

U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND  
Critical Skills Operator (CSO) / Special Operations Capabilities  
Specialists, (SOCS) / Special Operations Combat Service  
Specialists (SOCSS) Duty

1. General. The U.S. Marine Corps has a continuing requirement to provide qualified enlisted Marines to serve at U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) in Critical Skills Operator (CSO), Special Operations Capabilities Specialist (SOCS), and Special Operations Combat Service Support (SOCSS) billets. MARSOC's mission requires Marines throughout the operating forces to undergo Special Operations Force (SOF) skills training in order to ensure the force has the requisite level of technical expertise in a myriad of non-traditional areas to accomplish their mission.

a. MARSOC Marines are trained using Marine Corps Core Values (*i.e.*, Honor, Courage and Commitment) and the five SOF truths:

- (1) Humans are more important than hardware.
- (2) Quality is better than quantity.
- (3) Competent SOF cannot be created after crisis occurs.
- (4) SOF cannot be mass produced.
- (5) Most special operations require non-SOF assistance.

b. MARSOC's Multi Dimensional Operators (MDO) fall under three categories:

(1) Critical Skill Operator (CSO). CSO Marines are assigned to MARSOC in operator billets at the Team, Company, and Battalion level. A Marine is designated a CSO upon completion of Assessment and Selection (A&S) and graduation from the Individual Training Course (ITC) they will be assigned the Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) 0372. CSO's deploy to an area of operation in order to plan and execute missions independently. Such missions can range from direct action and special reconnaissance one day to foreign internal defense or unconventional warfare based on intelligence gathered and opportunities identified. CSO's possess the training and agility to transition between these missions as requirements change.

(2) Special Operations Capabilities Specialist (SOCS). SOCS are strategic and tactical force multipliers. SOCS Marines are assigned to MARSOC based on their specialized MOS skill and will receive additional training and certification through a specialized MARSOF training pipeline. Upon successful completion of the training pipeline they will be assigned the Additional Military Occupational Specialty (ADMOS) 8071. SOCS billet fields include, but are not limited to the following: Intelligence (02xx/26xx), Communications (06xx/28xx), Explosive Ordnance Disposal (2336), Dog Handlers (5811/5812), and Fire Control Specialists, (0861/8002). Marines assigned the ADMOS 8071 in MARSOC will execute a 60 month tour.

(3) Special Operation Combat Services Specialist (SOCSS). SOCSS Marines are primarily assigned to MARSOC to work in their Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) in fields such as Motor Transport and Logistics. In addition to their PMOS duties these Marines will gain additional SOF skill sets as required in support of SOF operations. SOCSS Marines are typically assigned to MARSOC for a period of 36 months.

## 2. Assignments Process

### a. CSO Billets.

(1) MARSOC has the primary responsibility to recruit, screen, and select volunteer Marines to fill CSO billets. Marines from most Primary Military Occupational Specialties (PMOSs) are eligible for CSO duty. Manpower Management Enlisted Assignments (MMEA), Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps (HQMC), in conjunction with MARSOC, will ensure candidates meet all assignment prerequisites. Marine Reservists (Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR), or Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA)) interested in MARSOC should refer to current MARADMIN detailing Reserve Enlisted Opportunities within MARSOC for further guidance.

(2) Marines must submit a "MARSOC Commanding Officer's Screening Checklist -- Critical Skills Operator (CSO/OFB)" to one of the MARSOC Recruiting Offices. MARSOC and MMEA will ensure applicants meet all assignment prerequisites to include Lateral Move authorization. Marines who do not meet assignment prerequisites will be informed via MARSOC Recruiting that they have been either denied to continue in the application process or may reapply at a later date.

(3) Approved CSO applicants will be assigned to an A&S Course. Active Duty Applicants will attend A&S in a Temporary Active Duty (TAD) status, funded by MARSOC. Marines who are "Selected" at A&S will be given the training event code of MA (A&S Selected), and will be assigned to the earliest available ITC (MCC KAT) via Web Orders.

(4) Upon return to parent unit from A&S, the Marine working through the unit Career Planner must submit a Re-enlistment/Extension Lateral Move (RELM) request to HQMC for "MARSOC CSO Duty, Intended MOS (IMOS) 0372." Included in the RELM, the Career Planner must attach copy of the Marine's A&S Certificate. Upon the RELM being approved and the Marine accepting contract, the Marine will be assigned PMOS 0300 with Intended MOS (IMOS) 0372 and a Projected Training Completion Date (PTCD).

(5) Upon graduation of ITC, Marines will be awarded PMOS 0372, and assigned to a Marine Special Operations Battalion.

b. SOCS/SOCSS billets. These billets are volunteer preferred, but may be filled by direct assignment. Marines must meet prescribed screening and training criteria found in the "MARSOC Commanding Officer's Screening Checklist -- SOCS/OFD" and "MARSOC Commanding Officer's Screening Checklist -- SOCSS. Currently SOCS/SOCSS are not required to attend a formal A&S process. SOCS/SOCSS are self identified or assigned to MARSOC through standard MMEA Branch, HQMC manning and staffing requirements based upon Permanent Change of Station (PCS)/Permanent Change of Assignment (PCA) eligibility.

(1) For self-identified Marines. Marines may use the following methods of requesting assignments. Upon request, Marines must be prepared to submit the appropriate checklist.

(a) Contact PMOS Monitor directly via phone or email. This may require assistance through their chain of command.

(b) First Term Alignment Plan RELM (FTAP RELM) as a Duty Station Incentive (DSI). Seek assistance through the chain of command/Career Planner.

(c) Submit Administrative Action (AA) Form via Automated Message Handling System (AMHS) to PMOS Monitor. Seek assistance through the chain of command.

(d) Establish contact with a MARSOC Recruiting Screening Team or MARSOF Monitor who can assist in providing information concerning the programs and process for requesting assignment.

(2) Once a Marine has been screened and found qualified for SOCS or SOCSS duty, MMEA, HQMC will issue Web Orders to MARSOC.

c. CSO, SOCS, or SOCSS are eligible to be assigned to one of the following commands based off of Staffing Goals:

- (1) HQ Marine Special Operations Command (MCC 094);
- (2) Marine Special Operations Regiment (MCC 1S8);
- (3) 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion (MCC 1MU);
- (4) 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion (MCC 1MR);
- (5) 3d Marine Special Operations Battalion (MCC 1MX);
- (6) Marine Special Operations Support Group (MCC 1MT);
- (7) Det West, Marine Special Operations Support Group (MCC 1MW); and
- (8) Marine Special Operations School (MCC 1MS).

d. Additionally, SOCS and SOCSS are eligible to be assigned to Marine Special Operations Intelligence Battalion (MCC 1MZ) (only applies to SOCS & SOCSS).

3. Desirable Characteristics and Attributes MDOs. MARSOC focuses on ten attributes. The combination of all ten attributes is felt to embody the type of Marine that will succeed in MARSOC. No single attribute carries more weight than the other. The ten attributes are as follows:

a. Integrity: Does the right thing even when no one is watching.

b. Effective Intelligence: The ability to solve practical problems when a "book solution" is not available. Learn and apply new skills to unusual problems by making sound and timely judgments.

c. Physical Ability: Having the necessary physical attributes and functional fitness to do one's job and persevere under stress.

d. Adaptability: The ability to continuously evaluate information about the present situation and change your plans as the situation changes, continuously operating with Commanders Intent.

e. Initiative: Going beyond the scope of required duties.

f. Determination: Ability to sustain a high level of effort over long periods of time regardless of adversity and complex situations.

g. Dependability: Can be relied on to complete tasks correctly, on time, and without supervision.

h. Teamwork: Working well within a team, large or small.

i. Interpersonal Skills: Ability to interact and influence others with a minimum of unnecessary strife or friction.

j. Stress Tolerance: Ability to deal with ambiguous, dangerous, high pressure and/or frustrating events while maintaining control of emotions, actions, composure, and effectiveness.

4. Disqualifying Factors. Any of the following may disqualify a Marine from consideration for assignment to CSO, SOCS and SOCSS billets. Although Commanders may make comments and/or recommendations, MMEA, HQMC and MARSOC will make the final determination.

a. Current enrollment in a command-directed stress and/or anger management course or undergoing marital counseling. Special attention will be given to Marines who are separated or undergoing divorce proceedings. Marines legally separated or pending divorce may be disqualified.

b. Any conviction by courts-martial.

c. Any non-judicial punishment (NJP) within the last 12 months of application submission, or more than two NJPs on current contract. Any NJP in career while either a staff noncommissioned officer or officer.

d. Civilian felony conviction within the last 12 months of application submission, or action taken which is tantamount to a finding of guilt, of an offense for which the maximum penalty under the Uniform Code of Military Justice is confinement in excess of one year or in which moral turpitude is involved.

e. Derogatory Page 11 entries within the last 12 months of application submission.

f. Any adverse fitness reports within 12 months of application submission.

g. A history of financial instability, e.g., written checks with insufficient funds, nonpayment of financial obligations, over-extension, repossessions, bankruptcy, certified letter of indebtedness, etc.

h. Any derogatory information in an applicant's background that may preclude obtaining the required security clearance for respective billet assignment. If necessary, contact the local S-2/Security Manager for verification.

i. A history of alcohol abuse, alcohol related incidents, or irresponsible alcohol use within the last 12 months or more than two alcohol related incidents in service. If the Marine has previously failed rehabilitation or has been diagnosed by competent medical or health authority as an alcoholic, alcohol dependent, or chronic abuser then the Marine must successfully complete a rehabilitation program and totally abstain from consuming alcohol for a period of at least two years.

j. In-service drug use or drug trafficking, sales or distribution.

k. Any medical documentation indicating problems with stress or psychological dysfunction is not necessarily a disqualifying factor but must be identified.

5. Service Obligation for CSO, SOCS, and SOCSS.

a. Obligated service for CSO duty. Upon completion of A&S and before assignment to ITC, Marines must have the maximum obligated service possible. In accordance with the current FY Retention Guidelines and the Marine Corps Enlisted Career Force Control (ECFC) Policy, Career Planners are directed to submit appropriate obligated service requests when requesting this duty

for a Marine. A Marine must be eligible to gain a minimum of 36 months obligated service for assignment to ITC.

b. Obligated service for SOCS/SOCSS duty. Marines are required to have more than 24 months of obligated service upon reporting to MARFORSOC.

6. MARSOC Duty Conversion/Extension.

a. SOCS. SOCS Marines may apply for A&S upon completion of 48 months in their tour.

b. SOCSS. SOCSS Marines may apply for lat move in accordance with FY retention guidelines.

c. Extensions of tour. SOCS Marines are required to submit via Administrative Action Form or Total Force Retention System (TFRS) six months prior to their tour completion date if they desire to extend their MARSOC tour. This will be done via the TFRS with appropriate justification and command endorsements. SOCSS Marines must request for extensions through their PMOS Monitor. However, due to these Marines being on a standard tour length these requests will normally not be favorably endorsed.

7. Prior MARSOC Duty. Marines who have had a successful MARSOC tour may request a return assignment to MARSOC thru MMEA, HQMC as per the applicable CSO, SOCS, and SOCSS processes described above.