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OF THE AIR FORCE**

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Weather



**SPECIAL OPERATIONS WEATHER
STANDARDIZATION AND EVALUATION**

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Chapter 1—GENERAL INFORMATION

4

1.1. General.

4

1.2.	Specific Objectives.	4
1.3.	Waiver Authority.	4
1.4.	Roles, Responsibilities and Program Structure.	4
Chapter 2—SPECIAL OPERATIONS WEATHER EVALUATIONS		7
2.1.	Special Operations Weather Evaluations.	7
2.2.	Initial Evaluation.	7
2.3.	Core Evaluations.	7
Table 2.1.	Special Operations Weather Physical Fitness Evaluation	10
2.4.	Task Evaluations.	12
2.5.	Spot Evaluations.	12
2.6.	Task and Spot Evaluation Documentation Procedures.	12
2.7.	Evaluation Briefings and Debriefings.	12
Chapter 3—REVIEW BOARDS		14
3.1.	Review Board Process.	14
Chapter 4—SPECIAL OPERATIONS WEATHER STANDARDS AND EVALUATIONS INSPECTION PROGRAM		15
4.1.	Unit Evaluations/Standardization and Evaluation Program.	15
4.2.	Program Objectives.	15
4.3.	Responsibilities.	15
4.4.	SOWSEP Compliance Performance Checklist.	16
4.5.	Weather Interest Items.	17
4.6.	Scheduling SOWSEP Evaluations.	17
4.7.	Conducting SOWSEP Evaluations.	17
4.8.	Evaluation procedures.	17
4.9.	Briefings.	18
4.10.	Follow-up Evaluations.	18
4.11.	SOWSEP Scoring and Rating.	19
Figure 4.2.	SOWSEP Ratings:	20
4.12.	Resolution of discrepancies and negative observations.	20
4.13.	Forms Adopted.	21
Attachment 1—GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION		22
Attachment 2—SAMPLE SPECIAL OPERATIONS WEATHER SKILL EVALUATION CHECKLIST.		26

Chapter 1

GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. General. Special Operations Weather Standardization and Evaluation Program (SOWSEP) provides for quality control and is structured with clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure commanders have an evaluation program that is both objective and effective. It is a compilation of the Air Force's proven On-the-Job Training (OJT) program and Air Force Weather's Standardization and Evaluation Program for Weather Operations (SEPWO), which includes both the tactical and technical evaluation requirements for Special Operations Weather Team (SOWT) personnel. The ultimate goal of SOWSEP is to provide commanders with a measure of unit training program effectiveness and overall unit capability. It ensures assigned SOWT are qualified to perform all core tasks and missions. Unless otherwise specified in this document, SOWT will comply with all other AFIs, AFMANs and other Air Force Weather policy guidance and directives for conducting standardization and evaluation.

1.2. Specific Objectives. The objectives of SOWSEP include:

- 1.2.1. Ensure continuity and mission capability by establishing standards.
- 1.2.2. Provide a system to assess both individual and unit capability/proficiency levels.
- 1.2.3. Improve training programs, lesson plans, standard operating procedures, and directives based on performance and evaluation results.
- 1.2.4. Provide an avenue for after action review feedback to senior, lateral, and subordinate headquarters through cross-command and cross-tell reports.
- 1.2.5. Standardize evaluation procedures.

1.3. Waiver Authority. Unless otherwise specified, HQ AF/A3O-W is the waiver authority for this instruction. Requested waivers to the basic guidance of this instruction are forwarded through applicable standardization/training channels to HQ AF/A3O-W.

1.4. Roles, Responsibilities and Program Structure. The appointed Stan/Eval SOWT will be highly experienced holding as a minimum a previous qualification as a unit certifier with a clear understanding of the SOWT training and evaluation system. This individual should be knowledgeable and proficient in both career progression and roles of the SOWT and SOWT-O AFSs. Stan/Eval SOWT (15WXC & 1W0X2) may perform all evaluations mandated by this instruction.

1.4.1. MAJCOM will:

- 1.4.1.1. Assign a Stan/Eval SOWT to the A3V staff who will work for the chief of Stan/Eval and provide subject matter expertise on all issues related to SOWSEP.
- 1.4.1.2. Consolidate unit trend analysis annually and provide feedback to senior, lateral, and subordinate headquarters through cross-command cross-tell reports no later than 1 December.
- 1.4.1.3. Review and maintain evaluation publications and supplements.

1.4.1.4. Solicit annual feedback from line units and provide feedback on AETC and MAJCOM unique SOWT training programs to AETC/AFSOTC to meet changing mission requirements.

1.4.1.5. Establish and monitor command evaluation programs, including the SOWSEP CPC.

1.4.1.6. Conduct evaluation program staff assistance visits (SAV) for subordinate units.

1.4.1.7. Conduct formal inspections on subordinate units (ASEV, ORI).

1.4.1.8. Maintain the Special Operations Weather Master Question Files (MQF).

1.4.1.9. Perform evaluations on units with assigned SOWT in accordance with this instruction.

1.4.1.10. Provide a system to assess both individual and unit proficiency levels.

1.4.1.11. Attend/host conferences related to SOWT guidance, architecture, training, and mission employment.

1.4.2. Wing/Group commanders will:

1.4.2.1. Appoint by letter, a Stan/Eval SOWT and annotate such in the member's Air Force Training Record (AFTR) Form 623a. The Stan/Eval SOWT will work for the Group Chief of Stan/Eval and in concert with unit commanders to execute the evaluation program. If manning does not permit assignment of a SOWT within the Group Stan/Eval division, a SOWT within the unit or a subordinate unit will be designated in writing by the Group/CC to fulfill this responsibility.

1.4.3. The designated Group Stan/Eval SOWT will:

1.4.3.1. Provide the Group/CC with subject matter expertise on all issues related to SOWSEP.

1.4.3.2. Develop, administer, and manage standardized open book evaluations for unit personnel. (MAJCOM maintains the Master Question File).

1.4.3.3. Maintain cross-tell program and provide annual trend analysis to the MAJCOM Functional Manager and Stan/Eval representative no later than 1 November each year.

1.4.3.4. Recommend improvements to training programs, lesson plans, standard operating procedures, equipment, and directives based on evaluation results and/or trends.

1.4.3.5. Attend conferences related to SOWT guidance, architecture, training, and mission employment.

1.4.3.6. Serve on mishap review panels.

1.4.3.7. Request MAJCOM assistance as required to perform SOWSEP functions.

1.4.3.8. Request MAJCOM Staff Assistance Visits (SAV), as required.

1.4.4. Squadron commanders or ANG Weather Flight commanders will:

1.4.4.1. Be responsible for ensuring development and maintenance of a robust unit Stan/Eval program.

1.4.4.2. Appoint the Stan/Eval SOWT by letter. This individual will work for and be rated by the unit commander.

1.4.4.3. Designate unit trainers and task certifiers IAW AFI 15-135 Vol 1, *Special Operations Weather Training* and AFI 36-2201 Vol 3, para 4.3.8.

1.4.4.4. Ensure the Stan/Eval section has at least one SOWT qualified, current, and proficient in each advanced skill that is evaluated. (i.e. MFF JM, SCUBA, etc.)

1.4.5. Squadron or ANG Weather Flight Stan/Eval will:

1.4.5.1. Rely on qualified trainers, task certifiers, within the unit to perform the bulk of the training and evaluations.

1.4.5.2. Ensure safety is never compromised and enforce all standards.

1.4.5.3. Analyze evaluation data semi-annually for adverse trends and recommend corrective action to the unit commander. This allows the commander to prioritize training requirements.

1.4.5.4. Ensure individuals maintain established standards of qualification and proficiency through evaluation and observation.

1.4.5.5. Review and validate evaluation scenarios.

1.4.5.6. Evaluate effectiveness of unit training programs. Recommend improvements to training programs, lesson plans, standard operating procedures, equipment and directives based on evaluation results.

1.4.5.7. Maintain and validate any commander signed qualification summaries (e.g. letter of X's).

1.4.5.8. Maintain cross-tell program and provide semi-annual trend analysis to Group Stan/Eval.

1.4.5.9. Evaluate task and advanced skill qualifications/certifications through the use of task and spot evaluations.

1.4.5.10. Maintain Flight Crew/Special Tactics Information File (FCIF/STIF), Unit Information File (UIF), publication library, and unit read file.

1.4.5.11. Develop local procedures questions and administer open book examinations when Group Stan/Eval is unavailable (MAJCOM maintains the Master Question File).

1.4.5.12. Provide feedback to the examinee on the results of the examinations and evaluations.

1.4.5.13. Notify the examinee's unit commander, director of operations, superintendent of operations, team leader, and immediate supervisor, if available, when a substandard performance is observed and graded, and conduct a review board when required.

1.4.5.14. Attend conferences related to SOWT guidance, architecture, training, and mission employment.

1.4.5.15. Request SAV as required.

Chapter 2

SPECIAL OPERATIONS WEATHER EVALUATIONS

2.1. Special Operations Weather Evaluations. The SOWSEP program ensures SOWT maintain the skills and capabilities to safely and effectively accomplish their assigned mission. Core evaluations should focus on the unit's METL using established tasks, conditions and standards. Other evaluations (initial, task, and spot) should be related to tasks required for upgrade, unit mission qualifications, or task proficiency.

2.1.1. In order for the evaluations to be effective and objective, the system relies on evaluations by someone other than the immediate supervisor/trainer. This provides checks and balances to the evaluation system. It also ensures standardization of processes across the unit.

2.1.2. An evaluation *will not* be changed to a training mission to avoid recording unsatisfactory performance. A scheduled training mission *will not* be changed to an evaluation to record satisfactory performance. If during an evaluation, an evaluator observes a procedure that jeopardizes safety, he will immediately relieve the individual responsible and either appoint another qualified individual or personally assume control of the operation.

2.2. Initial Evaluation.

2.2.1. An initial evaluation is required for all newly assigned SOWT personnel upon graduation from the SOWT pipeline. The initial evaluation will be conducted immediately following the member's completion of the unit Initial Familiarization (IFAM)/Initial Qualification training (IQT) requirements (normally within 90 days of assignment). Unit IFAM/IQT programs are required to be in place to validate competency levels and ensure all unit personnel are familiar with unit standard operating procedures (SOP) prior to the initial evaluation. The initial evaluation identifies required training areas. This evaluation may also be used to qualify an individual in the command or unit mission. The initial evaluation will consist of the following:

2.2.1.1. Open Book Examination IAW paragraph 2.3.2 of this instruction.

2.2.1.2. Physical Fitness Evaluation IAW paragraph 2.3.3 of this instruction.

2.2.1.3. Weather Skills Evaluation IAW paragraph 2.3.4 of this instruction

2.2.1.4. Team Employment Evaluation IAW paragraph 2.3.5 of this instruction.

2.2.1.5. Initial evaluations will be documented on an AF IMT 803 within a member's Air Force Training Records (AFTR).

2.3. Core Evaluations.

2.3.1. Core Evaluations are periodic evaluations administered as a quality control measure. They are designed to evaluate a member's proficiency in core and mission essential tasks. Core evaluations consist of an open book exam, physical fitness evaluation, weather skills evaluation and team employment evaluation.

2.3.1.1. All SOWT personnel will be evaluated at a minimum once every 18 months.

2.3.1.2. All core evaluations will be documented on an AF IMT 803 within a member's AFTR.

2.3.2. Open Book Exam.

2.3.2.1. The open book exam is designed to cover all aspects of SOWT duties. It must be oriented towards those areas related to the safe conduct of operations and ensure the individual retains a broad knowledge of SOWT operations. Prior to the open book examination, the Stan/Eval SOWT or designee will ensure the examinee had access to current study references and checklist. The following are the administration and documentation procedures for the open book examination:

2.3.2.2. The exam will only cover advanced qualifications possessed by the individual. Unit Stan/Eval will develop exam questions dealing with local procedures.

2.3.2.3. The open book exam will consist of 25 questions covering the following knowledge areas:

2.3.2.3.1. General Knowledge. A minimum of 10 general knowledge questions must come from the MAJCOM Master Question File (MQF). The Stan/Eval SOWT assigned to MAJCOM/A3V is the OPR for development and maintenance of the MQF.

2.3.2.3.2. Local Procedures. A minimum of five questions must come from unit local procedures MQF. If no unit local procedures MQF is developed, unit Stan/Eval must provide 15 additional general knowledge questions or all 25 questions will come from the MAJCOM MQF.

2.3.2.3.3. The minimum passing score for the written exam is 70 percent. Incorrect answers will be reviewed after grading.

2.3.2.4. Individuals who fail the open book test are considered Non-Mission Ready (NMR). Failures will be re-evaluated using an alternate test within 7 duty days (within two Unit Training Assemblies [UTAs] for ANG). Those who fail the re-evaluation will be recommended for review board action as outlined in Chapter 3 of this volume.

2.3.2.5. The open book examinations are controlled items. Stan/Eval sections at all levels are responsible for the integrity of the examination.

2.3.2.6. Document the open book exam on an AF IMT 803 within a member's AFTR.

2.3.3. Physical Fitness Evaluation.

2.3.3.1. SOWT members will be administered a physical fitness evaluation consisting of the exercises shown below in Table 2.1. The order for conducting the evaluation is as follows: pull-ups, sit-ups, push-ups, three mile run, and 1,500 meter swim. Calisthenics events will be tested one right after the other with a two minute rest period between events. Upon completion of all the calisthenic events, a 10 minute rest period is given prior to starting the three mile run. Upon completion of the three mile run, a 30 minute rest period is given prior to starting the 1,500 meter swim.

2.3.3.2. To pass the physical fitness examination successfully, an individual must meet the requirements for all events. Failure to meet physical fitness standards for any one event constitutes failure of entire test.

2.3.3.3. Physical Fitness Examination Procedures.

2.3.3.3.1. Pull-ups (two minute time limit). This exercise is executed on a pull-up bar. The individual grasps the bar with the hands about shoulder width apart with palms facing away from the face. This is a two-count exercise. The exercise begins in the "dead hang" position. Count one: pull the body directly upward until the chin is over the bar. Count two: lower the body until the body is again in the "dead hang" position. Individuals will not swing excessively or bicycle feet as the chin is pulled over the bar. Repeat as many times as possible. This is designed to measure strength and endurance in the back and bicep muscles used when performing specific mission tasks.

2.3.3.3.2. Sit-ups (four minute time limit). Starting position: back flat on the ground, hands on the head, head off the ground and knees bent at approximately a 90 degree angle. Another individual during the exercise holds the feet (optional). This is a two-count exercise. Count one: sit up until the back is vertical to the ground. Count two: return to the starting position. There is no authorized rest position. If an individual raises buttocks from ground or removes hands from the head during a repetition, the repetition is not counted. Designed to measure strength and endurance in abdominal and hip flexor muscle groups used when performing specific mission tasks.

2.3.3.3.3. Push-ups (two minute time limit). This exercise starts from the front leaning rest position. The body must be maintained straight from head to heels with knees together. This is a two-count exercise. Count one; flex the elbows, lowering the body until the elbows form a 90-degree angle. Count two; raise the body until the elbows are straight and locked. Repeat this exercise as many times as possible. Event is stopped when individual lifts an arm or a knee touches the ground. The only authorized rest position is the starting position. This exercise is designed to measure the strength and endurance of the chest and triceps muscles used during specific mission tasks. Strength and endurance in these muscle groups are required to perform swimming, lifting, climbing, load-bearing and hand-to-hand combat tasks.

2.3.3.3.4. Three Mile Run. Performed with running shoes and running shorts. Designed to measure aerobic endurance used when performing mission tasks, specifically employment or evasion situations.

2.3.3.3.5. 1,500 Meter Swim. The swim will be performed with swim trunks, dive mask or goggles (snorkel optional), and fins using any stroke. If swim is performed in open water, a life preserver or flotation device must be worn and 10 minutes will be added to maximum times in Table 2.1. Designed to measure aerobic endurance in a maritime environment.

2.3.3.3.6. Grading. Calisthenics repetitions, run times, and swim times will be rounded off to the lower point value. A composite score will determine the overall score.

2.3.3.3.7. Documentation. Physical Fitness Evaluations will be documented on an AF IMT 803 and maintained in a member's AF 623 – Individual Training Record within AFTR. The test will also be tracked in the Automated Records Management System (ARMS) IAW AFI 15-135 Volume 1.

2.3.3.3.8. Substandard Performance. Individuals who fail will be entered into a supervised remedial physical fitness (PT) program and re-evaluated within 60 calendar days. Individuals must complete an entire PT evaluation when retested. Eligibility for operational taskings will be determined by the commander. Individuals who fail a second time will not perform operational taskings and will be recommended for review board action.

Table 2.1. Special Operations Weather Physical Fitness Evaluation

Exercise (count)			Time = Points	
Push up (2)	Sit up (2)	Pull up (2)	3-Mile Run	1500 Meter Swim
85	100	16 = 100	20:00 = 200	26:00 = 200
80	95	15 = 90	20:30 = 190	27:00 = 190
75	90	14 = 80	21:00 = 180	28:00 = 180
70	85	13 = 75	21:30 = 170	29:00 = 170
65	80	12 = 70	22:00 = 160	30:00 = 160
60	75	11 = 65	22:30 = 150	31:00 = 150
55	70	10 = 60	23:00 = 140	32:00 = 140
50	65	9 = 55	23:30 = 130	33:00 = 130
45	60	8 = 50	*24:00 = 120	34:00 = 120 under 30
40	55	7 = 45	**25:00 = 110	34:30 = 110 30 and over
35	50	6 = 40	***26:00 = 100	35:00 = 100 40 and over
RATING SCALE				
*Indicates MAXIMUM allowable times for personnel less than 30 years of age.				
**Indicates MAXIMUM allowable times for personnel over 30 but less than 40 years of age.				
***Indicates MAXIMUM allowable times for personnel over 40 years of age.				
565-685	OUTSTANDING			
435-560	EXCELLENT			
325-430	SATISFACTORY			
< 325	UNSATISFACTORY			

2.3.4. Weather Skills Evaluations. Weather skills evaluations are designed to test proficiency, knowledge, and ability to conduct weather operations during peacetime, contingency, and wartime. These evaluations should be conducted under conditions that approximate, to the maximum extent possible, actual mission conditions. However, each evaluation must focus on the technical aspects of the operation and will not include overly complex employment scenarios that impede an operator’s ability to execute specific weather skills during the evaluation scenario. Complex mission scenarios involving operations other than key weather skills should be administered during periodic exercises vice during graded Stan/Evals. A sample weather skills evaluation checklist can be found in [Attachment 2](#). These weather skills evaluation items should closely coincide with those found in the SOWSEP Compliance Performance Checklist (CPC) as described in [Chapter 4](#).

2.3.4.1. Weather skills evaluations will be documented on an AF IMT 803 in the individual's AF IMT 623 within AFTR, and individual training items will be tracked in the Automated Records Management System (ARMS) IAW AFI 15-135 Volume 1.

2.3.5. SOWT Employment Evaluations. The SOWT employment evaluation will be administered to three or more personnel. Employment evaluation scenarios will be structured to evaluate as many of the unit's mission tasks as possible to include operations in air, land, and maritime environments. Tactical profiles should include rehearsals of tactics and procedures associated with the planning, preparation, insertion, execution, and extraction phases of an environmental reconnaissance operation. If practical, evaluations will be conducted in geographic areas not normally used during training.

2.3.5.1. Minimum requirements for an employment evaluation are: mission briefing, equipment preparation, mission rehearsal, insertion, operational event, extraction, and debriefing. Employment evaluations may be conducted during scheduled exercises with the prior concurrence of exercise planners. Each SOWT should be evaluated to their highest qualification level.

2.3.5.1.1. Inability to complete an insertion or extraction because of weather, flight cancellation, or other uncontrollable circumstances, will not negate an employment evaluation. The employment evaluation may be evaluated as long as the briefing is completed, a rehearsal is conducted, the insertion is attempted, the operational event is completed, the extraction is attempted, and a debriefing is conducted.

NOTE: This option will not be used during two consecutive evaluations of the same personnel.

2.3.5.1.2. The evaluator should not be incorporated into the evaluation scenario. In the event of a safety violation, the evaluator will assume control of the operation to prevent a safety incident. Once safety is restored the evaluator will relinquish control and continue to observe the operation.

2.3.5.2. Grading. Employment evaluations are graded Pass (combat mission ready) or Fail (non-mission ready). Employment evaluations will be documented on an AF IMT 803 in the individual's AF IMT 623 within AFTR, and individual training items will be tracked in the Automated Records Management System (ARMS) IAW AFI 15-135 Volume 1.

2.3.5.3. Substandard Performance. The evaluator will critique errors, incorrect procedures, and minor safety violations during the debriefing. A major safety violation is grounds for failure and will be corrected on the spot. Annotate areas requiring improvement and corrective action on a paper and electronic copy of the AF IMT 803 or 623a within AFTR. Individuals who fail the employment evaluation will be placed in a non-mission ready (NMR) status and will only participate in training missions under the direct supervision of a trainer or evaluator until they have successfully completed a re-evaluation. A re-evaluation must be completed within 90 days of the failure. Those who fail the re-evaluation will be recommended for review board action. Failure of an individual task does not constitute failure for the entire evaluation. If an individual core task is failed the individual will be decertified in that task and considered non-mission ready until re-evaluation.

2.4. Task Evaluations. Task evaluations are used to evaluate individuals for upgrade, unit mission qualifications, or task proficiency. The unit commander establishes the list of tasks to be evaluated in order to meet unit METLs and to qualify individuals for positional upgrades. This ensures only the best qualified SOWT are placed in positions of increased responsibility.

2.4.1. SOWT personnel nominated for Element Leader (EL) positions will be required to pass a task evaluation based on the list of tasks established by the unit commander. ELs are 5-level qualified SOWT and therefore are expected to be proficient in all 5-level core tasks in the 1W0X2 CFETP. In addition ELs will be signed off on all 7-level tasks under mission preparation of the 1W0X2 CFETP.

2.4.2. SOWT personnel nominated for Team NCOIC and SOWT-Os nominated for Team Leader (TL) positions must pass a task evaluation in conjunction with a full-mission profile exercise. This provides unit leadership with an opportunity to observe NCOICs and TLs plan and execute all phases of special weather operations. NCOICs are 7-level qualified SOWT and therefore are expected to be proficient in all 7-level core tasks in the 1W0X2 CFETP.

2.5. Spot Evaluations. Spot evaluations are used as a method to provide the commander with feedback on individual skills or specific team mission capabilities through random evaluations of mission training and exercises and may be conducted at any time.

2.5.1. Personnel receiving spot evaluations must be notified prior to the start of the event. Areas found to be substandard will result in de-certification in the task or tasks evaluated. The substandard performance will be documented in accordance with this instruction and AFI 36-2201 Vol 3, *Air Force Training Program on the Job Training Administration* as appropriate. Specific retraining recommendations should be completed prior to re-evaluation and documented by the evaluator. When re-training and re-evaluation are conducted on the spot, the specific training completed prior to re-evaluation will be documented by the evaluator. Re-training in substandard task(s) should be completed prior to scheduling the re-evaluation.

2.5.2. Units will ensure that a minimum of 20% of assigned personnel receive spot evaluations evenly distributed throughout the calendar year.

2.6. Task and Spot Evaluation Documentation Procedures.

2.6.1. Task and spot evaluations will be documented using brief and concise statements on an AF IMT 803 and maintained in the individual's AF IMT 623 within AFTR. When additional comments are required, they are referenced to the original AF IMT 803 on an AF IMT 623a, *On-the-Job Training Record Continuation Sheet*, within AFTR.

2.6.1.1. Annotate the appropriate type of evaluation (task or spot), reference if applicable, and task(s) evaluated.

2.6.1.2. Fill in a concise and factual history of tasks accomplished and the conditions in which they were accomplished. Annotate results of the evaluation (Pass/Fail).

2.7. Evaluation Briefings and Debriefings. The evaluator will brief and debrief examinees on all aspects of the evaluation. They will ensure examinees understand what is to be evaluated and the parameters of the evaluation. During debriefs, the evaluator will ensure the examinee understands all comments or remarks. The examinee's supervisor should be present during debrief. If not present, the supervisor will review the results of the evaluation via AFTR or

feedback provided by the evaluator. Each person present at the debrief should be given an opportunity to contribute their comments, observations, and recommendations. Conducting a proper debrief allows maximum benefit from the information collected and may be used to identify excellence or deficiencies in a training segment or methodology. Debriefings may also be documented on an AF IMT 623a within AFTR if the evaluator deems necessary.

Chapter 3

REVIEW BOARDS

3.1. Review Board Process.

3.1.1. Review boards are designed to look at the overall evaluation or training process to deliver an impartial judgment. Review boards look at the trainee and the training process to see if the failure is individual, institutional, or procedural.

3.1.2. Convene a review board when:

3.1.2.1. Directed by the commander.

3.1.2.2. A SOWT fails a re-evaluation.

3.1.2.3. After any incident that compromised safety or resulted in injury to personnel or damage to equipment through negligence or violation of directives.

3.1.3. Composition of Review Boards. Unit Stan/Eval conducts the review board. The review board also consists of the operations officer and operations superintendent (senior SOWT-O if not the operations superintendent). If a primary board member cannot be present, the commander will designate an alternate. The alternate will typically be the next senior ranking member of the AFSC involved. The reviewer's direct supervisor may observe the board proceeding; however, he will not be a voting member. The commander may observe the proceedings as a non-voting member since the board recommends action to the commander.

3.1.4. Review Board Actions. The board will evaluate and analyze all factors bearing on a situation and provide the commander with recommendations. Recommendations may include removal of an advanced skill qualification, additional supervised training, or recommendation for removal from the AFSC. Board findings of personnel retained in the AFSC will be maintained on file for 18 months within the member's PIF. When removal from AFSC is recommended, upon commander approval, the Chief/Senior Enlisted Manager with the assistance of the unit training manager will coordinate required actions with the local military personnel flight (MPF) and base training office.

3.1.5. Actions resulting in the recommendation for removal of an AFSC will be forwarded to the MAJCOM level or next higher headquarters as appropriate for review.

Chapter 4

SPECIAL OPERATIONS WEATHER STANDARDS AND EVALUATIONS INSPECTION PROGRAM

4.1. Unit Evaluations/Standardization and Evaluation Program. Units with assigned SOWT fall under the purview of HQ AFSOC/A3W for SOWT compliance and performance measures. HQ AF/A3O-W publishes and maintains the Stan/Eval SOWSEP Compliance Performance Checklist (CPC) that applies in whole or in part to units with assigned SOWT. As the lead command for SOWT forces, HQ AFSOC/A3W works closely with HQ AF/A3O-W to ensure the CPC remains relevant and current with TTPs. The SOWSEP CPC is the primary tool used to inspect units with assigned SOWT. Unit technical health and compliance are measured via this CPC and reported in accordance with this regulation.

4.2. Program Objectives. The SOWSEP Inspection Program is designed to:

- 4.2.1. Evaluate the ability of SOWT organizations to comply with Air Force standards and perform assigned missions.
- 4.2.2. Provide an objective assessment of mission readiness and effectiveness for AF/A3O-W, owning MAJCOM, and Field Operating Agency (FOA) senior leaders.
- 4.2.3. Assess the tactical and technical capabilities of SOWT weather forces.
- 4.2.4. Identify negative trends and oversee corrective actions.
- 4.2.5. Identify positive trends and successful practices for benchmark and crossfeed.
- 4.2.6. Provide a means of self-evaluation and process improvement to help focus resources (i.e., training, manpower, systems, research, funding) where most needed.
- 4.2.7. Identify shortfalls in compliance with Air Force instructions or previously implemented corrective actions.
- 4.2.8. Provide, in conjunction with other evaluations (e.g., technical verification, readiness reporting, training reports), information to identify, prioritize, and develop solutions to functional shortfalls.

4.3. Responsibilities.

- 4.3.1. The Air Force Director of Weather (AF/A3O-W) maintains overall responsibility for the SOWSEP.
- 4.3.2. The Air Force Chief, Weather Policy Division (AF/A3O-WP) will:
 - 4.3.2.1. Set SOWSEP policy.
 - 4.3.2.2. Manage HQ AF/A3O-W-directed Weather Interest Items (WIIs).
 - 4.3.2.3. Coordinate and serve as approval authority on proposed WIIs and recommended SOWSEP Compliance Performance Checklist (CPC) changes.
 - 4.3.2.4. Approve SOWSEP CPC and its effective date.
 - 4.3.2.5. Adjudicate unresolved discrepancies and observations regarding clarification and interpretation of policies.

4.3.3. MAJCOM/A3 retains responsibility to implement and execute the SOWSEP through the MAJCOM Weather Functional Manager (WFM). **WFMs will:**

4.3.3.1. Implement and manage the SOWSEP for applicable weather organizations within the command (including gained ANG organizations), to include leading, scheduling, funding, and designating team composition.

4.3.3.2. Coordinate and request Air Force Weather Agency (AFWA)/A3V (previously AFWA/A3OV) augmentation on a minimum of 25 percent of the scheduled SOWSEP evaluations

4.3.3.2.1. As per AFI 15-180, AFWA/A3V augmentation will be AFWA/A3V funded.

4.3.3.3. Provide AFWA/A3V with an estimated number of required augmentation mandays and proposed schedule (as available) for the following fiscal year no later than (NLT) 1 July annually.

4.3.3.4. Upon request and as resources permit, provide evaluator or observer augmentation to AFWA/A3OV or other MAJCOM led evaluations.

4.3.3.4.1. Evaluators will participate as members of the evaluation team.

4.3.3.4.2. Observers will be allowed full access to the evaluation. They will only observe and will not contribute to the evaluation.

4.3.3.5. Submit proposed WIIs, recommended CPC changes, and CPC waiver requests to AF/A3O-WP for approval (courtesy copy to AFWA/A3V). Air National Guard organizations will submit waiver requests through the National Guard Bureau (NGB), NGB/A3 Weather, to AF/A3O-WP (courtesy copy to AFWA and AFSOC/A3W).

4.3.3.6. Disseminate reports within 30 days of completion of the evaluation IAW the format in [Attachment 2](#); electronic reports are acceptable. Provide copies to HQ AF/A3O-W, AFWA/A3, and NGB/A3 Weather.

4.3.3.7. Approve resolution plans and closure requests for deficiencies and negative observations documented during SOWSEP evaluations.

4.4. SOWSEP Compliance Performance Checklist. Current SOWSEP CPC is available on the AFWA Standardization and Evaluation website and the HQ AFSOC/A3W SharePoint website.

4.4.1. SOWSEP CPC is not directive; it restates or paraphrases existing Air Force requirements, policy or procedures. The SOWSEP CPC includes guidance for conducting evaluations in the section labeled “Standard Approach for Evaluators (SAFE);” evaluators will adhere to the SAFE to ensure standardization in the evaluation process.

4.4.2. The SOWSEP CPC will be maintained and updated by AFSOC/A3W, and have publication and effective dates established by AF/A3O-WP.

4.4.3. All CPC items will be evaluated; those that do not apply, as determined by the MAJCOM WFM) will be marked as “Not Applicable” (N/A).

4.4.4. CPC items are either GO or NO-GO in accordance with AFI 90-201, *Inspector General Activities*. CPC items identified as NO-GO will be documented as discrepancies.

4.4.5. Items identified during the evaluation not directly addressed by the CPC, but having a positive or negative impact on safety or operations, will be documented as observations and will be included in the final evaluation report. These findings will not be counted into the SOWSEP scoring or overall rating.

4.4.6. A combination of related CPC failures that collectively have a negative impact on safety or operations can be documented as an observation. If created, these observations will be included in the final evaluation report but will not be counted into the SOWSEP scoring or overall rating. Note: The independent CPC failures will still be counted as a discrepancy.

4.5. Weather Interest Items. WIIs contain criteria and procedures for their evaluation, and WII results will be documented in a separate section of the report. AF/A3O-W may direct evaluation of WIIs as a means to focus management attention, gather data, and/or evaluate the status of conditions in the weather career field or of specific weather programs, policies, or procedures. WIIs are not within the purview of the Air Force Special Interest Item Program as described in AFI 90-201, Inspector General Activities. MAJCOM-unique WIIs will not conflict with or duplicate AF-level WIIs.

4.6. Scheduling SOWSEP Evaluations.

4.6.1. SOWSEP evaluations will be conducted once every 24-36 months for Active Component organizations, Air Force Reserve organizations, and applicable contracted weather organizations. Air National Guard organizations will be evaluated once every 48-60 months.

4.6.2. MAJCOMs are encouraged, but not required, to conduct SOWSEP evaluations concurrently with other evaluations and inspections that address similar functional areas.

4.7. Conducting SOWSEP Evaluations.

4.7.1. The SOWSEP evaluation consists of two related evaluations: compliance and performance. These components are evaluated and scored in sub-areas IAW the SOWSEP CPC. In addition, an overall score (OUTSTANDING, EXCELLENT, SATISFACTORY, or UNSATISFACTORY) will be computed based on the procedures in Chapter 3.

4.7.2. Compliance Evaluation. Measures compliance with Air Force directives with a score derived from direct evaluation of procedures and process documentation.

4.7.3. Performance Evaluation. Measures the effectiveness of weather organization procedures and training/competency of personnel or groups engaged in weather operations evaluated by direct observation of duty performance (checkrides).

4.8. Evaluation procedures.

4.8.1. Evaluators will:

4.8.1.1. When required, request advance copies of documents (e.g., SOPs, OIs, weather support plans, etc.) from inspected organization no later than 30 days before evaluation.

4.8.1.2. Use the SOWSEP CPC and follow the SAFE for compliance and performance evaluations.

4.8.1.3. Directly observe performance through administration of checkrides on a representative sample of task-certified military personnel. All CPC items used for checkrides will indicate the required performance standards.

4.8.1.4. Identify and document as a discrepancy any CPC line-item process or procedure not in compliance with AF standards. Discrepancies will be resolved IAW procedures outlined in paragraph 4.13.

4.8.1.5. Identify and document as an observation any non-CPC process or procedure found to have a significant positive or negative operational impact (e.g., improves existing procedures, poses a hazard to safety). Negative observations will be resolved IAW procedures outlined in paragraph 4.13. Positive observations will be reviewed for crossfeed by MAJCOMs and AFWA.

4.9. Briefings. At a minimum, in-briefs, progress briefs, and out-briefs will be presented as follows:

4.9.1. In-brief.

4.9.1.1. The SOWSEP team chief will introduce team members, provide an overview of SOWSEP evaluation, scoring, and reporting, and define observations, discrepancies, and the resolution process to the evaluated organization's key leadership.

4.9.1.2. The evaluated unit's commander (squadron-level or equivalent) or designated representative will introduce key leadership and provide a brief overview of the organization's mission (including supported agencies and major weapons systems), primary products, metrics, training, and mobility programs.

4.9.2. Progress-briefs. The SOWSEP team chief will brief the unit commander or designated representative on the results of each day's evaluation, including observations and discrepancies.

4.9.3. Out-brief. The SOWSEP team chief will present an out-brief to the evaluated organization's key leadership that will:

4.9.3.1. Provide a summary of positive observations and an overall assessment, including specific strengths and weaknesses.

4.9.3.2. Discuss discrepancies and negative observations, including the operational impact (e.g. impact to flight safety).

4.9.3.3. Identify repeat discrepancies from previous evaluation.

4.9.3.4. Identify outstanding performers, positive observations, best practices, and benchmark programs/practices.

4.9.3.5. Discuss resolution procedures for discrepancies and negative observations.

4.10. Follow-up Evaluations. Follow-up evaluations will be conducted NLT 180 days after initial evaluation for any organization receiving an overall rating of UNSATISFACTORY.

4.10.1. Follow-up evaluation waiver requests for weather squadrons must be approved by AF/A3O-WP.

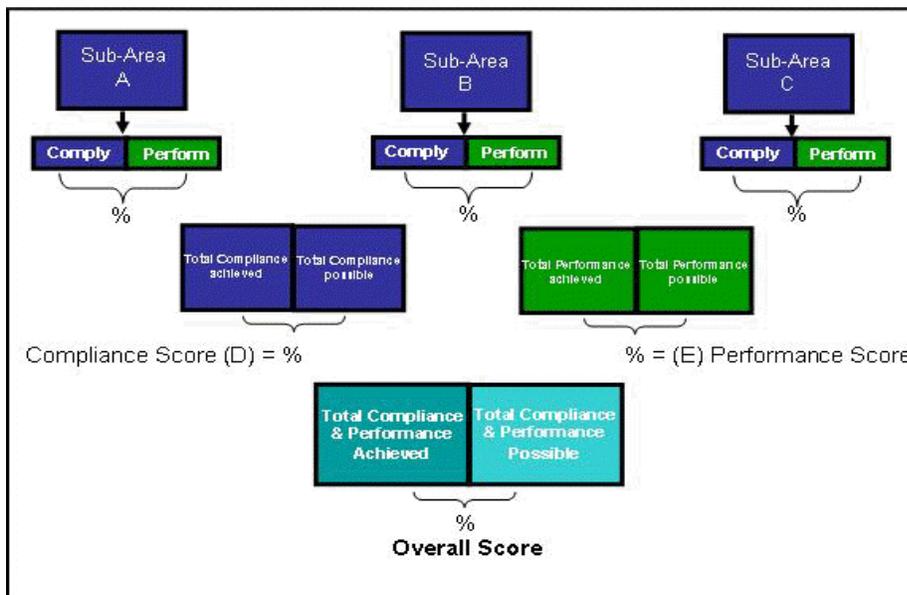
4.10.2. All other requests will be approved at the MAJCOM/A3 WFM level or equivalent and copies of requests will be provided to AF/A3O-WP and AFWA/A3V.

4.11. SOWSEP Scoring and Rating.

4.11.1. Scoring provides commanders with an assessment of compliance with Air Force standards and an evaluation of the organization's ability to perform assigned missions. The final report will identify an organization's overall score, compliance score, performance score, and a score for each applicable sub-area. These scores will be used to determine the overall SOWSEP rating IAW **Figure 4.2**

4.11.2. Scoring. Each CPC item is assigned a point value. Evaluators will follow CPC instructions for awarding points. Although some elements of the evaluation are subjective, evaluators will use the CPC and objective procedures as outlined in the SAFE list without exception. All scores are indicated by percentages. **Figure 4.1** depicts a SOWSEP scoring example.

Figure 4.1. Example SOWSEP Scoring A rating of <70% in any two sub-areas (A-C) or <70% in D or E results in overall rating of “UNSATISFACTORY”.



4.11.2.1. Sub-area scores are based on CPC compliance and performance items for the applicable sub-area. The score is computed by dividing the total points awarded (i.e., GOs) by the total points possible (minus N/As) and converting to a percentage.

$$\text{SCORE}_{\text{SUB-AREA}} \% = \frac{(\text{Total Compliance \& Performance Pts Awarded ("GOs")})}{(\text{Total Possible Compliance \& Performance Pts (Minus N/As)})} \times 100$$

4.11.2.2. The Compliance Score is based on CPC compliance items. The score is computed by dividing the total compliance points awarded (i.e., GOs) by the total compliance points possible (minus N/As) and converting to a percentage.

$$\text{SCORECOMPLIANCE \%} = \frac{(\text{Total Compliance Pts Awarded ("GOs")})}{(\text{Total Possible Compliance Pts (Minus N/As)})} \times 100$$

4.11.2.3. The Performance Score is based on CPC performance items. The score is computed by dividing the total performance points awarded (i.e., GOs) by the total performance points possible (minus N/As) and converting to a percentage.

$$\text{SCOREPERFORMANCE \%} = \frac{(\text{Total Performance Pts Awarded ("GOs")})}{(\text{Total Possible Performance Pts (Minus N/As)})} \times 100$$

4.11.2.4. Overall score is based on a total of the Compliance Score and Performance score. The score is computed by dividing the total Compliance and Performance points awarded (i.e., GOs) by the total Compliance and Performance points possible (minus N/As) and converting to a percentage.

$$\text{SCOREOVERALL \%} = \frac{(\text{Total Compliance and Performance Pts Awarded ("GOs")})}{(\text{Total Possible Compliance and Performance Pts (Minus N/As)})} \times 100$$

4.11.3. Ratings. Evaluated organizations earn an overall rating of OUTSTANDING, EXCELLENT, SATISFACTORY, or UNSATISFACTORY based on the criteria listed in **Figure 4.2** Ratings will not be assessed for compliance, performance, or sub-areas.

Figure 4.2. SOWSEP Ratings:

OVERALL RATING		CRITERIA		
Ratings	Required Score	Performance Score	Compliance Score	Sub-Area Score(s)
Outstanding	≥ 95%	≥ 95%	≥ 95%	All ≥ 90%
Excellent	≥ 85%	≥ 85%	≥ 85%	All ≥ 80%
Satisfactory	≥ 70%	≥ 70%	≥ 70%	No more than one sub-area ≥ 70%
Unsatisfactory	< 70%	Any Score	Any Score	Any Scores
	Any Score	< 70%	Any Score	Any Scores
	Any Score	Any Score	< 70%	Any Scores
	Any Score	Any Score	Any Score	Two or more sub areas < 70%

4.12. Resolution of discrepancies and negative observations. MAJCOM WFMs have approval authority for resolution plans and closure requests for SOWSEP discrepancies and negative observations. Discrepancies and negative observations will not be closed until the core issues that warranted each finding are fully resolved to prevent recurrence.

4.12.1. The evaluated organization will adhere to the following guidance for resolution of discrepancies and negative observations.

4.12.2. NLT 60 days from the date of the SOWSEP report, forward a resolution plan to the MAJCOM WFM.

4.12.2.1. Plans will delineate proposed actions, including suspense dates, to resolve each item NLT 180 days (365 days for ANG organizations without full-time support) from the approval date of the resolution plan.

4.12.2.2. Resolution plans are not required for organizations receiving an overall rating of UNSATISFACTORY. Those organizations will be reevaluated within 180 days.

4.12.3. Forward closure requests, including items resolved prior to submitting the resolution plan, to MAJCOM WFM.

4.12.4. Within 30 days of receipt, the MAJCOM WFM will rule on resolution plans or closure requests. Requests for closure of SOWSEP discrepancies must include sufficient descriptions of actions taken to correct the deficiency and prevent recurrence.

4.12.5. Performance discrepancies can be closed by creating and documenting training (e.g., during checkride person fails to convert winds from magnetic to true, and SOP exists, then document training locally).

4.12.6. Discrepancies that cannot be resolved by the owning MAJCOM WFM will be forwarded to AF/A3O-WP for final adjudication.

4.13. Forms Adopted.

AFTR, AF IMT 623, *On-the-Job Training Record*

AF IMT 623a, *On-the-Job Training Record Continuation Sheet*

AF Form 1098, *Special Task Certification and Recurring Training*

AF IMT 803, *Report of Task Evaluations*

AF IMT 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

PHILIP M. BREEDLOVE, Lt Gen, USAF
DCS, Operations, Plans and Requirements

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

AFDD 2-7, *Special Operations*, 16 December 2005
AFDD 2-9.1, *Weather Operations*, 3 May 2006
AFPD 11-4, *Aviation Service*, 7 March 2007
AFPD 15-1, *Atmospheric and Space Environmental Support*, 8 January 2001
AFPD 36-22, *Military Training*, 22 March 2004
AFI 15-135 Vol 1, *Special Operations Weather Training*
AFI 15-180, *Standardization and Evaluation Program for Weather Operations*, 23 July 2007
AFI 36-2201 Vol 3, *Air Force Training Program On-the-Job Training Administration*, 4 February 2005
AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFI—Air Force Instruction
AFPD—Air Force Policy Document
AFRIMS— Air Force Records Information Management System
AFS—Air Force Specialty
AFSC—Air Force specialty code
AFSOC— Air Force Special Operations Command
AFTR— Air Force Training Record
AFTTP— Air Force Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
AFWA— Air Force Weather Agency
ANG—Air National Guard
ARC—Air Reserve Component
ARMS—Aviation Resource Management System
ASEV— Aircrew Standardization and Evaluation
CC—Commander
CFETP—Career Field Education and Training Plan
CMR— Combat Mission Ready
CPC— Compliance Performance Checklist
EL— Element Leader

ER— Environmental Reconnaissance
FCIF— Flight Crew Information File
IAW— In Accordance With
IFAM— Initial Familiariation
IQT—Initial Qualification Training
MAJCOM—Major command
MC— Mission Commander
METL—Mission Essential Task Listing
MQF— Master Question File
NCO—Non Commissioned Officer
NMR— Non-Mission Ready
OJT—On the Job Training
OPR—Office of primary responsibility
RDS— Records Disposition Schedule
SAFE— Standard Approach For Evaluators
SAV— Staff Assistance Visit
SOP—Standard Operating Procedure
SOWSEP— Special Operations Weather Standards and Evaluation Program
SOWT— Special Operations Weather Team
SOWT—O – Special Operations Weather Team Officer
STIF— Special Tactics Information File
TL— Team Leader
UTA—Unit Training Assembly
UTM— Unit Training Manager
WFM— Weather Functional Manager
WII— Weather Interest Items

Terms

Certification— a formal indication of an individual's ability to perform a task to required standards.

Combat Mission Ready—Status attained by an individual when certified in all core tasks and special qualifications required to perform command and unit missions unless exempted or waived.

Core Evaluations—Core evaluations consist of: the closed book examination, physical fitness test and employment evaluation.

Element Leader—SOWT 5-skill level qualified Amn/NCO that has completed mission upgrade training per duty position/CFETP/MAJCOM quality training plan.

Evaluator—Evaluators are qualified instructors that conduct both mission related evaluations requiring an AFTR IMT 803. As a minimum, they must meet all requirements for certifiers listed in AFI 36-2201 Vol 3, *Air Force Training Program on the Job Training Administration* and be interviewed and certified by the unit commander.

Initial Evaluation— an evaluation administered to personnel that are newly assigned 3 or 5 level graduates at their first assignments.

Instructor—Instructors are those individuals qualified to conduct mission related task training and certification for any task that they are trained (non-core) or certified (core) to perform. As a minimum, they must meet all requirements for certifiers listed in AFI 36-2201 Vol 3, *Air Force Training Program on the Job Training Administration*, complete a MAJCOM approved instructor upgrade and be interviewed and certified by the unit commander.

Mission Commander—Special Operations Weather Officer qualified through mission upgrade training per MAJCOM quality training plan to lead weather operations in combat.

Mission Essential Task List—The complete list of mission essential tasks (METs) for any organization, also called METL.

Non-mission-ready—Status resulting from failure in core evaluations or not trained/decertified in core task.

OJT—Individual training in designated job skills provided to individual member's when serving in job positions in operational units.

Qualification Expiration—The date qualification expires, normally, the last day of month, 18 months from the last successful evaluation.

Re—certification Evaluation—an evaluation required due to an unsatisfactory rating on a previous evaluation or evaluation expiration.

Recurring Evaluation—an evaluation administered within a specified period of time on a recurring basis (e.g. annually, semi-annually, bi-annually).

Standard—an exact value, a physical entity, or an abstract concept, the appropriate authority, custom, or common consent sets up and defines to serve as a reference, model, or rule in measuring quantities or qualities, developing practices or procedures, or evaluating results.

Tasks, Conditions, and Standards—A method of evaluating performance. Defines a specific task to be accomplished, the conditions the task is to be accomplished under, and the standard that is to be met for the task.

Task Evaluation—an evaluation conducted as a quality control measure to evaluate members on specific tasks or qualifications but not to satisfy a recurring evaluation requirement.

Task Trainer—An individual trained and qualified to teach others to perform specific tasks. Task trainers are certified to conduct task training in non-flight related OJT tasks that they are trained (non-core) and certified (core) to perform. They must meet all requirements for trainers

listed in AFI 36-2201 Vol 3, *Air Force Training Program on the Job Training Administration*. Commanders may apply further restrictions in writing.

Team Leader—SOWT-O qualification for officers that have completed mission upgrade training per duty position/CFETP/MAJCOM quality training plan.

Trainee—an individual who is undergoing training.

Attachment 2

SAMPLE SPECIAL OPERATIONS WEATHER SKILL EVALUATION CHECKLIST.

Special Operations Weather Skill Evaluation: Joint/Tactical Operations Center		
Name:	Rank:	Date:
Scenario: Item # 1.2.2. Providing continuous timely, accurate and relevant information to key decision makers.		
PLANNING		
1. Pre-coordinated work space and connectivity (SIPR, NIPR, JET, phone, work area, living/sleep space, equipment storage space, gear prep area for ER personnel, antenna field, etc)	5	(Evaluator Comments)
2. Pre-coordinated special METOC requirements with aircraft and ground personnel (unique thresholds, warning/advisory requirements, lead times, etc)	4	
3. Pre-coordinated with JMO/Lead Weather Unit to determine on-scene sensing requirements and responsibilities (observing, warning and advisory criteria, MEF production, etc)	3	
4. Pre-coordinated communications requirements, callsigns, etc (frequency management requirements, communications nets, callsigns, SOI/JCEOI inputs, SPIN submissions, etc)	3	
5. Coordinate to support theater sensing strategy considerations (where, when, how collect and report data, to who, how often, via what communications, etc)	5	
MISSION SERVICES		
6. Integrates into battlestaff and battle rhythm	4	
7. Attends/briefs at critical meetings (updates, ORM, rock drills, COA development, JPG, etc)	4	
8. Determines mission weather-related decision points, ensures publication as part of mission synchronization	4	
9. Ensures weather network has situational awareness and is updated to perform operational reporting during mission execution in support of CC's decision making process	4	
10. Performs MISSIONWATCH throughout execution, provides CC immediate notification changing conditions	4	
SOWT LIASON		
12. Manages/facilitates SOWT movement in support of sensing strategy and operational requirements	5	
13. Monitors SOWT communications IOT capture key reporting, provide collections to global database, and activate collection network, when required	5	
14. Provides key weather and operational updates to employed SOWT ISO situational awareness	5	

Recommendations/Remarks: Total: ____/60 ____% GO/NO GO