

APPLICATION



Application Deadlines:

Fall 2020 Selection	
Applications Due:	31 August 2020
Phase 1 (record review):	3 September 2020
Phase 2 (in-person selection):	4 – 8 October 2020
Winter 2021 Selection	
Applications Due:	14 December 2020
Phase 1 (record review):	17 December 2020
Phase 2 (in-person selection):	31 January – 4 February 2021
Summer 2021 Selection	
Applications Due:	12 April 2021
Phase 1 (record review):	15 April 2021
Phase 2 (in-person selection):	16 – 21 May 2021

Submit applications to: 24SOWSTTS.Assessments.RAS@us.af.mil
For general questions: 720OSS.SOST.Orgbox@us.af.mil

“Quis Illos Bellatores Custodiet”

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Special Operations Surgical Team Assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Special Operations Surgical Team (SOST). This document outlines the application procedures for becoming a SOST member. SOST is tasked under the 24th Special Operations Wing (24 SOW), which is tasked under Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). For more information, visit our website at <https://www.airforcespecialtactics.af.mil/Special-Tactics/Battlefield-Surgery/>. Applicants should review this document thoroughly because it has undergone significant revision.

2. CAREER FIELD ELIGIBILITY

SOST requires high levels of teamwork, physical fitness, mental agility, professionalism, leadership, interpersonal skills, initiative, psychological stability, motivation, critical thinking skill sets, and technical competency. Additional eligibility criteria are below:

- Officer candidates: Grades of O-3 to O-4 (+/-1 may be considered on a case by case basis)
- Enlisted candidates: Minimum grade of E-5 with 7-level qualifications (or able to attain within 6 months of selection). E-4 with a line number to E-5 will be considered on a case by case basis
- Hold a qualifying SOST AFSC/Skill level**: 44E3A, 45A3, 45S3, 46Y3M, 46N3E, 46N3J, 4H071, 4N171 or sister service equivalent for officer positions only
- Security clearance: Secret (minimum), Top Secret eligible
- Sister service or civilian candidates: Must meet AF entry requirements prior to application submission
- Medical/Physical: Ability to complete a 9C/Operation Support Flyer Physical and submit DD Form 2992
- Physical Fitness: Candidates must have scored at least a 90% on their last AF Fitness Test
- Eligible to PCS within 12-24 months of selection
- Prior approval from officer career consultant or enlisted career field manager must be documented
- Must hold or be able to meet appropriate license and credentials for the states of Florida, Alabama, or Nevada
- ER physicians from both 3 and 4 year programs will be considered
- Medical Providers, when appropriate, must be at a minimum; board eligible
- Critical care nurses must have current ADP reflecting intent to join SOST
- Civilian Registered Nurses at a minimum must have 5 years of recent and consecutive Critical Care Flight Nurse, adult ICU or ER nurse experience in a Level 1 or Level 2 trauma center. Civilian applicants must have a current board certification in one of the following: CCRN, CFRN, TCRN, CEN.
- Surgical Technicians with B/C/D shred outs will require approval from the Career Field Manager

**Individuals may apply to SOST if they have either a primary or secondary AFSC that correlates to an approved AFSC. If your primary AFSC is not listed as an approved AFSC for SOST, but your secondary AFSC is, then the first step is to discuss with your leadership and determine if you are eligible to leave your current career field. If you are eligible, then an individual should have a discussion with appropriate leadership to determine if you would be able to meet AFSC requirements while assigned to SOST.

3. SOST APPLICATION PROCEDURES

There will be two SOST Assessments each year consisting of two phases per assessment. In Phase I, a panel of officers reviews and stratifies applications submitted by the deadline. Qualified applicants are invited to attend Phase II. Phase II consists of a 6-day in-person evaluation conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL. Selection is funded by AFSOC.

Upon completion of Phase II, the 24 SOW/CC, or delegated authority, will make their selection of new SOST personnel. Applicants are briefed on their select/non-select status upon completing Phase II. Refer to the front cover for the schedule pertaining to our two assessment cycles.

These schedules may change depending on SOST needs and available resources. Receiving an invitation to Phase II means the Phase I assessment board would like to take a closer look at your potential of joining SOST. Your decision to attend is voluntary and non-binding. Phase II selection means the selection board president has approved your entry into SOST and pipeline training. It is ultimately up to you to accept the challenge.

Active Duty AF: Any members may apply as long as they meet the eligibility requirements stated above.

Reserve Personnel: The SOST program has Individual Mobilization Augmentee(IMA) authorizations. A traditional reservist or IMA may apply for this position. Reserve personnel may join SOST in one of two ways:

1. Join in an IMA position
2. Transition to Active Duty

Individual Mobility Augmentee (IMA): IMAs are authorized to submit an application. IMA applications begin on the AF portal under AFPC Secure; select reserve vacancies, then IMA Officer/Enlisted vacancies as appropriate. Upon selection they will remain IMAs and attend training and deploy in IMA status.

Inter-service Transfers: Officers in other services seeking to apply for SOST should reference AFI 36- 2004 *Inter-service Transfer of Officer to the United States Air Force (USAF) and the United States Air Force Reserve (USAFR)*. You should submit your SOST application to the Phase I selection board before an approved service transfer. However, you must include in your application a letter from your commander supporting this transfer in lieu of a career field release by an AFPC functional manger. Bear in mind that selection at Phase II does not guarantee an approved inter-service transfer, the processes are independent of each other. It is highly recommended that this process be started at least six months prior to Phase II due to the time required to complete a transfer. For additional information, contact the Appointed Assessment Director. **Note:** At this time, enlisted transfers are not accepted.

Civilian Personnel: Civilian personnel may contact SOST for application guidance if needed.

First-Time Non-Selects: Candidates who attend Phase II, but are not selected, may be invited back based on approval authorities recommendation.

Guard Personnel: May contact SOST for application guidance if needed.

4. **PHASE I**

Phase I applications are due by the date posted on the top of each cycle's application. The appointed Assessment Director does an initial review of the applications for completeness then convenes a review board consisting of current SOST personnel. The selection board has final authority to invite applicants to Phase II. Once invitations are sent, the Assessment Director contacts the individuals with Phase II reporting instructions.

The appointed Assessment Director designates the candidate team leader. At that time, the team is encouraged to begin team building via email and other means. The more cohesive the team is prior to arrival, the better the team interaction will be during Phase II which enhances everyone's selection chances. The team leader is the primary means of contacting the ST Assessment Director for assessment related matters. The appointed Assessment Director is your definitive resource for all policy, continuity, and information on Phase II.

Applications from candidates are stored for Phase II cadre to gain an initial impression of the team members. All non-invited applicants may request feedback on their applications from the ST Assessment Director. If you do not hear from the Assessment Director within 45 days of submitting your application, contact him/her for details.

Read through ANNEX A for complete instructions and guidance on constructing your Phase I package.

5. **PHASE II**

Phase II Selection occurs at Hurlburt Field, FL. The purpose of Phase II is to assess each candidate in SOF attributes such as: teamwork, physical fitness, mental agility, professionalism, leadership, interpersonal skills, initiative, psychological stability, motivation, critical thinking skill sets, and technical competency for determining if you have the raw skills to operate in the Special Operations environment.

Your ability to be a team member and your individual performance are evaluated. The schedule is designed to stress you. The Assessment Cadre will observe and take notes on everything you do. These observations will be the basis for a hiring recommendation made to the Senior Ranking Officer (SRO). The data will also be used to provide critical feedback to enhance your personal and professional growth.

Candidates must prepare for a physically and mentally trying time. The cadre will push you physically and mentally beyond your comfort zone to assess those critical attributes in adverse situations. You will be expected to perform to the best of your ability in all events.

Candidates will receive reporting instructions. Billeting will be coordinated for all candidates. Candidates will be billeted together for the duration of Phase II. The candidate team leader is responsible for passing travel and contact information for all candidates. The first person to check in will be responsible for facilitating the in-processing of additional candidates. When the candidate team leader arrives, he/she must check in with the Assessment Director for further instructions.

There are five ways to be dismissed during Phase II.

- 1) **Failure to pass the PT Evaluation** during Phase II is grounds for immediate dismissal.
- 2) **Medical disqualification** results from a medical assessment determining your inability to continue safely through Phase II.
- 3) **Self-Initiated Elimination (SIE)** means that you no longer wish to continue in the assessment.
- 4) **Quitting by Action (QBA)** is a Phase II policy that allows the Phase II cadre to give you three consecutive warnings during an assessment event, for demonstrating lack of motivation to continue or perform at the required level of effort. If a fourth warning is issued, you are subject to removal from the assessment. If a candidate SIE's or QBA's, they will not be considered again for assessment.
- 5) **Integrity Violation** is grounds for immediate removal from the assessment, no warning will be issued.

Candidates should prepare for the following:

- Briefing and writing skills evaluations
- Problem solving events
- Leadership ability evaluations
- Tactical/field medical care scenarios
- Extensive psychological testing and interviews
- Potential for ruck marching distances over 4 miles at a 15:00 min/mile pace with 45 pounds of weight
- Potential for running distances up to 3 miles at an 8:00 min/mile pace
- Calisthenics sessions of various exercises
- Water confidence evaluations, to include:
 - o Underwater swim 15 yards
 - o Be able to tread water and/or surface swim in uniform

ANNEX A

SOST Phase I Application Instructions & Example

PHASE I APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proofread your application for accuracy, format, grammar, and spelling. In Phase I, the selection board relies solely on the information and impressions made through your application. Incomplete or poorly crafted applications are a reflection of the applicant's professionalism. As a rule, successful Phase I applications are concise, easy to understand, and are not filled with extra "fluff." Your success in the SOF community begins with this application.

The application will include the following in this order:

1. Application checklist
2. Cover page – Use Times New Roman and Font size 10.
3. Personal Narrative – One page in length (See example for format and specifics).
4. One page résumé and/or Curriculum Vitae – emphasize leadership experience (See example for format).
5. One signed recommendation letter formatted according to AFH 33-337 The Tongue and Quill (or sister service equivalent) from your commander or residency director, no more than one-page in length. The letter should comment on your leadership abilities and/or clinical proficiency including relevant examples.
6. Copies of the three most recent performance or training reports, etc. If your time in service is too short to have three reports, include what is available.
7. Service members will also include a copy of their SURF or Career Data Brief (CDB)
8. Sister service or civilian only: A signed statement documenting member meets AF entry requirements and has sister service approval for release (first O-6 in the chain).
9. Ensure completion of a 9C/Operational Support Flyer physical and submit a signed DD Form 2992 with this package.

When complete, your application should be scanned into a PDF file as ONE DOCUMENT, and sent via signed official email (.gov or .mil) to 24SOWSTTS.Assessments.RAS@us.af.mil. Put your last name and "SOST Application" separated by a hyphen in the subject line of the email and as the PDF file name, such as "Johnson-SOST Application."

Additional Considerations:

- When submitting your application, insert the appropriate FOUO statement at the beginning portion of the e-mail traffic. Example: "The information herein is For Official Use Only (FOUO) which must be protected under the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. Unauthorized disclosure or misuse of this PERSONAL INFORMATION may result in criminal and/or civil penalties."
- The format on the next pages is required. Follow the example. However, if the header or section does not apply to your situation, simply use N/A. Page numbers are not needed
- Be sure that all signature blocks are signed digitally or with wet ink
- If you have additional questions contact: 720.OSS.SOST.orgbox@us.af.mil

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Cover page – Use Times New Roman and Font size 10.
- Personal Narrative – One page in length (See example for format and specifics).
- One page résumé and/or Curriculum Vitae – emphasize leadership experience (See example for format).
- One signed recommendation letter formatted according to AFH 33-337 The Tongue and Quill (or sister service equivalent) from your commander or residency director, no more than one-page in length. The letter should comment on your leadership abilities and/or clinical proficiency including relevant examples.
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- Service members will also include a copy of their SURF or Career Data Brief (CDB)
- Sister service or civilian only: A signed statement documenting member meets AF entry requirements and has sister service approval for release (first O-6 in the chain).
- Ensure completion of a 9C/Operational Support Flyer physical and submit a signed DD Form 2992 with this package.

- If you have a waiver, are taking long term medication, and/or receiving ongoing treatment; notify the Phase I Board for further instructions.

Rank/Name: Capt John Smith **SSN:** 123-45-6789

Email: john.smith@eglin.af.mil **Phone:** 850-555-1234

Duty Title: General Surgeon

Branch of Service: USAF **Duty Status:** Active / IMA / Guard

Status Applying For: Active / IMA / Guard

Residency Program: Johns Hopkins Emergency Medicine

Highest Level of Education: MD Duke University

Board Status: Board Certified / Board Eligible / Neither / N/A

Have you previously attended SOST Selection: Yes / No

If yes, when: (Month, Year)

INSERT YOUR PHOTO HERE.

Insert a forward facing portrait against a solid colored background. Be in service dress and crop the photo from the bottom of your name tag/bottom of your ribbon rack to the top of your head.

If an official photo lab is not available, use a digital camera and stand against a white wall with nothing in the background. If deployed, wear the appropriate uniform of the day. Civilians wear appropriate professional attire.

Squadron Commander Rank/Name: Lt Col John A. Doe

Email/Phone: john.doe@eglin.af.mil / 850-678-1234

Consultant/Career field Manager Rank/Name: Lt Col Jane Doe

Email/Phone: jane.doe@lackland.af.mil / 850-789-3456

(Nurse Only) Chief Nurse Rank/Name: Lt Col Jane Doe

Email/Phone: jane.doe@hurlburt.af.mil / 850-123-4567

**** Uniform personnel must complete the following. Civilian personnel will coordinate with Phase I personnel to complete these requirements. ****

PT Test Results

PT Test Date:

Sit-ups ___ **Push-ups** ___

1.5 Mile run ___ mins ___ secs **Calculated PT Test Score** ___

Candidate can complete 15 yard underwater and can swim 250 meters without stopping (Yes/No)

PTL/OIC/NCOIC Name/Rank:

PTL/OIC/NCOIC Contact (Email/Phone):

PTL/OIC/NCOIC Signature: _____

Please answer the following statements/questions:

US Citizen: Yes / No City/State of Birth: _____ Conscientious Objector: Yes / No
Prior Service: Yes / No Branch: _____ From: _____ To: _____
If prior service, list current clearance level? _____ When was the last investigation? _____
Law Violations: Yes / No If Yes, list (Current Active Duty/ Reserve/ National Guard with any branch; also distinguish from
and list all violations since your last security clearance)

Candidate Statement of Acknowledgement

“I, (Insert Full Name Here), hereby apply to become a Special Operations Surgical Team member and volunteer to perform the duties inherent to Special Operations. I acknowledge that I can be removed from further assessment for any of the following reasons: 1) quitting through words or actions, 2) becoming a medical or safety risk, 3) committing an integrity violation such as lying, cheating, or stealing, or 4) failing to meet specified fitness standards. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is true.”

Candidate Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS SURGICAL TEAM ASSESSMENT BOARD

FROM: 96 MDG/SGOS

SUBJECT: Personal Narrative

1. This document is provided to give the assessment board an overall understanding of your character and personality. It should be clear, concise, and free of extra “fluff” statements.

It should include:

1. Your personal background, significant jobs/positions held, and/or an explanation of your clinical currencies and experiences before and/or during military service
2. An identification and explanation of your perceived strengths and weaknesses
3. A discussion on what attracts you to joining the Special Operations Surgical Team
4. Why the Special Operations Surgical Team is the right career for you

2. The narrative will be formatted with 1-inch margins on the left and right sides. The top margin will be between 1 inch and 1.5 inches depending on the heading, you establish. The bottom will be 1 inch and will include the Special Operations Surgical Team motto: ***“Quis Illos Bellatores Custodiet.”***

3. The heading format you see above should be followed with your own information entered in the FROM portion. The document may not exceed more than one page in length. Use Times New Roman with a 12 font size. Include a crest in the upper left hand corner of your header similar to an official memorandum for record. See AFH 33-337 *The Tongue and Quill* or sister service equivalent for examples of an Official Memorandum for Record.

John Smith

JOHN SMITH, Capt, USAF, MC
General Surgeon

PERSONAL RÉSUMÉ

John Smith
Capt, USAF

SSAN: XXX-XX-XXXX
DOB: DD MMM YY
AGE: XX

SERVICE HISTORY

Aug 10 – Present

General Surgeon, 96 MDG, Eglin AFB, FL. Specific description of position and duties assigned....

Jan 10 – May 10

NCOIC, Operating Room, 96 MDG, Eglin AFB, FL. Specific description of position and duties assigned....

Include no more than last 10 years

EDUCATION

M.D	USUHS	2012
B.S. Biology	University of Michigan	2008
A.A.S. Surgical Services	Community College of the Air Force	2002

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (If applicable)

Squadron Officer School	2010
Airmanship Basic Course	2007

CERTIFICATIONS/AWARDS/MILITARY AND MEDICAL TRAINING/PUBLICATIONS/RESEARCH

USAFA Distinguished Graduate
EMT Basic Certification
USAF NCOA Distinguished Graduate

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Air Force Sergeants Association
American Medical Association

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Surfing, rock climbing, fly-fishing, off-roading

ANNEX B

SOST Physical Training (PT) Evaluation Standards

General: All SOST applicants shall complete the physical training test in accordance with these procedures as part of the SOST application. This test is based off of the Special Tactics operator physical training standards/evaluation test described in AFI 13-219V2, *Combat Control and Special Tactics Operator Standardization and Evaluation*. Portions of the PT Evaluation have been modified to better reflect SOST requirements.

Standards: You must achieve a minimum of a 90% on an Air Force PT Test and successfully accomplish the 15 yard underwater swim and 250 meter surface swim. SOST selection is extremely competitive; you should give your very best effort and strive to exceed the 90% minimums. When you submit your application, your PT Test should have been accomplished within three months of the Phase I due date, and as close to Phase I as possible to reflect your current level of fitness.

Administration: The PT test must be given in the order listed and completed within a three-hour timeframe. If you are unable to meet any of the minimums, you have failed the test. Your supervisor, such as the unit PT manager, should administer the PT test. Other test administrators are considered on a case-by-case basis, following coordination with the Assessment Director. If you fail to execute the proper form, the test administrator will correct you, and the incorrect repetition will not count. The test administrator will document the results on the cover sheet of your application and sign in the appropriate space.

Procedures: Calisthenic events will be tested one right after the other with approximately a 2 minute time lapse between events. Upon completion of the calisthenic events, a 10 minute rest period is given prior to starting the 1.5-mile run. Upon completion of the 1.5-mile run, a 20-minute rest period is given prior to starting the underwater swim. There will be a 5 minute break after the underwater swim, before beginning treading water/surface swim.

- **Sit-ups (one-minute time limit):** Starting Position. The use of a mat is optional. The member will be instructed to lie face up on the floor/mat. In the starting position, the member's feet may extend off the mat, but the buttocks, shoulders, and head must not extend beyond the mat. The member's knees will be bent at a 90 degree angle (throughout the assessment), with the feet or heels in contact with the floor at all times. The member's arms will be crossed over the chest with the hands/fingers on the shoulders or resting on the upper chest. A complete sit-up is accomplished when the upper torso of the member is raised off the floor/mat, the elbows touch the knees or thighs, and the upper torso is lowered back to the floor/mat until the shoulder blades touch the floor/mat. Elbows must touch the knees or thighs at the top of the sit-up, and the shoulder blades must touch the floor/mat at the bottom of the sit-up. Any part of your hands/fingers must remain in contact with your shoulders/upper chest at all times. Incorrect sit-ups (e.g., elbows do not touch the knees or thighs at the top of the sit-up, shoulder blades do not touch the floor/mat at the bottom of the sit-up, hands/fingers lift completely off the shoulders/upper chest, etc.) will not be counted. If an incorrect sit-up is performed, assessor will repeat the number of the last correct sit-up and explain what is being done incorrectly. The member may only rest in the up position. If the member rests in the down position or holds onto their knees/legs while in the up position, the sit-up component of the assessment will be terminated. A 2 minute rest follows this event.
- **Push-ups (one-minute time limit):** From the starting position (elbows extended), the member will lower the body to the ground until the upper arm is at least parallel to the floor (elbow bent at least 90 degrees or less) before pushing back up to the starting position (the chest may touch but not rest on or bounce off the floor). The member completes one full push-up after returning to the starting position with elbows fully extended. It is important to monitor the member's form and make sure the body does not bow at the waist as the member tires. The body must remain rigid during the assessment (the back must remain straight unless resting). Incorrect push-ups (e.g., member does not lower body until upper arm is at least parallel to the floor, member does not fully extend elbows when returning to starting position, body bows at the waist, etc.) will not be counted. If an incorrect push-up is performed, assessor will repeat the number of the last correct push-up and explain what is being done incorrectly. Member may rest in the up position only. If member rests in the down position with their body on the ground, the push-up component of the test will be terminated. A 10 minute rest follows this event.

- **1.5 Mile Run:** Performed with running shoes and running shorts. This run must be continuous (non-stop). If a candidate stops anytime during the run, the test is terminated and a failure is entered for the entire test. The test is conducted on a measured running track. Designed to measure aerobic endurance used when performing mission tasks, specifically employment or evasion situations. This event is followed by a 20 minute rest period prior to the underwater swim.
- **Underwater Swim Test:** The 15 yard underwater swim will be performed with swim trunks and mask or goggles. Enter the pool feet first and swim 15 yards, while keeping their face submerged and/or not taking a breath. It should be completed without the candidate surfacing or breaking the water surface during any portion of the swim. If violated, the test will be terminated and considered a failure for the entire test. Swimsuits and swim goggles/mask are the only equipment items allowed. Allow a 5 minute rest period prior to treading water/surface swim. Candidates should carefully stretch for the swim during this break time.