

POTFF Priorities

- Enhance the Readiness of SOF
- Coordinate and collaborate with Services
- Build force resiliency and optimize SOF performance
- Provide innovative solutions to hard problems
- Identify challenges
- Advocate for policy change
- Achieve necessary authorities
- Program evaluation
- Reduce stigma associated with seeking care



Portrait of a SOF Operator

The average SOF Operator is not average. SOF Operators...

Require two or more years of specialized training to be mission ready.

Are older than conventional military (29 years old for enlisted and 34 years old for officers).

Have 8 years of experience with Conventional Forces before joining SOF.

Are married and have 2 children.

Require extensive language and cultural training to be effective in diverse environments.

Require extensive education in order to become effective strategic thinkers and ambassadors.



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USSOCOM Preservation of the Force & Family



Our Mission

The mission of the Preservation of the Force and Family Task Force (POTFF-TF) is to build and implement a holistic approach to address the pressure on our force. The POTFF-TF will identify and implement innovative, valuable solutions across the USSOCOM Enterprise aimed at improving the short and long-term well-being of our Special Operations Forces (SOF) warriors and their families.

"People--military, civilian and families--are our most important asset. We will leverage every resource available--SOF, Service and community programs to ensure our people are mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically prepared for the demanding tasks that we will ask them to execute. We will pay particular attention to the hard and often invisible challenges that our people and their families face. As our people keep faith with our Nation, we will keep faith with them, now and in the future."

GEN Joseph Votel
Commander, USSOCOM

POTFF-TF bases its programs and initiatives on four key domains, overviews of which are provided here:

1 Human Performance

SOF operators perform hazardous work in unforgiving environments at an unrelenting pace. Without extensive physical conditioning and training, the demands of SOF may lead to debilitating injuries or death. The Human Performance Program (HPP) is designed to meet the unique physical needs of the SOF operator. This conditioning is accomplished through a holistic "pre-habilitative" physical training program developed and led by certified professionals that involve focused strength and conditioning, performance nutrition, and physical therapy.

HPP is supported by applied techniques involving exercise physiology, kinesiology, and sports psychology. This allows for the optimization of a SOF Operator's increased output during sustained periods of physical exertion and mental stress in austere operational environments. This includes performance enhancement-based mental skills training that allows a SOF Operator to maintain optimal cognitive capability in stressful situations. HPP also provides rehabilitative support, through physical therapy, that accelerates the SOF Operator's return to duty in peak physical and mental condition following injury.

2 Psychological Performance

After more than a decade of war, the psychological strain of continuous operations is taking a toll on the SOF community. To mitigate these stressors, SOF requires a tailored, multidisciplinary response. The Psychological Performance Program (PPP) is improving the cognitive and behavioral performance of the force. Important aspects of this include helping service members cope with stress and improving the resiliency of SOF and their families. The PPP relies on dedicated embedded and trusted professionals that are attuned to the needs of the SOF community. A critical component of the program is to engage with leadership at all levels to remove the stigma associated with seeking help.

3 Spiritual Performance

The Spiritual Performance Program is designed to enhance core spiritual beliefs, values, awareness, relationships and experiences. These elements form the basis to promote healthy living, sound decision-making, meaningful relational interaction, sense of transcendent life purpose and meaning. This is accomplished through chaplain-led or chaplain supported programs for service members and their families.

Core spiritual components, coupled with one's individual religious practices and rituals, form a vital link to strengthening the human spirit and the force and families' ability to deal with the challenges of life in SOF.

4 Social Performance

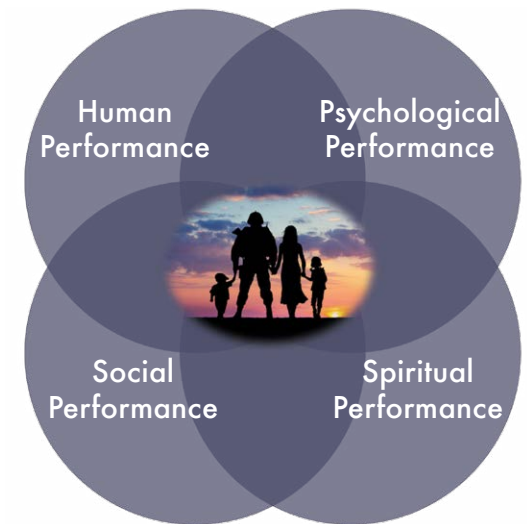
Strong social performance requires the ability to engage in healthy social networks that promote overall well-being and optimal performance. Family cohesion is a strong component of this domain. SOF requires stability and reliability in all aspects of the operator's lives, and the well-being of family members is inextricably linked to that of the operator. Multiple and extended separations that often times involve sensitive, high-risk and secretive missions places a unique hardship on the families of operators.

Families must continuously remain focused on maintaining a tight consistent link to their support networks. These networks and support elements must be ready to deploy and support at nonstandard, unconventional times due to the unpredictable deployment and training cycles.

The Social Performance Program incorporates family resilience programs designed to enhance Service-provided programs. These programs are adapted for the uniqueness of the SOF family. POTFF is providing dedicated staff and programs for our SOF families that will enhance communication and improve relationships.



Integrated Support to SOF



- Holistic Preventative Care Model
- Strength & Conditioning
- Advanced Rehabilitation
- Sleep Hygiene
- Cognitive Processing
- Assessment & Selection
- Post-Deployment & Periodic Assessment
- Dedicated Stress-Inoculation Training
- Immediate, Proximate Care/Consultation
- Teaching Skills, Goal-Setting, Education
- Identification and Referral for Tertiary Care
- Integration of Family into all Aspects of Care
- SOF-Unique Family Programs
- Specialized Pastoral Coaching
- Responsive and Knowledgeable Staff
- Predictability