

Special Forces (CMF 18) Career Progression Plan

Chapter 1. Duties

CMF 18, the Special Forces (SF) contingent of the Army's Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) employs SOF during peacetime, conflict, and war in support of the Joint Force. Special Forces conducts Special Operations by executing their nine core activities: Unconventional Warfare (UW), Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Security Force Assistance (SFA), Counterinsurgency (COIN), Direct Action (DA), Special Reconnaissance (SR), Counterterrorism (CT), Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD), and Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE). Additionally, Special Forces Soldiers conduct mission-related collateral activities, which includes support to coalition operations, personnel recovery in support of combat search and rescue, non-combatant evacuation operations, counter-drug operations, counter-mine operations, security assistance, and foreign humanitarian assistance. Special Forces operations are inherently joint and sometimes multinational, requiring interagency and international coordination. Special Forces project combat power and are typically deployed as small combat maneuver units in permissive, uncertain, and hostile operational environments far from logistics support bases, in support of theater operations that often have geopolitical implications. In their doctrinal role as Unconventional Warriors, SF operations are conducted with and through resistance partners. For more information about SF doctrine refer to FM 3-18.

Chapter 2. Transformation

The unique skills of Special Forces NCOs are more relevant in today's global environment than ever before. As SF Groups transform to provide improved operational and logistical support to the Operational Detachments in the field, they will be empowered to accomplish more than ever before. Every SF NCO must continue to adapt to ever-changing situations by using innovative technology and systems being developed and fielded at an unprecedented pace, while maintaining the ability to be operationally effective in the absence of technologies. SF Soldiers will continue to deploy in small elements, in uncertain and austere environments, while tasked to conduct operations with geopolitical implications. They must be fully versed and competent in the latest tactics, techniques, and procedures while adapting them to the situation they are facing to ensure mission success. They must be knowledgeable of the other units and services to achieve a synergistic effect on the battlefield. Foremost, they must continue to be a leader, capable of honorably accomplishing any mission assigned to them.

SF NCOs should focus on continuing to develop the basics to prepare for a myriad of operational environments, future threats, and ever-changing battlespaces. Special Forces Soldiers need to work in small autonomous cells often detached and isolated from command. They will lead resistance partners, often in denied areas and or politically sensitive environments. SF NCOs should continuously work to earn the confidence and trust of their leaders, proving that they can and will achieve their Commander's intent with little guidance or oversight. While working in these isolated environments, NCOs must be capable of making precise, well thought out, and often rapid decisions to solve complex problems. To prepare effectively, every SF NCO should focus their development on the judgement, maturity, knowledge, consciousness, and tenacity that is uniquely required for leadership in Special Forces.

Chapter 3. Recommend Career Management Self-Development

1. Leadership.

The demanding, politically sensitive, and often high-risk nature of missions that Special Forces Soldiers perform requires extremely competent Noncommissioned Officers that can succeed in an increasingly complex and dynamic contemporary operational environment. Therefore, the Special Forces branch naturally produces a high concentration of highly skilled Noncommissioned Officers. Those Noncommissioned Officers that consistently exceed standards and demonstrate mental and physical capabilities above their peers are more competitive for demanding positions and career advancement. Leaders, the Special Forces Proponent, the United States Army Human Resources Command, and the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development System (NCOPDS) all play an essential part in the career development of the force; however, each Soldier is ultimately the true steward of their career. Noncommissioned Officers at every rank are encouraged to demonstrate their ability to exceed standards in presence, intellect, leads, develops, and achieves by setting the example for their peers and subordinates through personal courage, confidence, competence, military bearing, general military knowledge, and warrior skills. To assist leaders with talent management, Noncommissioned Officers at every level must seek opportunities to demonstrate their leadership potential and distinguish themselves from their peers.

Note: Regarding Senior Rater comments on NCOERs, the phrase “Promote now” should be reserved for SMs in the top 5% of other NCOs in that grade who demonstrate *Superior Performance and Potential*. The phrase “Promote ahead of peers” should be reserved for those SMs in the top 20% of NCOs of the same grade who demonstrate *Outstanding Performance and Potential*. The phrase “Promote with peers” should be used for those SMs who demonstrate *Average Performance and Potential*.

2. Physical Fitness.

The ability to conduct Special Forces operations across the competition continuum requires Special Forces Soldiers to be of the highest physical capability for operating in the most rigorous environments. All personnel must maintain a high state of readiness. Physical fitness contributes to a Noncommissioned Officer’s overall wellness and ability to set the example for others. A holistic health and fitness (H2F) approach is essential to readiness when assessing a Soldier’s physical and mental status. Additionally, it assists to design programs to sustain or improve that Soldier’s ability to meet the demands of their MOSs, duty assignments, and combat-specific tasks. While it is a command responsibility to establish physical training policies and allocate sufficient resources for Soldiers to meet Army and unit standards and goals, it is an individual responsibility to meet those goals. Soldiers must keep themselves in a high state of physical readiness. All Soldiers are encouraged to use existing resources to assist them in making a healthy lifestyle, good dietary choices, and developing an individual goal-oriented physical training regimen. Special Forces Soldiers will meet all standards for their respective grades as specified in DA PAM 611-21 and IAW ATP 7-22 scoring a minimum of 60 in each event and an overall score of at least 360 points. Noncommissioned Officers must meet all physical fitness requirements as directed by the command to ensure maximum mission readiness to fulfill global requirements with Joint special operations forces (SOF) partners.

3. *Assignments.*

NCOs are encouraged to have a diverse career assignment profile. This covers a wide range of positions and duties pertaining to and outside of one's MOS. A detailed list of Key Developmental, Nominative, Mission Critical, Mission Essential, and Mission Enhancing assignments can be found in Appendix A.

(a) Key Developmental – Operational MOS and CMF positions, identified by proponent as required to develop critical technical and leadership skills and experience that provide the greatest potential for advancement. Special Forces Proponent considers these positions to be on an SFOD-A, SFOD-E, SFOD-G, or in a Special Missions Unit (SMU). Company level positions such as those on a SFOD-B, SFOD-F, SFOD-H, and other company and Battalion positions, while important, are not considered Key Developmental positions.

(b) Nominative – These positions should be filled by the best and top tier of Special Forces NCOs within the Regiment. The positions require packet submissions that demonstrate the Soldier's ability to consistently perform at the highest levels and assignment to these is approved by SF Group or higher CSMs.

(c) Mission Critical – These positions should be filled from the top 24% of Special Forces NCOs within the Regiment. These positions are key leadership positions that are required to conduct force generation and advanced training.

(d) Mission Essential – These positions are required to conduct force generation, advanced training, and other staff functions.

4. *Military Education*

(a) Professional Military Education:

(1) Staff Sergeant: Senior Leader Course; DLC 3. Completion of DLC 3 is mandatory and must be accomplished before the Staff Sergeant is eligible for promotion to Sergeant First Class in the primary zone, otherwise they will be subject to a HQDA bar to continued service.

(2) Sergeant First Class: Master Leader Course; DLC 4. Completion of DLC 4 is mandatory and must be accomplished before the Sergeant First Class is eligible for promotion to Master Sergeant in the primary zone, otherwise they will be subject to a HQDA bar to continued service.

(3) Master Sergeant/ First Sergeant: U.S. Army Sergeants Major Course (USASMA) or Joint Special Operations Forces Senior Enlisted Academy (JSOFSEA); DLC 5. Completion of DLC 5 is mandatory and must be accomplished before the Master Sergeant or First Sergeant is eligible for promotion to Sergeant Major in the primary zone, otherwise they will be subject to a HQDA bar to continued service.

Note: Obtaining recognition as the Distinguished Honor Graduate, Honor Graduate, Commandant's List, or Leadership Awardee at Professional Military Education (PME) courses, or any MOS enhancing courses attended should be the goal of all Special Forces NCOs.

(b) Functional and Institutional Domain Training: Special Forces Noncommissioned Officers should pursue formal military training opportunities that improve their survivability, tactical, and technical skills and increase their ability to lead Soldiers in any Special Forces unit that they may be assigned. This includes but is not limited to all Additional Skill Identifier (ASI), Special Qualifications Identifier (SQI), and Professional Development Skill Identifier Producing Schools (PDSI), Joint Service Courses, and International Military/Government Training. See Appendix B for a list of courses, ASIs, SQIs, and PDSIs pertaining to CMF 18 NCOs.

Soldiers interested in challenging themselves and setting themselves ahead of their peer group should compete in competitions such as the U.S. Army Best Medic Competition, U.S. Army Best Ranger Competition, U.S. Army Best Sapper Competition, U.S. Army Best Warrior/Best Squad Competition, U.S. Army Best Sniper Competition, USASOC Best Sniper Competition, Soldier and Non-Commissioned Officer of the Month, Quarter, and Year boards, and other similar competitions. NCOs at every rank are encouraged to compete for acceptance into the Sergeant Audie Murphy board.

Soldiers of all ranks are highly encouraged to continue their military training and education through self-paced and distributed-learning platforms. Courses in a wide variety of military topics can be found at the Army Learning Management System (ALMS), Joint Knowledge Online (JKO), and the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU).

5. Language Proficiency and Regional Expertise.

Maintain language proficiency, cultural expertise, and knowledge of issues and trends particular to the NCO's regional alignment. Knowledge of language and culture plays a critical role within the Special Forces mission to better engage, understand, and influence partners within the operational environment. Individuals must take every opportunity to improve their knowledge and understanding of their aligned region's history and current affairs. See Appendix C for a list of languages by category and code.

Note: CMF 18 NCOs serving in Observer / Controller positions at one of the Army's three Combat Training Centers have been granted a 3-Year ETP by HQDA G2. The ETP is effective from the termination date of their current DA330 plus three years.

Other SMs can receive 12-month ETPs from their first O5 in command if their OPTEMPO prohibits them the opportunity to stay current. SMs should ensure that these ETPs are uploaded to their IPERMs for board visibility.

6. Civilian Education.

Civilian (academic) education is a component of the self-development program for Special Forces Soldiers. Early career management accelerates professional development and allows for flexibility in operational requirements and tempo. A college degree is not required for promotion, but it should look favorable, and it can be a deciding factor in identifying the Most Qualified (*Superior Performance and Potential*) NCOs. Soldiers are encouraged to pursue a degree or certificate program that relates to their MOS to receive maximum credit for previous military training. Soldiers should seek more information on this topic by utilizing the Service-member Opportunity

Colleges Army Degree (SOCAD) website <https://www.education.army.mil/socad.aspx>. See Appendix D for more information on how to obtain college credits.

(a) Educational Goals:

- (1) Staff Sergeant: Should set their educational goal of completing 60 semester hours or trade skill certificate.
- (2) Sergeant First Class: Should set their educational goal of completing 90 semester hours or trade skill certificate.
- (3) Master Sergeant / First Sergeant: Should set their educational goal of completing 90 semester hours or trade skill certificate.
- (4) Sergeant Major / Command Sergeant Major: Should set their educational goal of completing 90 semester hours or trade skill certificate. Due to limited authorizations and fiercely competitive records, civilian education may be considered a major factor for selection to Command Sergeant Major (CSM) positions.

7. Jumpmaster.

As All the Critical Leadership Development opportunities being airborne assignments, all active-duty Special Forces NCOs should attend the Static Line or Military Free-Fall Jumpmaster Course at the earliest opportunity.

8. Army Career Tracker (ACT).

ACT is a leadership development tool that integrates training and education into one personalized, easy-to-use website. Users can search multiple Army education and training resources, monitor their career development, and receive personalized advice from their supervisor, Army leadership, and individually selected mentors. The chain of command and the Noncommissioned Officer support channel assist Soldiers in managing their careers through counseling, mentoring, and coaching. Leaders should also assist Soldiers in establishing an individual development plan within the ACT website. The College of the American Soldier, accessible through the career resources tab on the Army Career Tracker (ACT) is designed to expand existing civilian education choices for Soldiers to provide them with degree options that will enhance their leadership capabilities while maximizing college credit granted for military experience.

9. Professional Reading.

Special Forces Soldiers of all ranks should pursue self-development and understanding of the Army profession through professional reading. Special Forces NCOs of all ranks should read titles from the Sergeant Major of Army's recommended reading list which can be found at the Association of the United States Army website: <https://www.ausa.org/programs/nco-and-soldiers/sma-grinstons-reading-list>.

A list of military publications Special Forces NCOs should all be familiar with is in Appendix E.

Chapter 4. MOS 18B, 18C, 18D, 18E, 18F Special Forces Weapons, Engineer, Medical, Communications, and Intelligence Sergeants

Proponent Note: Proponent guidance should not be construed as a simplified checklist for promotion selection. It does not guarantee promotion or a competitive Order of Merit (OML)

number following the Evaluation Boards. NCOs who have completed assignments in Critical Leadership Developmental positions and consistently outperformed their peers receiving exceptional rater and senior rater comments are viewed more favorably by board members.

Prerequisites. For initial award of the CMF 18 MOS, see DA Pam 611–21 on HQDA G-1's webpage (<https://www.army.mil/g-1#org-g-1-publications>) for details. SF recruits volunteer from within the ranks of the U.S. Army as well as from among U.S. Army Initial Entry Enlistees. Upon graduation from all phases of the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC), Soldiers are awarded the CMF 18 MOS, promoted to the rank of SGT E–5, and awarded the Green Beret and SF Tab. Graduates will have completed, as part of the SFQC or its prerequisites: Basic Airborne Course, BLC, Special Forces Orientation Course (SFOC), ALC, Small Unit Tactics (SUT), Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE), MOS specific courses, and CULEX. Additionally, they will complete Special Operations Language Training (SOLT), scoring 1+ or higher on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

1. *Major Duties.*

(a) **MOS 18B (SSG/SFC) – Special Forces Weapons Sergeant.** The Special Forces Weapons Sergeant employs and maintains U.S. and foreign small arms, light and heavy crew-served direct and indirect weapons, anti-aircraft, and anti-armor weapons; controls the emplacement and supervises employment during tactical offensive and defensive operations; reads, interprets, and prepares orders; coordinates organic and supporting fire power, coordinates standard and non-standard air delivery, airborne operations, and air-ground operations; ensures collection and proper reporting of intelligence data to unit and staff sections.

(b) **MOS 18C (SSG/SFC) – Special Forces Engineer Sergeant.** The Special Forces Engineer Sergeant employs offensive/defensive combat engineer capabilities; performs project management and instructs construction including field fortification, civil action projects, welding, electrical wiring, plumbing, masonry, and framing; understands, employs, and instructs demolitions, explosives, improvised munitions, UXO/IED identification/classification and destruction; performs reconnaissance, target analysis, collects and disseminates engineer intelligence data; prepares and reviews target folders; proficient in understanding, employing and advising sabotage operations with standard, nonstandard, and improvised munitions and explosives; responsible for service and support annex of the operations order and serves as the subject matter expert of sustainment when applied as a warfighting function.

(c) **MOS 18D (SSG/SFC) – Special Forces Medical Sergeant.** The Special Forces Medical Sergeant trains and maintains proficiency serving as a non-physician medical provider independent of a medical officer, provides life-saving care for multi-system trauma patients and treats life threatening acute illnesses; performs and instructs on diagnostic procedures, prolonged field care, surgical procedures, blood product transfusion, analgesia, procedural sedation, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives (CBRNE) treatment, basic laboratory, basic sonography, basic radiography, dental care, preventive medicine, and veterinary support to US and foreign forces independent of environmental conditions; advises commander on risk to force mitigation through planning, coordinating, and evaluating medical resources and operations.

(d) **MOS 18E (SSG/SFC) – Special Forces Communications Sergeant.** The Special Forces Communications Sergeant provides conventional and unconventional tactical communications

support during unilateral, combined, coalition, joint, interagency and multinational operations; employs SFOD-A mounted and man-portable communications equipment throughout the radio frequency spectrum and SOF Information Exchange (SIE) communications systems to transmit and receive secure voice and data messages; advises and supervises the installation and operation of radios, communications procedures, and computer networks; plans, manages, and advises the commander on C4I architecture, communications matters, and communications security up to the Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) level; prepares communications plans and annexes; prepares Signal Operations Instructions (SOI).

(e) **MOS 18F (SFC) – Special Forces Intelligence Sergeant.** To be considered for reclassifying to MOS 18F, a Soldier must hold a primary MOS in CMF 18 (18B, C, D or E). After successful completion of the Special Forces Intelligence Sergeant's Course (SFISC) all SSGs and SFCs will be awarded MOS 18F. The Special Forces Intelligence Sergeant prepares intelligence estimate (analysis) during mission planning and preparation (isolation); employs conventional and unconventional techniques in intelligence collection and processing during unilateral, combined, coalition, joint, interagency, and multinational operations; plans, organizes, trains, advises, assists, and supervises indigenous and allied personnel on collection and processing of intelligence information; establishes intelligence nets, conducts agent handling and prepares agent reports within the operational area; capable of establishing identification, establishes security plan and performs security duties; maintains all classified documents in the operational area and establishes destruction and evacuation plans; provides area specialist assistance to U.S. Forces and outside agencies.

2. Goals for Development.

Special Forces branch guidance is for Noncommissioned Officers to serve in Key Leadership Development assignments to be considered to have the minimum branch development. SF NCOs should serve in a variety of institutional and operational billets throughout their career to increase their development.

3. Sergeant (SGT)

There are no authorized CMF 18 Sergeant positions in the Regiment. All Soldiers who graduate the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) and meet the requirements outlined in AR 600-8-19: Chapter 3-1 para. (a) Regular Army will be promoted to the rank of Sergeant. These Sergeants will fill Staff Sergeant positions and follow the career path of Staff Sergeants as outlined in paragraph 4 below.

Note: In accordance with the exception to policy from USAJFKSWCS to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G1 to current promotion policy AR 600-8-19 authorizes automatic promotion to Sergeant without regard to TIG or TIS, an appearance to a decentralized promotion board effective upon graduation from the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC). A Soldier who is otherwise qualified in accordance with paragraphs 1–11. Non-promotable status, AR 600-8-19, one rank up to the rank of SGT.

Professional Military Education: Advanced Leader Course (ALC); DLC 2. Completion of DLC 2 is mandatory and must be accomplished before graduation from the SFQC, otherwise the Sergeant will be subject to a HQDA bar to continued service. ALC requirements are currently fulfilled in the SFQC.

4. Staff Sergeant (SSG) - MOS 18B3, 18C3, 18D3, 18E3 Special Forces Weapons, Engineer, Medical, and Communications Sergeants

1. Highly Qualified (Outstanding Performance and Potential)

- (a) Leadership: The HQ SSG must have 24 months on an SFOD-A and a pattern of clearly stated strong, quantifiable ratings and enumerations by the Senior Rater (consistently exceeds the standard).
- (b) Physical Fitness: Must meet Height and Weight IAW AR 600-9 and pass the ACFT with a total score of 570 or better.
- (c) Assignments
 - (1) Key Developmental Assignments: Must serve as one of the initial CMF 18 MOSs on an SFOD-A.
 - (2) Nominative Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Superior Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A.
- (d) Military Education: Must complete DLC (SSD) 3. Must have one or more advanced skill (See Appendix B). Special consideration should be given to those SSGs who achieve Distinguished Honor Graduate, Honor Graduate, Commandant's List, or is the Leadership Awardee at PME and MOS enhancing courses.
- (e) Must meet the language proficiency standard (per AR 11-6, 1-15 m and USASOC Reg 350-1, 4-5 a) by scoring 1+ on the Oral Proficiency Interview (16 in Speak) or 1+/1+ on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (16 in Read and Listen) within 12-months as reflected on the Soldier Record Brief. Special consideration should be given to those who score above the standard.
- (f) Civilian Education: Special consideration should be given to those SSGs who have earned 60 credit hours or a trade skill certificate.
- (g) Jumpmaster: Special consideration given to those SSGs who are Jumpmaster qualified.

2. Not Fully Qualified

- (a) Leadership: in the last 24 months received a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand (GOMAR) or Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER) in current grade with any of the following:
 - (1) Relief for Cause NCOER
 - (2) Annotation of "Did Not Meet Standard" in Part IV (Performance Evaluation, Professionalism, Attributes, and Competencies), block c (Character)
 - (3) Annotation of "Not Qualified" in Part V (Senior Rater Overall Potential), block a (Rated Noncommissioned Officer's Potential)

5. Sergeant First Class (SFC) - MOS 18B4, 18C4, 18D4, 18E4, 18F4 Special Forces Weapons, Engineer, Medical, Communications, and Intelligence Sergeants

1.. Most Qualified (Superior Performance and Potential)

- (a) Leadership: The MQ SFC must have 48 months of cumulative time on an SFOD-A, SFOD-E, SFOD-G, or SMU with additional time in a nominative or mission critical position. Must have pattern of clearly stated strong, quantifiable ratings and enumerations by the Senior Rater (consistently exceeds the standard).
- (b) Assignments

- (1) Key Developmental Assignments: See Appendix A
- (2) Nominative Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Superior Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A
- (3) Mission Critical Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Outstanding Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

2. Highly Qualified (*Outstanding Performance and Potential*)

(a) Leadership: The HQ SFC must have 48 months of cumulative time on an SFOD-A, SFOD-E, SFOD-G, or SMU and a pattern of clearly stated strong, quantifiable ratings and enumerations by the Senior Rater (consistently exceeds the standard).

(b) Physical Fitness: Must meet Height and Weight IAW AR 600-9 and pass the ACFT with a total score of 570 or better.

(c) Assignments

(1) Key Developmental Assignments: See Appendix A

(2) Nominative Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Superior Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

(3) Mission Critical Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Outstanding Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

(d) Military Education: Must complete DLC (SSD) 4. Must have two or more advanced skills (See Appendix B). Special consideration should be given to those SFCs who achieve Distinguished Honor Graduate, Honor Graduate, Commandant's List, or is the Leadership Awardee at PME and MOS enhancing courses. Special consideration should be given to those SFCs who are qualified in more than one CMF 18 MOS.

(e) Jumpmaster: Must be a Jumpmaster.

(f) Language: Must meet the language proficiency standard (per AR 11-6, 1-15 m and USASOC Reg 350-1, 4-5 a) by scoring 1+ on the Oral Proficiency Interview (16 in Speak) or 1+/1+ on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (16 in Read and Listen) within 12-months as reflected on the Soldier Record Brief. Special consideration should be given to those who score above the standard.

(g) Civilian Education: Special consideration should be given to those SFCs who have earned 90 credit hours or a trade skill certificate.

3. Not Fully Qualified

(a) Leadership: in the last 24 months received a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand (GOMAR) or Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER) in current grade with any of the following:

(1) Relief for Cause NCOER

(2) Annotation of "Did Not Meet Standard" in Part IV (Performance Evaluation, Professionalism, Attributes, and Competencies), block c (Character)

(3) Annotation of "Not Qualified" in Part V (Senior Rater Overall Potential), block a (Rated Noncommissioned Officer's Potential)

Chapter 5. MOS 18Z5 Special Forces Senior Sergeant

Proponent Note: Proponent guidance should not be construed as a simplified checklist for promotion selection. It does not guarantee promotion or a rating following the Evaluation

Boards. No school or assignment is a deciding factor in promotion. NCOs who have completed assignments in Critical Leadership Developmental positions and consistently outperformed their peers receiving exceptional rater and senior rater comments are viewed more favorably by board members.

1. *Major Duties.*

(a) **Master Sergeant (MSG) - MOS 18Z5 Special Forces Operations Sergeant** is the senior NCO of the SFODA, SFODE, SFODG, or SMU Team and is responsible for all administrative, operational, and training requirements of the detachment in peacetime and war; supervises all aspects of mission preparation (isolation) and execution. CMF 18 MSGs are the “Subject Matter Experts (SME)” and “Master Trainers” in ARSOF, capable of planning and executing conventional and unconventional combat operations across the spectrum of conflict in support of theatre level objectives in a unilateral, joint, interagency, multinational, combined, or coalition environment. Assignment within the SFODE or SFODG requires the NCO to continue to serve within their assigned CMF18 MOS on the SFODE, SFODF, SFODG, or SFODH and as the SME in advanced special operations, focusing on the direct in-theater requirements of the GCC and TSOC missions. A Senior NCO is expected to operate at the operational and strategic level positions.

2. Most Qualified (*Superior Performance and Potential*)

(a) Leadership: The MQ MSG must have 36 consecutive months **OR** have 24 months or more as a Team Sergeant with 12 months of additional time in a nominative or mission critical position. The SMU SF MSG must successfully serve no less than 60 months within the SMU and possess the SQI of either "D" or "T" or serve as a SMU Case Officer. Must have a pattern of clearly stated strong, quantifiable ratings and enumerations by the Senior Rater (consistently exceeds the standard).

Note: While MSGs who have served as an SFOD-A Team Sergeant as a SFC have demonstrated progression ahead of their peers, that time is not considered to be Key Developmental as a MSG. MSGs promoted prior to effective date 01 April 2024, will still be considered Key Developmental complete if they have Rated Team Sergeant time as a SFC.

(b) Assignments

(1) Key Developmental Assignments: See Appendix A

(2) Nominative Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Superior Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

(3) Mission Critical Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Outstanding Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

3. Highly Qualified (*Outstanding Performance and Potential*)

(a) Leadership: The HQ MSG must have 24 consecutive months or more as a Team Sergeant on an SFOD-A, SFOD-E, or SFOD-G. SMU SF MSGs must successfully serve no less than 48 months within the SMU and possess the SQI of either "D" or "T" or serve as a SMU Case Officer. Must have a pattern of clearly stated strong, quantifiable ratings and enumerations by the Senior Rater (consistently exceeds the standard).

Note: While MSGs who have served as an SFOD-A Team Sergeant as a SFC have demonstrated progression ahead of their peers, that time is not considered to be Key Developmental as a MSG. MSGs promoted prior to effective date 01 April 2024, will still be considered Key Developmental complete if they have Rated Team Sergeant time as a SFC.

(b) Physical Fitness: Must meet Height and Weight IAW AR 600-9 and pass the ACFT with a total score of 570 or better.

(c) Assignments

(1) Key Developmental Assignments: See Appendix A

(2) Nominative Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Superior Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

(3) Mission Critical Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Outstanding Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

(d) Military Education: Must complete DLC (SSD) 5. Must have two or more advanced skills (See Appendix B). Special consideration should be given to those MSGs who achieve Distinguished Honor Graduate, Honor Graduate, Commandant's List, or is the Leadership Awardee at PME and MOS enhancing courses.

(e) Jumpmaster: Must be a Jumpmaster.

(f) Civilian Education: Special consideration should be given to those SFCs who have earned 90 credit hours or a trade skill certificate.

(g) Language: Must meet the language proficiency standard (per AR 11-6, 1-15 m and USASOC Reg 350-1, 4-5 a) by scoring 1+ on the Oral Proficiency Interview (16 in Speak) or 1+/1+ on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (16 in Read and Listen) within 12-months as reflected on the Soldier Record Brief.

3. Not Fully Qualified (*Below Average Performance and Potential*)

(a) Leadership: in the last 24 months received a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand (GOMAR) or Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER) in current grade with any of the following:

(1) Relief for Cause NCOER

(2) Annotation of "Did Not Meet Standard" in Part IV (Performance Evaluation, Professionalism, Attributes, and Competencies), block c (Character)

(3) Annotation of "Not Qualified" in Part V (Senior Rater Overall Potential), block a (Rated Noncommissioned Officer's Potential)

Chapter 6. MOS 18B, 18C, 18D, 18E, 18F, 18Z Professional Development Model

Professional Development Models for MOS 18B, 18C, 18D, 18E, 18F, and 18Z (Senior Sergeant) is available at <https://actnow.army.mil>. It is also available on the Army HRC website at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/CMF%2018%20Information>.

Chapter 7. MOS 18Z Special Forces Sergeant Major and Command Sergeants Major (MAJ/LTC and COL levels of command)

1. *Major Duties.*

(a) **Sergeant Major (SGM) - MOS 18Z6 Special Forces Operations Sergeant** is the senior Non-Commissioned Officer of a Special Forces Company (O-4 level of command) or serves as an Operations Sergeant at the various levels of command from the battalion level through

various senior level headquarters. Additionally, Special Forces SGMs can serve in a variety of key positions that require senior NCO experience. In the role of a Special Forces Company SGM, the Soldier is the primary advisor to the commander on all matters pertaining to enlisted personnel, individual training, and advance skills training. This Soldier provides vast experience and knowledge to the commander regarding Soldier equipment and experience in combat operations. The SGM enforces the implementation of established policies and standards on the performance, training, appearance, and conduct of enlisted personnel within the command. The SGM provides counsel and guidance to the NCOs within their company. In other roles as an Operations SGM, they fill a key staff role within the commands managing the daily activities and operations for the headquarters he is assigned. They also coordinate and oversee the daily activities of a deployed Joint Operations Center (JOC). They provide seasoned experience in all aspects of Special Force's missions and operations to the staff.

(b) **Command Sergeant Major (CSM) - MOS 18Z6 Special Forces Operations Sergeant** is the senior Non-Commissioned Officer of a Special Forces Battalion (O-5 level of command) or Group (O-6 level of command). They are the primary advisor to the commander and their staff on all matters pertaining to enlisted personnel, individual training, and advance skills training. They provide vast experience and knowledge to the commander and staff regarding Soldier equipment and seasoned experience in Special Forces missions and combat operations. They enforce the implementation of established policies and standards on the performance, training, appearance, and conduct of enlisted personnel within the command. They provide counsel and guidance to the NCOs and all enlisted personnel within the organization.

2. Most Qualified (*Superior Performance and Potential*)

(a) Leadership: The MQ SGM must have 24 consecutive months **OR** have 12 months or more as an SF Company or SMU SGM with 12 months of additional time in a nominative position.

(b) Assignments

(1) Key Developmental Assignments: See Appendix A

(2) Nominative Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Superior Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

3. Highly Qualified (*Outstanding Performance and Potential*)

(a) Leadership: The HQ SGM must have 24 consecutive months **OR** have 12 months or more as an SF Company or SMU SGM with 12 months of additional time in a mission critical position.

(b) Physical Fitness: Must meet Height and Weight IAW AR 600-9 and pass the ACFT with a total score of 570 or better.

(c) Assignments

(1) Key Developmental Assignments: See Appendix A

(2) Nominative Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Superior Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

(3) Mission Critical Assignments: These positions are filled by CMF 18 NCOs who have demonstrated *Outstanding Performance and Potential* above their peers. See Appendix A

(d) Military Education: USASMA or JSOFSEA complete.

(e) Civilian Education: Special consideration should be given to those SGMs who have earned 90 credit hours, an associate degree, or a trade skill certificate.

(f) Jumpmaster: Must be a Jumpmaster.

4. Not Fully Qualified (*Below Average Performance and Potential*)

(a) Leadership: in the last 24 months received a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand (GOMAR) or Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER) in current grade with any of the following:

(1) Relief for Cause NCOER

(2) Annotation of "Did Not Meet Standard" in Part IV (Performance Evaluation, Professionalism, Attributes, and Competencies), block c (Character)

(3) Annotation of "Not Qualified" in Part V (Senior Rater Overall Potential), block a (Rated Noncommissioned Officer's Potential)

5. ASIs / Professional Development Proficiency Codes (PDPCs) associated with CMF 18 SGM/CSM:

6C	Battalion Level Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Experience
6K	Initial Level Sergeant Major (SGM) Key Billet Experience (CSL)
6P	Post Battalion Level Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Experience
6S	Initial Level Sergeant Major (SGM) Experience
6U	Post Battalion Level Sergeant Major (SGM) Broadening Experience
6X	Post Brigade Level Sergeant Major (SGM) Broadening Experience
7C	Brigade Level Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Experience
7K	Primary Level Sergeant Major (SGM) Key Billet Experience (CSL)
7P	Post Brigade Level Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Experience

Appendix A – Assignments

(All assignments are in order of precedence)

1. Staff Sergeant

(a) Key Developmental: SFOD-A

(b) Nominative: Drill Sergeant, Recruiter

(c) Mission Essential: All other SSG positions not previously listed.

2. Sergeant First Class

(a) Key Developmental: SFOD-A, SFOD-E, SFOD-G, or Special Missions Unit

(b) Nominative: SFOD-A TM SGT, Human Resources Command (HRC) Career Management NCO, Special Forces Proponent Personnel Career Manager, and any SFC filling a nominative or critical MSG billet.

(c) Mission Critical: SR Instructor Writer at SF SLC; Committee or Field Team NCOIC at Robin Sage, MOS, SUT, and SFAS.

(d) Mission Essential: All other SFC positions not previously listed.

3. Master Sergeant / First Sergeant

(a) Key Developmental: Team Sergeant for SFOD-A, SFOD-E, SFOD-G, or serving in a Special Missions Unit

(b) Nominative: Human Resources Command (HRC) Senior Talent Management NCO, Special Forces Proponent Personnel Senior Career Manager; 1SGs in the following assignments: USASOC HHC, 1st SFC (A) HHC, SWCS HHC, A CO 4/1 SWTG(A) (STUDENT COMPANY), 18A committee, SF SLC, ARSOF BLC, SERE and Operational Group HHCs; E-1/1 SWTG(A) Company NCOIC (A&S SGM), and any MSG filling a nominative or critical SGM billet.

(c) Mission Critical: All other 1SG positions; S3 Ops SGTs at Operational Groups and BNs; SFOD-B Ops SGT in the operational groups; NCOA SLC Ops Sgt and MLC Chief instructor; Chief Instructor/Writer at Robin Sage, MOS, SUT and SFAS; NCOIC/Chief Instructor at MFFIC, MFFPC, MFFJM, SFARTAETC, and SFSC; SFUWO Ops Sgt.

(d) Mission Essential: All other MSG positions not previously listed.

4. Sergeant Major

(a) Key Developmental: Special Forces Company/Squadron Sergeant Major for a tactical unit.

(b) Nominative: SF Proponent SGM; G3 SGM at USASOC, 1st SFC(A), and SWCS; J3 SGMs at a TSOC; Group S3 SGMs at Special Forces Groups and Special Warfare Training Groups.

(c) Mission Critical: Company SGMs at Robin Sage and SUT; Battalion S3 SGM at operational Groups, G8, IG, SMU

(d) Mission Essential: All other SGM positions not previously listed.

Appendix B - Advanced Skills

1. ASIs, SQIs, and PDSIs

The following schools provide the Special Forces soldier a specialty school that improves an individuals' skills beyond the basic level received in the SFQC.

ASI	DESCRIPTION
2S	BATTLE STAFF OPERATIONS
5A	JOINT AIR TACTICAL OPERATIONS
5U	TACTICAL AIR OPERATIONS
5W	STATIC LINE JUMPMASTER
J9	MILITARY FREE FALL JUMPMASTER
Q5	SPECIAL FORCES COMBAT DIVING, MEDICAL
S5	COMMUNITY IMAGERY ANALYSIS COURSE
S6	SPECIAL FORCES COMBAT DIVING, SUPERVISION
W3	SPECIAL FORCES SNIPER
W7	SPECIAL FORCES UNDERWATER OPERATIONS
W8	SPECIAL FORCES MILITARY FREE FALL OPERATIONS
W9	SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES PECULIAR WEAPONS REPAIRER

SQI	DESCRIPTION
2	TRAINING DEVELOPMENT
4	NONCAREER RECRUITER
8	INSTRUCTOR
B	INSPECTOR GENERAL NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER
D	USASOC SPECIAL MISSIONS UNIT (SMU) ADVANCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS – DIRECT SUPPORT
L	LINGUIST
M	FIRST SERGEANT
N	JOINT PLANNER
P	PARACHUTIST
Q	EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ADVISOR (EOA)
S	SPECIAL OPERATIONS SUPPORT PERSONNEL
T	SFOD-D UNIT OPERATOR
V	RANGER PARACHUTIST
W	SPECIAL FORCES ADVANCED RECONNAISSANCE, TARGET ANALYSIS & EXPLOITATION TECHNIQUES COURSE
X	DRILL SERGEANT

PDSI	DESCRIPTION
C2B	SPECIAL OPERATIONS MILITARY DECEPTION PLANNER
C3B	WINTER MOUNTAINEERING COURSE
C4B	SUMMER MOUNTAINEERING COURSE
C5B	SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES MULTI-PURPOSE CANINE HANDLER (SOFMPK9H)
C6B	SPECIAL WARFARE LOGISTICS PLANNERS COURSE (SWPLC)
D5B	ADVANCED SPECIAL OPERATIONS TECHNIQUES (ASOT)
D5E	INTERMEDIATE LEVEL LANGUAGE SKILLS

D5F	ADVANCED LANGUAGE SKILLS
D5G	COMPANY SERGEANT MAJOR
D5H	SOF SENSITIVE SITE EXPLOITATION
D5J	ADVANCED SOF SENSITIVE SITE EXPLOITATION
D5K	CULTURAL SUPPORT TEAM
D5L	SPECIAL FORCES TECHNICAL SURVEILLANCE
D5N	EXPLOITATION ANALYSIS CENTER-ORGANIC
D5P	SPECIAL FORCES PHYSICAL SURVEILLANCE
D5Q	SPECIAL PURPOSE BREACHING COURSE (SPBC)
D5R	REGIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
D5S	SPECIAL WARFARE NETWORK DEVELOPMENT COURSE (SWNDC)
D5T	NETWORK ENABLER COURSE
D7B	GOVERNANCE SUPPORT ELEMENT (GSE)
J3J	SPECIAL OPERATIONS FOREIGN AND NON-STANDARD ARMORERS COURSE
J4J	ADVANCED SPECIAL OPERATIONS MANAGERS COURSE
J5J	SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATIONAL DESIGN COURSE
M4B	MILITARY FREE FALL INSTRUCTOR (MFFI)
S1J	OPERATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT COURSE (ORMC)
S2J	SPECIAL WARFARE TOUCHSTONE (ADVANCED TACTICAL TECHNOLOGY COURSES)
S3J	SPECIAL WARFARE BRIGHTON (ADVANCED TACTICAL TECHNOLOGY COURSES)
S4J	MILITARY INFORMATION SUPPORT OPERATIONS (MISO) PROGRAM DESIGN AND ASSESMENT COURSE (MPDAC)

2. Other Specialty Skill Courses

Special Forces Intel Sergeant Course (18F), Sapper, Air Assault, Pathfinder, Army Mountain Warfare School, Army Sniper Course (B4), Infantry Mortar Leaders Course (IMLC), Special Forces Sniper Course II (SFSCII formerly SOTIC II), Special Operations Tactical Air Controller (SOTAC), and the Advanced Land Navigation Course.

Appendix C – Language

CMF18 NCOs will be assigned one of the following languages and expected to stay proficient in it throughout their career. Language categories bin the languages in CAT 1 (easiest) to CAT 4 (hardest) to learn.

CODE	LANGUAGE
CAT I	
FR	FRENCH
PQ	BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE
PT	PORTUGUESE-EUROPEAN
QB	SPANISH
CAT II	
GM	GERMAN
JN	INDONESIAN
CAT III	
PF	PERSIAN FARSI

RU	RUSSIAN
UK	UKRAINIAN
TA	TAGALOG
TH	THAI
CAT IV	
KP	KOREAN
CM	CHINESE MANDARIN
JA	JAPANESE
AD	ARABIC (MSA)
AE	ARABIC (EGYPTIAN)
AP	ARABIC (LEVANTINE)

Appendix D – Civilian Education

1. College Opportunities: Many opportunities and resources exist to support Special Forces Soldiers in pursuing their civilian education: Army Continuing Education System; Army eLearning; Army University; Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support; Army IgnitED; Joint Service Transcript; and Advanced Civil Schooling opportunities. Achievement of college or higher-level degree credits can be also completed during the MOS training process, as modeled by the 18D SOCM program degree.
2. Army Continuing Education System (ACES): ACES programs and services support the self-development domain of the Army leader development tenets by providing Soldiers opportunities for traditional and technology-based education and support for personal and professional career goals. The ACES programs assist Soldiers in achieving the lifelong synthesis of the knowledge, skills, and experiences required for success. Enlisted Soldiers should master the academic skills needed to perform the duties of their primary military occupational specialty and to meet prerequisites for the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development System (NCOPDS) IAW AR 621-5.
3. Army eLearning: The Army eLearning Program provides free training to all Active Army, Reserve, National Guard, ROTC (MS III/IV), and DA Civilians. The 3,500 web-based courses in Information Technology (IT), Business, Leadership, and Personal Development are available 24x7 from anywhere using an internet connection.
4. Army University: The Army University is a professional military education university system of the United States Army. It is the most extensive professional military education system globally with over 150,000 soldiers educated in more than 88 occupations across its worldwide network of 70 schools. <https://armyuniversity.edu/>.
5. Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support: Soldiers are encouraged to earn additional college credit for knowledge acquired outside of the traditional classroom through the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) <https://www.dantes.doded.mil/EducationPrograms/get-credit/creditexam.html>. College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) are exams that test the mastery of college-level subjects acquired a variety of ways—through general academic instructions, significant independent study, or extracurricular work.
6. Army IgnitED: Army IgnitED is a virtual gateway for all eligible Soldiers to request college tuition assistance or funding for professional credentials and certificates online anytime, anywhere for classroom and distance learning. It allows Soldiers to manage their education records including college classes, testing, and Army Education

Counselor support. Through Online programs, Education Centers and On-site programs offer over 300,000+ college courses.

7. Joint Service Transcript: Joint Service Transcript is an academically accepted document approved by the American Council on Education (ACE) to validate a service member's military occupational experience and training along with the corresponding ACE college credit recommendations. Joint Service Transcript can be accessed at <https://jst.doded.mil/jst/home>.

8. Advanced Civil Schooling. Advanced Civil Schooling opportunities are available for Special Forces NCOs. The National Defense University (NDU) Joint Special Operations Master of Arts (JSOMA) Strategic Security Studies degree program is conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS). Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, California provides a Master of Science. SF NCOs in the grade of SSG/E6 and above with a minimum of six years' Time in Service (TIS) and no more than 13 years TIS are eligible. Application requirements are published annually. Note: NCOs who graduate from NDU, NPS or similar programs will incur a one to two ratio utilization duration tour per AR 621-1.

Appendix E - Publications for Special Forces NCOs

ADP 3-05, AR 600-8-19, AR 670-1, ATP 3-05.1 C1, ATP 3-05.2, ATP 3-05.20, ATP 3-05.68, ATP 3-18.10, ATP 3-18.13, ATP 3-18.14, ATP 3-18.72, ATP 3-21.8, ATP 3-76, ATP 4-02.43, FM 101-5-1, FM 27-10, FM 3-05, FM 3-05.212, FM 3-06, FM 3-07, FM 3-18, FM 3-22.9, FM 3-24, FM 6-22, GTA 31-01-003, GTA 31-02-001, JP 3-05, STP 21-24-SMCT, STP 31-18B34-SM-TG, STP 31-18C34-SM-TG, STP 31-18D34-SM-TG, STP 31-18E34-SM-TG, STP 31-18F4-SM-TG, STP 31-18-SM-TG, TC 18-01, TC 4-02.1; -10 level maintenance manuals associated with their equipment; and battle drills associated with their current assignment level.