

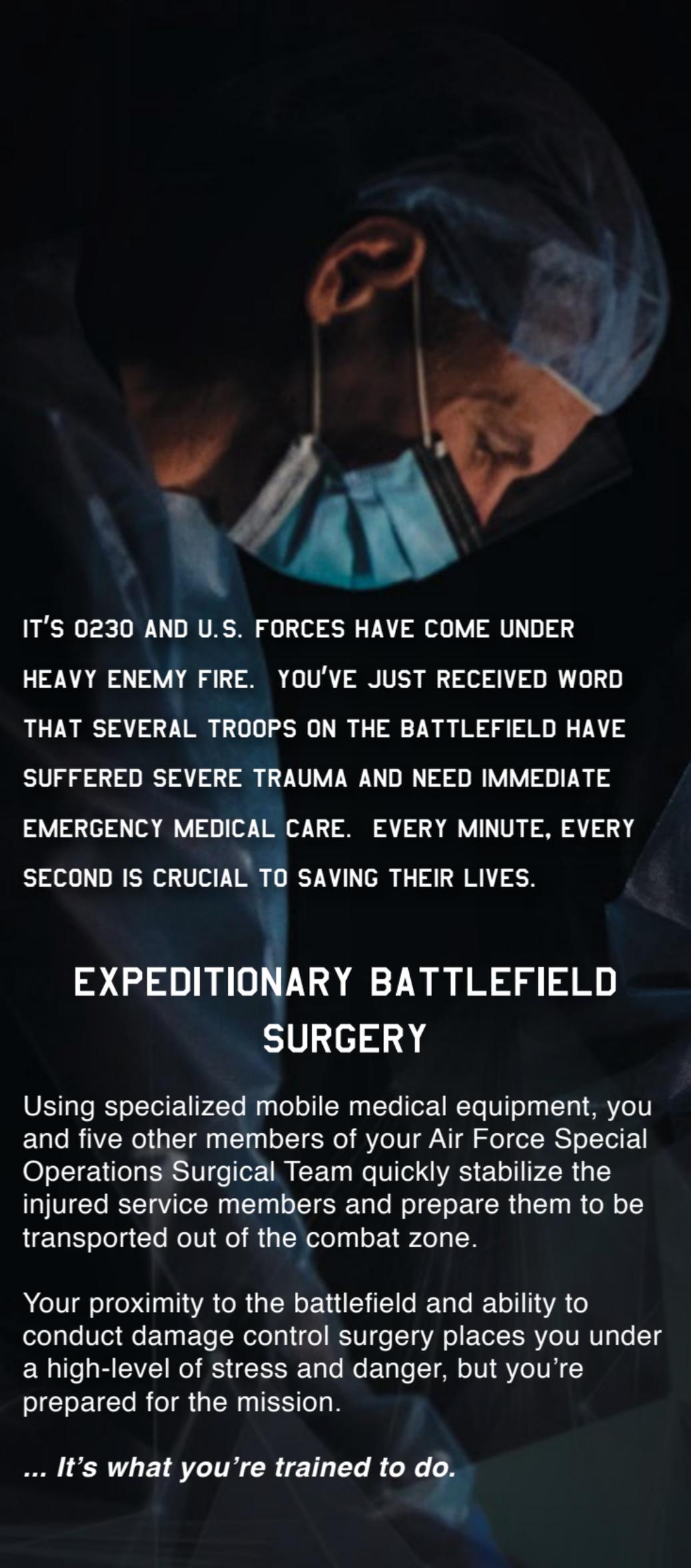


# UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
SURGICAL TEAMS



DIGITAL EDITION



IT'S 0230 AND U.S. FORCES HAVE COME UNDER HEAVY ENEMY FIRE. YOU'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT SEVERAL TROOPS ON THE BATTLEFIELD HAVE SUFFERED SEVERE TRAUMA AND NEED IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE. EVERY MINUTE, EVERY SECOND IS CRUCIAL TO SAVING THEIR LIVES.

## **EXPEDITIONARY BATTLEFIELD SURGERY**

Using specialized mobile medical equipment, you and five other members of your Air Force Special Operations Surgical Team quickly stabilize the injured service members and prepare them to be transported out of the combat zone.

Your proximity to the battlefield and ability to conduct damage control surgery places you under a high-level of stress and danger, but you're prepared for the mission.

*... It's what you're trained to do.*

# SAVING LIVES - ANY PLACE, ANY TIME, ANYWHERE

Special Operations Surgical Teams, also known as SOSTs, are highly-mobile, tailorable teams of surgical and emergency specialists trained to provide life-saving care any place, any time, anywhere. By providing life-saving surgical care and trauma resuscitation on the battlefield, these teams close the gap between the front lines and conventional medical care. They enable far-forward military operations due to their ability to conduct high-level surgical support in close proximity to combat and crisis. Working short distances from the front lines of combat, they operate with limited equipment and resources, requiring them to practice medicine on a different level in circumstances not seen across the westernized healthcare system.

They deploy as six-member teams consisting of:

- **General Surgeon**
- **Anesthesiologist or Nurse Anesthetist**
- **Emergency Physician**
- **Critical Care or Emergency Room Nurse**
- **Surgical Technician**
- **Respiratory Therapist**

SOSTs work in some of the most austere and hostile environments and function independently of any established healthcare support system or facility. Whether on the battlefield or on a medical evacuation flight, SOST supports joint and allied special operations and contingency operations around the globe.





## SOST CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

Much like other special operations forces (SOF), those applying to SOST must be assessed and selected for these positions. The selection objective is to assess members physically and mentally to make sure the right person is in the right place when battlefield surgery or trauma care is necessary. Your recruiter will provide you with information on Air Force qualifications specific to your career field. If you pass the qualifications and are selected as a SOST candidate, you'll undergo further evaluations at Hurlburt Field, Florida.

The week-long evaluation schedule is both physically and mentally challenging. It is designed to stress you and determine if you have the raw skills required to operate in the special operations environment.

## EVALUATIONS

SOST candidates are evaluated on:

- Oral and written communication skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Leadership and followership ability
- Tactical/field medical care scenarios
- Psychological testing and interviews
- Potential for ruck marching distances of over four miles at a 15:00 min/mile pace with 45 pounds of weight
- Potential for running distances up to three miles at an 8:00 min/mile pace
- Calisthenics sessions of various exercises
- Water confidence, including:
  - Underwater swim 15 yards
  - Tread water for 10 minutes
  - Surface swimming in uniform



## MEDICAL CAPABILITIES

SOSTs provide four unique medical capabilities:

- Trauma resuscitation
- Damage control surgery
- Critical care evacuation
- Post-op critical care stabilization

## ADVANCED TRAINING

If you successfully pass the SOST selection, you will undergo 10 months of advanced training that includes: survival, evasion, resistance and escape (SERE) courses, operational medical training and SOF-specific operational and tactical training. Finally, you will participate in full mission exercises with Special Tactics and SOF units from other military branches.

[SOST WEBSITE](#)



## BENEFITS

As a SOST member, you'll enjoy Air Force benefits including:

An excellent starting salary with regular pay raises with the possibility of accession/retention bonuses and special pay

- Continuing medical education opportunities
- 30 days of vacation with pay each year
- Free comprehensive medical and dental care
- Tax-free food and housing allowances
- Thrift Savings Plan similar to a 401(k)
- Generous retirement program

## CIVILIAN TRAUMA CENTERS

As a SOST member, your assigned duty location will be at a civilian Level 1 trauma center. Being able to train together stateside in an operating room and emergency room is invaluable to our ability to execute our mission in a complex environment downrange. This environment allows the teams to develop an enduring relationship in preparation for deployment where they must be able to trust each other's decisions and anticipate their next move.

Your team will stay together in a continuous training mode while you're not deployed, which enables you to develop and maintain your trauma and special operations skills. With such a small team of medical professionals, the bonds are critical in forming trust amongst team members to make the right decisions. The SOSTs don't train 'just in time,' they train all the time.



## CARING FOR WARRIORS

Should SOF warriors fall, a SOST will be there to provide the critical care required to save lives. This pledge is reflected in the SOST motto: "Quis Illos Bellatores Custodiet," which means, "Those Who Care for the Warriors."

If you feel the call to save lives on the frontlines, contact your local Air Force Health Professions recruiter or call **1-800-588-5260**. Also visit **[AIRFORCE.COM/HEALTHCARE](https://www.airforce.com/healthcare)**.



**U.S. AIR FORCE**

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FIND A RECRUITER



**AIM HIGH**

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