior aeronautical officer.

The period for the ranks of major and lieutenant-colonel was at least ten years, during which time officers were promoted to the positions of commander of an aviation or aerostatic group, in order to familiarize and train future aeronautical commanders for wartime corps levels.

At the end of this stage, the officers were advanced to the ranks of colonel and later general, without a certain internship in units and promoted, depending on the seniority in service at the command of large aeronautical units, the activity on these types of functions ensuring their training for military commanders in military warfare [7].

4. CONCLUSIONS

These developments in the first interwar decade generated comprehensive actions for the consolidation and establishment of a unitary system of management and administration of all means operating in the air, military and civilian fields. The constructive approach was adopted by the Law for the Organization of Aeronautics and the establishment of the Under-Secretariat of State for Air, promulgated by the High Royal Decree no. 1890 of 31st of May 1932.

For the present approach, the pioneering represented by this law is highlighted, which, through its internal organization, integration of all aeronautical components in a coherent whole, depth and legal clarity in defining the status of military and civilian aeronautical personnel in terms of military career, rights and the particular obligations of this category of personnel, an approach that is constituted and, certainly, will constitute a perennial source for the developments that will follow in air law and the related aviation laws.

*Challenges Related to the Regulation of the Status of Aviation Personnel in the Post-War
Regulatory Legal Documents Issued by the Romanian Royal Aeronautical Directorate
and the General Inspectorate of Aeronautics*

REFERENCES

- [1] Romanian Military Archives (R.M.A.), *Content General Staff, Section 1 Mobilization Organization*, file no. 389, f. 48;
- [2] Romanian Military Archives (R.M.A.), *Report no. 1642 of 2nd of June 1920*, f. 41;
- [3] Romanian Military Archives (R.M.A.), *Tecuci Military Pilot School*, file 439, f. 121';
- [4] Romanian Military Archives (R.M.A.), *Aeronautical Directorate*, file 253, f. 353;
- [5] Romanian Military Archives (R.M.A.), *M.St.M., Section 1 Mobilization Organization, Instructions on the organization and operation of the Aviation Training Center (A.T.C.)*, file 389, f. 73-78;
- [6] Romanian Military Archives (R.M.A.), *The High Royal Decree no. 3761 of November 10, 1924*, content *General Inspectorate of Aeronautics*, file no. 8, f. 15-41;
- [7] Romanian Military Archives (R.M.A.), *M.St.M., Section 5 Instruction, Report on the activity of the Preparatory and Special Schools of Aeronautics from the establishment until now, 1924-1928*, file no. 34, f. 331-333.