



Armed Contract Security Officers in Federal Facilities:

An Interagency Security Committee Best Practice

2019



CISA
CYBER+INFRASTRUCTURE



Change History

Rev. #	Date	Changes	Approver
1.0	2013	First Publication (Best Practice)	Interagency Security Committee
2.0	2019	Updated with significant changes.	Interagency Security Committee

Message from the Chief, Interagency Security Committee

One of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) top national priorities is the protection of federal employees and private citizens who work within and visit United States (U.S.) government-owned or leased facilities. The Interagency Security Committee (ISC), chaired by DHS, consists of federal departments and agencies and has as its mission the development of security policies, standards, and recommendations for non-military federal facilities in the United States.

As the Chief of the ISC, I am pleased to introduce the updated ISC document titled *Armed Contract Security Officers in Federal Facilities: An Interagency Security Committee Best Practice*. This document provides a recommended set of minimum criteria for hiring, issuing uniforms and equipment, training, and staffing levels for an armed contract security force in federal facilities.

Notwithstanding the minimum criteria cited in this document, contractors must follow federal, state, and/or local licensing requirements for armed contract security officers (ACSOs). In the event there is a legal licensing requirement that exceeds these minimum criteria, that legal requirement shall take precedence. Departments and agencies may exceed these minimum criteria for ACSOs as required to adequately secure specific facilities and essential mission functions.

Consistent with Executive Order (EO) 12977, issued October 19, 1995, *Armed Contract Security Officers in Federal Facilities: An ISC Best Practice* should be applied to all facilities in the United States occupied by federal employees for non-military activities. These include existing owned, to be purchased, or leased facilities; stand-alone facilities; federal campuses; individual facilities on federal campuses; and special-use facilities.

This document represents exemplary collaboration within the ISC working group and across the entire ISC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daryle Hernandez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daryle Hernandez
Chief, Interagency Security Committee

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1.0 Background

The *Vulnerability Assessment of Federal Facilities* issued by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in 1995 established the first set of government-wide physical security guidelines for federal facilities. Over the ensuing years, the ISC issued additional security polices, standards, and recommendations.

During the 2007 ISC Summit, members identified the need to develop minimum standards or best practices for ACSOs working in federal facilities. The ISC recognized that a well-trained, professional security force would raise the level of protection in federal facilities across the country. The ISC therefore established the Armed Contract Security Officers Working Group.

The working group quickly realized to adequately identify, justify, and validate legally defensible best practices, they needed a comprehensive and independent job task analysis (JTA) of the ACSO position, which was conducted in 2009 by the Federal Protective Service (FPS).

This document update, *Armed Contract Security Officers in Federal Facilities: An Interagency Security Committee Best Practice*:

- Defines the functions of a contract security force as a threat countermeasure;
- Lists the minimum criteria for suitability, physical, medical, training/education, experience, grooming/appearance, uniforms, and equipment; and
- Provides factors that estimate security staffing levels for specific security posts.

Except for the “Personnel Security Requirements” set forth in Table 1, federal agencies may exceed these best practices, as required, to secure specific facilities and/or to fulfill essential mission functions.

2.0 Applicability and Scope

This document defines a recommended set of minimum criteria for all ACSOs working at buildings and facilities in the United States occupied by federal employees for non-military activities. This document is issued pursuant to the authority of the ISC contained in EO 12977, issued October 19, 1995, “Interagency Security Committee,” as amended by EO 13286, March 5, 2003.

Each executive department and agency should consider implementing the best practices contained in this document. Departments and agencies should consider applying these best practices to all new contracts. There is no requirement to amend existing contracts to meet this best practice document.

In addition to meeting the ACSO duties and responsibilities described in this document, contractors should meet all federal, state, and/or local ACSO licensing requirements. All legal licensing requirements shall take precedence if they exceed the ISC best practices.

To keep pace with the changing nature of the threat to federal facilities, the ISC will update the best practices for ACSOs as needed. Users of this document should visit the ISC website (www.dhs.gov/interagency-security-committee) for updates and announcements affecting this and other ISC documents related to the security of federal facilities.

3.0 Methodology

The ISC working group reviewed the findings of the 2009 FPS JTA that identified 84 critical tasks all ACSOs should be able to perform. This list included both frequently occurring tasks and tasks which occur less frequently but are extremely important, such as deploying weapons. The ISC working group modified and adopted these 84 critical tasks in establishing this ACSO document. The FPS JTA also outlined the physical, medical, equipment, uniform, grooming, education, and training standards for ACSOs. These findings serve as the foundation for *Armed Contract Security Officers in Federal Facilities: An Interagency Security Committee Best Practice*.

4.0 Functions and Tasks of an ACSO

The ACSO's primary responsibility is to perform as a countermeasure to deter, detect, delay, deny, and diminish threats to federal property, as well as to assist in ensuring the safety of employees and visitors while at federal facilities. The six basic functions of ACSOs are:

- Access Control;
- Screening;
- Visitor Processing;
- Patrol and Response;
- Control Center Operations; and
- Common Tasks.

These six functions consist of the 84 critical tasks defined by the JTA. These tasks describe the minimum set of duties and responsibilities all ACSOs perform. The ISC working group used these 84 critical tasks to identify and validate the minimum physical, medical, equipment, uniform, grooming/appearance, and training standards all ACSOs should meet. Appendix A: ACSO Functions and Tasks contains all 84 JTA-defined critical tasks listed by category.

5.0 Standards for an ACSO

5.1 Minimum Criteria for Hiring an ACSO

The following table identifies the minimum criteria for citizenship, experience, medical, physical, and personnel security requirements for an ACSO. Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee employment with a contractor or a positive suitability determination by the government. Final hiring decisions are determined by the contractors.

Table 1: Minimum Criteria for Hiring an ACSO

Criteria	Requirements
Citizenship	<p>The candidate should meet one of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a United States citizen (either by birth or naturalization); or • Be a lawful permanent resident of the United States.
Experience	<p>The candidate should meet one of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two (2) years of service in the United States Armed Services (including Reserves or National Guard); • Any combination of two (2) years of experience in physical security (as a security officer, armed or unarmed) and service with the United States Armed Services (including Reserves or National Guard); • Associate Degree or higher in a security-related or law enforcement-related field; • Successful completion of a police officer’s basic training academy; • Three (3) years of experience in physical security as a security officer, armed or unarmed; or • Eligibility based on any long-standing “grandfather” clause that may be in effect.
Medical and Physical	<p>The candidate should meet all the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medical examination, physical testing, and physician’s clearance that evaluates and measures the applicant’s or incumbent’s vision, hearing, cardiovascular system, musculoskeletal system, and general health to conclude the individual can successfully perform the 84 tasks and functions of an ACSO (see Appendix A). Drug screening will be performed by a certified laboratory in accordance with Appendix B: Minimum Medical and Physical Norms for an ACSO. • Appendix B provides the minimum medical and physical criteria for an ACSO. The examination should also provide a reasonable indication of the applicant’s or incumbent’s ability to remain on his or her feet for long hours, conduct roving patrols, climb and descend stairs and hills, and respond to an emergency by quickly reporting to the scene on foot.

Criteria	Requirements
Personnel Security Requirements	<p>In accordance with established background investigation reform efforts, ACSOs shall be required to complete, at minimum, a Tier 2 background investigation and receive a favorable adjudication based on the adjudicative guidelines established in the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 Credentialing Standards or equivalent. The requisite investigation shall be determined based on a position risk designation using the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) Position Designation Automated Tool (PDT). In compliance with the 2012 Revised Federal Investigative Standards, all ACSOs shall be reinvestigated every five (5) years.</p> <p>Each ACSO and Supervisory ACSO shall annually complete a signed and dated Lautenberg Amendment Statement / Domestic Violence certification that satisfies the legal requirements of the Lautenberg Amendment, 18 United States Code Sec. 922(g) (8) and (9). This certification is valid for one year.</p>

5.2 ACSO Professional Appearance: Grooming, Uniform, and Equipment Criteria

ACSOs spend most of their time interacting and communicating with the public to ensure proper protocols are followed to minimize threat and maximize security for all occupants in the federal facility. Interaction and communication with the public are tasks categorized as high importance, high frequency tasks. The ACSO’s appearance in duty uniform, as well as issued equipment, should be clean and neat to present a professional appearance and to identify the ACSO as the first line of response from an authorized and responsible security workforce.

5.2.1 ACSO Grooming and Appearance Criteria

ACSOs should practice good hygiene and grooming to enhance their professional appearance at their duty location. Like the military and other law and safety enforcement groups, ACSOs should be easily identifiable by their uniform and professional mannerisms. To improve variations in grooming, wearing of a uniform, and issued equipment by departments and agencies, this document shares ACSO best practices as they are reviewed, updated, and approved by members of the ISC.

Appropriate grooming practices contribute to professional appearance and safety. Grooming practices are influenced by societal norms that change through the years and can be difficult to defend at times. Although they may be viewed as limiting personal freedoms, grooming best practices tend to promote the perception of a more professional functioning workforce, increase camaraderie, and improve safety in operations. The ISC working group will evaluate and adjust the grooming practices as needed to reflect the changing norms while maintaining consistency of professional appearance criteria to promote safety and public confidence.

Practices must not discriminate based on sex, race, religion, disability, or any other federal-protected status. As a result, agencies are generally responsible for the equal and fair application and enforcement of rules and regulations within the workplace. For example, it would not be defensible to allow women, but not men, to wear earrings on the job.

Accordingly, it is unlikely an agency could successfully use a job-relatedness defense to prohibit ACSOs from having visible tattoos or piercings. Furthermore, any grooming practices must consider exceptions for religious reasons.

Other grooming practices have clearer relationships to the ACSO’s health and safety. One example is facial hair. Facial hair that interferes with the seal of a particulate respirator, while discouraged, is allowable so long as the ACSO receives an effective alternative protective device. If necessary, positive pressure respirators of the hooded or helmet type are better to accommodate facial hair. These respirators are approved by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and have hoods that fit over the head and contact to the user’s neck.

Agencies and the ISC will review and modify the following practices as needed.

Table 2: ACSO Grooming and Appearance Standards

Subject Area	Grooming and Appearance Standards
Facial Hair	Should be able to pass the OSHA-required fit test for a respirator, if required. Acceptable facial hair is full beard or mustache, neatly trimmed, and no longer than ¼ inch in length.
Hair	Hair should be clean, neat, of naturally-occurring color, and not interfere with wearing of headgear. Uncovered hair should not fall below either eyebrow or collar of shirt. Covered hair should not protrude below sweatband of headgear. Items to hold hair in place should be concealed and blend with color of hair.
Jewelry/ Piercings	One set of stud earrings, one ring per hand (wedding band combinations should be counted as one ring), one fitted wrist watch, medical bracelets, and one necklace (not visible in uniform) are permitted. Visible piercing jewelry should be prohibited in locations other than the ear.
Visible Tattoos	Tattoos displaying the following should be prohibited in the performance of duty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depictions of nudity, violence, or criminal activity; • Illustrations, references, initials, symbolism, or acronyms that represent criminal, oppressive, discriminatory, or prejudicial organizations or activities; • Gang-related or drug-related depictions; and • Illustrations political in nature.
Uniforms	Uniforms should be clean, pressed, professional, and serviceable.

5.2.2 ACSO Issued Uniform Items

An ACSO's uniform visually identifies they are part of the facility's security force. To ensure ACSOs can perform their duties in varying weather conditions and physical settings, the ISC identified a list of uniform items and descriptions that ACSOs should be issued. ACSOs posted to locations with extreme weather conditions, such as tropical/desert or extreme cold climates, will have additional uniform and equipment requirements depending on the conditions of the facility site. Items necessary only if the post assignment is outdoors and/or in an area with winter weather conditions are marked with an asterisk (*).

Table 3: ACSO Issued Uniform Items

Item	Description	Qty
Cap	1 each, winter/summer	2
Shirt, Long Sleeve	Insignia (as appropriate)	5
Shirt, Short Sleeve	Insignia (as appropriate)	5
*Jacket (Winter)	Patrol type, heavy jacket	1
Jacket (Summer)	Light jacket	1
*Rain Gear	Slicker with hood or other head cover, pair of rubber boots or shoe covers	1
Reflective Vest	No description needed	1
Nametag	No description needed	2
Duty Belt "Keepers"	No description needed	4
Key Strap with Flap	No description needed	1
Handcuff Case	No description needed	1
Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Case	Slide on belt type	1
Disposable Glove Pouch	Slide on belt type, holds set of single-use disposable gloves	1
Disposable Gloves	Pair	1
Gloves	Winter, pair	1
Double Magazine Case or Speed Loader Case	Case compatible with specified weapon	1
Pistol Belt	Shall include inner trouser belt and without shoulder strap	1
Level II Firearm Retention Holster	Slide on belt type with hammer safety strap (left/right hand as required)	1
Trouser or Battle Dress Uniform Pants	All-season weight	5
Boots/Shoes	Pair – boots or dress shoes	1

5.2.3 ACSO Issued Equipment

To support ACSO duties and responsibilities in a safe and professional manner, officers should have basic issued equipment items, including communication devices, such as a two-way radio with a dedicated channel, to converse with fellow officers. For regular duty, ACSOs should also wear body armor that conforms to the minimum standards identified by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Level IIA. All equipment shall be kept clean and maintained in workable condition while worn or carried on duty.

Table 4: ACSO Issued Equipment Items

Item	Description	Qty
Body Armor	NIJ Level IIA with carrier (minimum level)	1
Police Baton with Holder	Expandable	1
Firearm (ACSOs should qualify with firearm assigned)	Assigned to ACSO by serial number	1
Flashlight	No description needed	1
Handcuffs and Keys	NIJ 0307.01 Guideline	1
Magazines (3) or Speed Loaders (2)	Compatible with issued weapon and ammunition	3 or 2
N95 Disposable Particulate Respirator	OSHA-approved, non-oil resistant, 95 percent particulate blocking	1
OC or Combination OC-CS (orthochlorobenzaimalononitrile) Canister	2.0-ounce non-flammable flip-top safety canister with fog/cone, stream, or foam spray pattern	1
Communication Device	Radio, landline telephone, or cellular telephone	1
Whistle	No description needed	1

5.3 Training

Training and education are critical components of developing a well-qualified ACSO. Ensuring that ACSOs have mandatory basic and follow-on training and education enhances job performance and has a direct impact on life, safety, and all other aspects of the homeland security mission.

This document presents a baseline for ACSO training. Agencies are responsible for contractor hiring practices and shall have a system to validate ACSOs meet qualification and training requirements of the contract. Addressing the identified gap in training is the responsibility of the ACSO's contract company.

The ISC working group paired each critical task with an appropriate subject matter area. Related subject matter and tasks were combined to create eight major training subject areas with the associated minimum required training hours. Each major training subject area identifies the

related specific training course subject matter areas. Unless otherwise noted, refresher training activities should be required at the discretion of individual agencies; however, the contracting company has the responsibility for conducting the refresher training.

The following table lists the appropriate subject matter areas with corresponding best practices to meet critical tasks recommended by the ISC working group. While many of the training best practices do not go into every detail to support a full training gap analysis of each critical task (or subject area), the table does give agencies valuable information to build upon.

Table 5: Standards to Meet Critical Tasks – Initial Training

Subject Areas	Criteria to Meet Critical Tasks
General Job-Related Training	<p>Should require a minimum eight (8) hours of training in the following subjects, with 20 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the administration and/or agency policy; • Overview of the Roles and Responsibilities of an ACSO; • Ethics and Professionalism; • Company/agency administrations; and • Post duties.
Human Interaction and Customer Service	<p>Should require a minimum of 16 hours of training in the following subjects, with 50 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of Communications; • Professional Public Relations; and • Understanding Human Behavior (psychology). <p>Seasoned ACSOs are first-line representatives of the agency being protected. ACSOs spend most of their duty day interacting with the public.</p> <p>Human interaction and customer service skills are essential to effective job performance in providing security. ACSOs with these skills help gain public trust, support, and compliance. Strong conflict management skills can often deescalate or completely stop a negative situation from occurring. These skills are also valuable in notifying other safety/security team members about a potential problem.</p>

Subject Areas	Criteria to Meet Critical Tasks
Weapons and Defensive Tactics	<p>Should require a minimum of 64 hours of training in the following subjects, with 80 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensive Tactics; • Use of Handcuffs; • Use of Non-Lethal Weapons; • Use of Firearms; and • Use of Force. <p>ACSOs must comply with all appropriate federal, state, and local weapons regulations, as well as successfully complete the firearms range qualifications requirements of a state or local firearms permit/license issuance process. This is not an acceptable replacement or substitution for the requirement of firearms qualification every six (6) months.</p>
Inspections	<p>Should require a minimum of 24 hours of training in the following subjects, with 50 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screener Training; and • Examining of Identification and Credentials.
Law Enforcement Support	<p>Should require a minimum of 16 hours of training in the following subjects, with 20 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Law, Legal Authorities, Jurisdiction, and Responsibilities; • Crimes and Offenses; • Search and Seizure; • Authority to Detain; • Crime Scene Protection; • Rules of Evidence; and • Crime Detection, Assessment, and Response.
Patrol	<p>Should require a minimum of two (2) hours of training in the following subjects, with 20 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of Patrol Methods and Patrol Hazards.
Communications	<p>Should require a minimum of eight (8) hours of training in the following subjects, with 50 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records, Reports, and Forms; and • Communications Equipment.

Subject Areas	Criteria to Meet Critical Tasks
Emergency Response	<p>Should require a minimum of 24 hours of training in the following subjects, with 50 percent practical application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Shooter; • General Response Procedures; • Safety and Fire Prevention; • Special Situations; • Code Adam; • Terrorism, Antiterrorism, and Weapons of Mass Destruction; • Bomb Threats and Incidents; • Hostage Situations; • Civil Disturbance; • Workplace Violence; • Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), and First Aid; • Emergency Communications; and • Agency-Specific Training.

5.4 Providing ACSO Training

The department or agency shall explicitly state in the contract provisions of the statement of work the ACSO training requirements needed for the contracting company to pursue/bid on the ACSO contract. The contract should specify how the contract company will provide, and, in turn, how the agency will validate completion of required training of the ACSOs. The agency should also specify critical tasks and methodology to measure and validate training results and outcomes.

Where the requirements are identified and must be met in accordance with state guidelines (to the extent those state guidelines are not preempted by or in conflict with federal law or guidelines), agencies and contract guard companies shall comply. Regarding the actual training, the contractor is responsible for scheduling, coordinating, and conducting all training not provided by the government in accordance with the contract. Contract guard companies should use only qualified instructors to accomplish the required training. Instructors should have attended credible courses giving them the applicable certifications. These certifications shall meet any state and/or agency requirements. Contract guard companies should maintain a copy of any instructor’s certifications on file.

ACSOs are only authorized to be armed with firearms, ammunition, and non-lethal weapons as specified in the contract. Prior to carrying a firearm, ACSOs are required to attend a basic

firearms course and pass a firearms qualification course. Subsequent re-qualifications shall be required to maintain eligibility to stand post.¹

As case law influences the evolution of training requirements for law enforcement professionals, ACSO training should maintain the highest focus on public safety. The training should emphasize safety for all, the chain of command, and good judgment. To sustain training proficiency, ACSOs should qualify every six months with firearms and receive annual refresher training on firearms, non-lethal weapons, defensive tactics, screening, handcuffing, and use of force. Other retraining activities shall be at the discretion of the agency based upon location and/or facility-specific needs. All training, whether required or as a refresher, should be performed by a certified trainer and training organization for:

- Defensive tactics;
- Empty hand control techniques;
- Firearms (initial and requalification training);
- Handcuffing techniques;
- Non-lethal weapons/compliance; and
- Use of force.

Table 6: Training Providers Roles and Responsibilities

Provider	Role/Responsibility
Federal Government	Verifies ACSOs received all training prior to standing post. Provides updates for existing ACSOs as identified and in the contract. These updates can be via webmail, meetings, computer-based training, or other means.
Contractor	Provides quality training, whether outsourced or conducted by the contracting company. Contractors should have appropriate testing and quality control measures to ensure quality is maintained in the training environment and best practices are met.
Site Specific	The government shall determine site-specific training necessary for any newly hired ACSOs before their first assignment and direct the contracting company to provide that training. The government should consider ACSOs newly assigned to a post to be familiar with post orders prior to standing that post. This practice not only provides continuity of thought, directions, and intentions, but also creates improved efficiency and communications from the top down and the bottom up.

¹ Federal Protective Service – PSO Smart Book.

5.5 Use of Force

ACSOs, by virtue of their position and duties, may employ “Use of Force” in accordance with federal, state, and local laws. ACSOs may or may not have arrest authority based on their contract and/or assignment.

- **Deadly Force:** Any use of force that is reasonably likely to cause death or serious bodily injury.
- **Non-Deadly Force:** Any use of force other than which is considered deadly force. It includes any physical effort used to control or restrain another, or to overcome the resistance of another.

ACSOs may use force to repel an attack on their life and/or the safety and lives of another person(s). The limits on the use of force in such instances are measured by reasonableness; in other words, the degree of force which may be used in defense must be reasonable and necessary to repel the attack. Deadly force may be used only when the attack poses risk of death or serious bodily injury.

Government agencies will ensure the following requirements are met for all ACSOs:

- Proper training of the “Use of Force” and “Types of Force”;
- Proper training of the escalation of force;
- Proper training on the type(s) of equipment ACSOs will be using;
- Written guidance on “Use of Force” policy at all posts; and
- Retraining on the “Use of Force” as stipulated by the agency or contract.

6.0 Definitions

Access Control: The use of physical and procedural controls to ensure only authorized individuals or items are granted entry to a facility or secure area.

Alarm: An audible or visual signal that functions as an alerting mechanism.

Armed Contract Security Officer (ACSO): A member of a facility security force, including immediate armed supervisors, who is issued a firearm and has the training, equipment, and appropriate certifications to perform security functions. For this document, ACSOs are contract personnel.

Authorized Identification: A document or documents in accordance with the REAL ID Act of 2005.

Countermeasure: A security device, procedure, or person designed, implemented, or trained to mitigate the risk of identified credible threats at a facility.

Facility Security Committee (FSC): A committee responsible for addressing facility-specific security issues and approving the implementation of security measures and practices. The Facility Security Committee (FSC) consists of representatives of all federal tenants in the facility, the security organization, and the owning or leasing department or agency. In the case of new construction or pending lease actions, the FSC will also include the project team and the planned tenant(s). The FSC was formerly known as the Building Security Committee (BSC).

Incident: Any event affecting the safety, security, or protection of property, a facility, or occupant that requires a response, investigation, or other follow up.

Law Enforcement Officer (LEO): Any officer, agent, or employee of the United States, a state, or political subdivision thereof, that in the lawful performance of official duties is authorized by law to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of law.

Occupant: Any person who is permanently or regularly assigned to the government facility and displays the required identification badge or pass for access. The FSC establishes the thresholds for determining who qualifies for “occupant” status.

Offense: A violation of federal, state, or local criminal law, regulation, or ordinance for which a violator could be subject to prosecution.

Post Orders: Operational instructions for a security post that establish functions and the supporting tasks performed at that duty location.

Prohibited Item: An item, legal or illegal in nature, where possession is restricted from entry into a facility by federal, state, or local law, regulation, court order, rule, or FSC policy.

Screener: An individual performing a security screening function at a security post.

Screening Event: The presentation, review, decision, and disposition related to an object introduced into a facility, whether in plain view, concealed on a person, or in a container.

Security Post: A countermeasure consisting of one ACSO, the purpose of which is to perform a specific security function as defined in post orders.

Security Screening: An electronic, visual, or manual inspection of persons, vehicles, packages, and containers for the purpose of detecting the possession or attempted introduction of illegal, prohibited, or other dangerous items into a federal facility or secure area within a federal facility.

Security Station: A space consisting of an arrangement of multiple security posts and equipment to provide an integrated security process at a specific location.

Weapon: An object (such as a club, knife, or gun) used to injure, defeat, or destroy.

7.0 Abbreviations / Acronyms / Initialization List

ACSO	Armed Contract Security Officer
AED	Automatic External Defibrillator
BSC	Building Security Committee
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DOJ	Department of Justice
EO	Executive Order
FPS	Federal Protective Service
FSC	Facility Security Committee
GSA	General Services Administration
ISC	Interagency Security Committee
JTA	Joint Task Analysis
LEO	Law Enforcement Officer
NIJ	National Institute of Justice
OC	Oleoresin Capsicum
OC-CS	Orthochlorobenzaimalononitrile
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PDT	Position Designation Automated Tool
U.S.	United States

8.0 Working Group Participants

8.1 Contributors to the 2013 Edition

Contributors to *Best Practices for Armed Security Officers in Federal Facilities* (ISC, 2013):

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8.2 Contributors to the 2019 Edition

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Appendix A: ACSO Functions and Tasks

ACSO Specific Tasks as shown per Core Area (6 Functions/84 Specified Tasks).² All ACSOs should be able to perform these 84 specified tasks.

1.0 Access Control

- 1.01 Stand post at the entry/exit points to verify all persons' identification and to conduct inquiries and surveillance of suspicious items, packages, and people.
- 1.02 Ensure individuals do not depart with government material unless they are authorized to do so.
- 1.03 Verbally challenge individuals who are approaching restricted areas.
- 1.04 Direct individuals who cause a disturbance to leave the property.
- 1.05 Operate traffic control points.
- 1.06 Close off areas to traffic, establish perimeters, and set up barricades to secure incident scenes or facilities.
- 1.07 Control access to incident scenes.
- 1.08 Help ensure integrity of a crime scene, maintaining it in its original condition until law enforcement personnel take over.
- 1.09 Coordinate the receipt, issuance, and tracking of all keys, key cards, lock combinations, vehicle passes/decals, etc.
- 1.10 Identify suspicious persons or vehicles.

2.0 Screening

- 2.01 Inspect packages, briefcases, containers, or any other items in the possession of people entering or leaving a federally controlled facility.
- 2.02 Operate metal detectors to inspect visitors for prohibited items.
- 2.03 Operate X-ray machine to inspect deliveries and visitors' packages, equipment, and hand-carried articles for prohibited items.

² Test Administrator's Manual, Physical Abilities Testing, Federal Protective Service, Protective Security Officer Final Task List, Appendix B, December 2009.

2.04 Conduct vehicle inspection that may include inspecting under seats, in the trunk, and under the vehicle.

2.05 Conduct frisks or pat-downs for weapons or other unauthorized items.

3.0 Visitor Processing

3.01 Verify proper identification of visitors required for issuance of visitor badges.

3.02 Process visitors.

4.0 Patrol and Response

4.01 Inspect appropriate countermeasures, including facility-critical protection points and classified containers.

4.02 Inspect facilities for hazards, mechanical problems, and unsafe conditions and report problems to appropriate authorities.

4.03 Close and secure open windows, doors, gates, or other access points.

4.04 Manually open and close heavy gates and doors.

4.05 Conduct patrols in accordance with routes and schedules contained in post orders.

4.06 Inform dispatcher of present status and changes in conditions.

4.07 Patrol locations in areas which are potentially hazardous to the public (e.g., construction sites).

4.08 Inspect the perimeter, property, and buildings for hazards, intruders, and suspicious activities.

4.09 Observe the environment for suspicious vehicles or persons on or around federal property.

4.10 Review maps, floor plans, diagrams, or other information to become familiar with facility and property boundaries.

4.11 Evacuate individuals from dangerous and/or life-threatening situations.

4.12 Guide and assist first responders (e.g., with scene management or security).

4.13 Assess the condition of injured individuals.

4.14 Perform basic first aid in response to emergencies.

- 4.15 Administer CPR.
- 4.16 Administer/deploy AED.
- 4.17 Use a fire extinguisher to put out a minor fire.
- 4.18 Request emergency assistance in response to traffic accidents.
- 4.19 Assist in conducting accident/incident scene searches/investigations (e.g., check visitor logs, video) in search of relevant evidence and information to determine the facts of the situation.
- 4.20 Follow directions and respond to emergency and routine calls for service until the situation is resolved or until relieved by a higher authority.
- 4.21 Investigate the source of suspicious odors and sounds.
- 4.22 Pursue fleeing individual(s).
- 4.23 Escort money, valuables, or people to provide security.
- 4.24 Escort facility tenants and visitors to and/or from their vehicles after hours.

5.0 Control Center Operations

- 5.01 Check radio equipment for proper operation.
- 5.02 Monitor security and fire alarms and video surveillance systems to detect security risks, threats, or prohibited items carried by visitors.
- 5.03 Dispatch ACSOs in response to calls for service, alarms, or emergencies.

6.0 Common Tasks

- 6.01 Report potentially threatening situations and violations of law, security policy, and procedures.
- 6.02 Observe unique characteristics of an individual for identification purposes.
- 6.03 Collect information about stolen or missing property or suspicious activities to aid investigations.
- 6.04 Write detailed field notes so reports can be completed.
- 6.05 Write and/or provide oral situation reports regarding security-related information (e.g., accidents, bomb threats, unlawful acts, characteristics of individuals).

- 6.06 Communicate with individuals to establish rapport.
- 6.07 Adjust communication to ensure understanding.
- 6.08 Provide direction or information to tenants or visitors.
- 6.09 Advise persons relative to problems, situations, etc.
- 6.10 Encourage people to approach by using effective non-verbal communication (e.g., making eye contact, smiling, greeting a person cordially, and nodding).
- 6.11 Communicate with rude or abusive people.
- 6.12 Use body language to project control and influence.
- 6.13 Use voice commands to project control and direct actions.
- 6.14 Explain rules, regulations, and procedures to individuals.
- 6.15 Interact with a subject who does not speak English.
- 6.16 Interact with a subject who is deaf or has a communication issue.
- 6.17 Interact with a subject who is blind or has a mobility issue.
- 6.18 Interact with the public, including children or people with medical issues.
- 6.19 Interview witnesses to obtain description of possible suspects or description of what happened.
- 6.20 Advise appropriate personnel of potentially hazardous conditions (e.g., slippery floors).
- 6.21 Communicate with first responders.
- 6.22 Testify in court regarding criminal activity or other incidents.
- 6.23 Report misconduct of other ACSOs.
- 6.24 Ensure all security equipment is activated and operating properly; if not, report to proper authority.
- 6.25 Inventory physical objects (e.g., keys, keycards, vehicles, visitor badges) and log accordingly.
- 6.26 Locate and review documents and information (e.g., logs, lists).
- 6.27 Read memos and other written material to acquire and maintain knowledge.

- 6.28 Participate in search for missing child.
- 6.29 Activate alarm systems.
- 6.30 Provide backup assistance to LEOs and other ACSOs.
- 6.31 Maintain situational awareness regarding individuals' body language, projected attitudes, and intentions.
- 6.32 Care for and maintain firearms.
- 6.33 Participate in firearms training.
- 6.34 Participate in training in the use of non-lethal weapons to be used in emergency situations.
- 6.35 Use non-lethal weapon to temporarily incapacitate a violent individual.
- 6.36 Operate firearm to protect self and others.
- 6.37 Maintain positive control and retention of firearms and non-lethal weapons at all times.
- 6.38 Use defensive tactics to prevent or control movements of individuals.
- 6.39 Defend against violent combative person(s) to prevent injury to self or others.
- 6.40 Physically control individuals displaying disruptive or violent behavior, including applying handcuffs.

Appendix B: Minimum Medical and Physical Norms for an ACSO

B.1 Vision

- 20/30 vision while using both eyes (may use corrective lenses or surgical correction);
- Capable, in at least one eye, of reading a minimum of Jaegar Number 2 or equivalent type and size letter at a distance of no less than 12 inches on a standard Jaegar chart;
- Normal color vision; and
- No peripheral vision deficits, night blindness, or visual conditions that may prevent successful task performance.

B.2 Hearing

- Average hearing across 500, 1000, 2000, and 3000 Hertz (Hz) is less than or equal to 25 decibels (db) (may use a hearing aid);
- Hearing at 4000 and 5000 Hz levels is less than or equal to 45db; and
- No inner, middle, or outer ear disorders affecting equilibrium.

B.3 Cardiovascular System

- Possesses adequate aerobic capacity: Minimum 9 METs or 31.5milliliter/kilogram/minutes VO2 Max during standardized aerobic capacity test (step box, treadmill, or stepmill for 6 minutes); and
- Resting blood pressure: Maximum: 180 systolic, 90 diastolic (read 120 over 80 millimeters of mercury).

B.4 Musculoskeletal System

- Exhibits full range of motion;
- Able to easily get down to and up from a kneeling position;
- Able to lift 40 pounds minimum from floor to waist;
- Able to bench press at least 40 percent of his or her body weight; and
- Able to perform sit-ups and push-ups continuously for at least 30 seconds.

B.5 General Health

- No loss of sense of smell, aphonia, or other abnormalities of nose, throat, or ears that may prevent successful task performance;

- No evidence of chronic bronchitis, emphysema (moderate or severe), infectious pulmonary tuberculosis, or other respiratory abnormalities that may prevent successful task performance;
- No evidence of eczema, psoriasis, dermatitis, or other dermatological condition that may prevent successful task performance;
- No evidence of a gastrointestinal issue that may prevent successful task performance or prevent the candidate from being able to stand or walk continuously for eight hours without regular access to a restroom; and
- No unauthorized drug use.

Individuals will have no established medical history or medical diagnosis of epilepsy or diabetes, or where such a condition exists, the individual will provide medical evidence that the condition can be controlled with proper medication and the individual will not have a seizure, or lapse into a coma or unconscious state while performing assigned duties. Any other disease or condition which may interfere with the full performance of duties is also grounds for rejection. A physician's certification for employment should be obtained prior to the return of duty for any incapacitating injury or when a disease or condition may interfere with the full performance of duties.

B.6 Mental Health

As a medical concern, the mental health status/posture of an ACSO is important. Mental health requirements for ACSOs vary in accordance with state mandates/guidelines. Some states do not have any requirements. Also, in some instances federal agencies (for example, FPS, Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)) all have specific requirements which must be met.

To ensure all applicable requirements are met, agencies will ensure the proper verbiage is incorporated into all ACSO statements of work. The verbiage will specifically outline the requirements, whether state, agency, or both. The verbiage will also outline the respective responsibilities of the agency (if applicable), as well as the ACSO company.

Appendix C: Factors to Consider in Estimating ACSO Staffing

This guideline provides factors to estimate the number of ACSOs needed to perform specific security functions for a given facility. It consists of a series of talking points that will or must be discussed with the facility tenants. This guideline was developed based on the results of an extensive job analysis and the ISC working group’s identification of the 84 critical tasks all ACSOs are expected to perform regardless of facility.

The major task analysis findings influencing the design of this guideline are summarized below by type of post.

The primary posts affecting ACSO staffing levels are screening, visitor processing, and access control posts. Patrol and response posts and control center operations also affect staffing levels but are directly related to facility size and can largely be accounted for by the results of the facility security assessment.

C.1 Findings Related to Screening Posts

- Tenant tolerance for wait time is the primary factor in determining the need for additional staffing at all security stations. Tenants who desire to limit the amount of time people must wait to be processed should consider adding additional ACSOs beyond those estimated by this tool.
- When additional staffing is required for personnel and package security stations, the most common approach is to add additional screening posts. In most cases, a security station consists of three screening posts that should be performed independently—metal detector, X-ray, and wand—therefore requiring three ACSOs per security station. Additional duties at entrances (e.g., visitor processing) can be performed across multiple security stations but should not typically be performed by ACSOs in one of the screening posts.
- Completing the basic personnel and package screening processes (e.g., the individual successfully passes metal detector examination and their belongings successfully pass X-ray examination) typically requires 45 to 60 seconds per person.
- Wandering/secondary screening of individuals adds an additional 90 seconds per person on average.
- In most cases, 40 persons per hour can be expected to pass through a security station without a line of people forming. This estimate includes time for up to 25 percent of persons to require secondary screening (wandering).
- Vehicle security stations typically require two ACSOs: one in the vehicle screening post and one in the vehicle access control post. In locations with a small amount of vehicular traffic (e.g., fewer than 10 per hour), it may be possible for one ACSO to perform both functions.

C.2 Findings Related to Visitor Processing Posts

- Time spent on visitor processing (e.g., sign-in, issuing a visitor badge, and monitoring until an escort arrives) varies significantly by facility due to differences in equipment, procedures, and policies and is not accounted for in this tool. At facilities where the tenants require visitors to be escorted by ACSOs instead of the visitors' points of contact, the tenants should consider adding additional patrol and response posts at the entrance beyond those estimated by this tool.
- In locations that do not screen employees and with a small number of visitors (e.g., fewer than 10 per hour), it may be possible to reduce the number of ACSOs at an entrance by having all or some of the functions (e.g., metal detector, X-raying, wand, visitor processing) performed by one or two ACSOs, as long as the ACSO(s) can maintain control of the security station.

C.3 Findings Related to Access Control Posts

- At facilities that do not require employees to be screened, employee entrances typically require two ACSOs—one to check credentials and one to provide over-watch situational awareness. It may be possible for one ACSO to perform both functions if only a small number of employees (e.g., fewer than 20 per hour) enter the facility.
- At facilities requiring employees to be screened, the tenant may require three or more additional ACSOs to be posted at security stations, consistent with the guidance outlined in section 3.1, "Findings Related to Screening Posts."

C.4 Findings Related to Patrol and Response Posts

- For entrances with more than one screening post, a patrol and response post should be added to serve as an over-watch situational awareness position.
- A patrol and response post can be expected to patrol at a speed of 1.5 miles per hour (about 130 feet per minute).
- This estimate includes time for the ACSO assigned to the patrol and response post to stop at any predetermined spots and interact with visitors and tenants.

C.5 Findings Related to Control Center Operations

- One ACSO can be expected to effectively observe up to five monitor screens simultaneously.
- Each control center should have a minimum of two ACSOs to allow for control center operations and continued communications with ACSOs outside the control center, as well as incoming communications from other parties.
- In locations with a small number of visitors (e.g., facilities not normally open to the public), it may be possible to have a single ACSO simultaneously perform control center operations, access control, and visitor processing functions.

Appendix D: Emergency Procedures

Procedures for the officer at a post to follow in the event of an emergency, which may be different from procedures in the Occupant Emergency Plan for the tenant population, may include:

- Active shooter;
- Civil disturbances;
- Elevator malfunction;
- Explosion or fire;
- Hazardous materials/CBRN events;
- Medical emergencies;
- Code Adam;
- Natural hazards or events;
- Power, water, and/or natural gas disturbance;
- Suspicious object;
- Bomb threats;
- Workplace violence, domestic violence, or the commission of violent crimes at a place of work;
- Suspicious or unlawful activity;
- Building evacuation; and
- Shelter-in-place.³

D.1 Active Shooter

Federal Executive Branch Agencies and Departments should have a policy/contract for their ACSOs covering the duties and responsibilities before, during, and after an active shooter incident based on *Planning and Response to an Active Shooter: An Interagency Security Committee Policy and Best Practices Guide (FOUO)*,⁴ July 2015, Section 6.3 Training for Contracted Officers, which can be found on the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN).

D.2 Code Adam

Code Adam, one the country's largest child-safety programs, was created and named in the memory of six-year-old Adam Walsh, whose abduction from a Florida shopping mall and subsequent murder in 1981 brought the horror of child abduction to national attention. The Code Adam Act of 2003 requires the designated authority for each federal building open to the public to establish procedures for a missing child.

³ Federal Protective Service – PSO Smart Book.

⁴ *Planning and Response to an Active Shooter: An ISC Policy and Best Practices Guide (FOUO)*, 2015.

The security authority for each facility will ensure the procedures are incorporated into all ACSO Post Orders. Once an ACSO receives the report of a missing child, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Obtain a detailed description of the child and activate a “Code Adam” alert;
2. Escort the parent, teacher, or guardian to the door to help identify the child;
3. Monitor building exits;
4. Require all persons with children to exit through a designated entrance;
5. Search the building and contact local law enforcement if the child isn’t found;
6. Call 911 to notify the national Center for Missing and Exploited Children; and
7. Prepare a report of the incident.

D.3 Acts of Nature

This manual cannot address every potential situation that could occur. Some natural occurrences are more prevalent during certain seasons. In any event, natural occurrences may cause serious disruption to normal operations and present problems for security and/or overall safety.

If an ACSO is on duty when one of these occurrences happens, they may be required to remain posted until the event is over. In such an event, the ACSO’s primary responsibility remains the overall protection and security for personnel, property, and the facility, although they may be forced to detour from normal operating procedures.

It is quite possible the ACSO may have to act independently until assistance arrives. It is at these times when the ACSO should rely on their training and judgment to perform the necessary duties.⁵

⁵ Federal Protective Service – PSO Smart Book.

Appendix E: Jurisdiction

Legislative jurisdiction refers to the physical or geographical area where law enforcement power can be exercised. While you may not need to know the legislative jurisdiction of your facility, this knowledge is helpful if state or local law enforcement need to enter your facility to conduct their duties. Most federal criminal laws are contained in the United States Code, particularly Title 18 – Crimes and Criminal Procedure. Title 18 describes each federal crime and contains provisions for punishment, such as fines, jail time, or both. There are three legislative jurisdictions: Exclusive Jurisdiction, Concurrent Jurisdiction, and Proprietary Jurisdiction.

E.1 Exclusive Jurisdiction

Exclusive Jurisdiction covers areas where the federal government owns the property and has acquired all the law enforcement authority, and the state/locality where the area is located has not reserved the authority to act at the same time. Exclusive jurisdiction is rare for federally controlled facilities.

However, if a facility is covered by exclusive jurisdiction, the state or municipality law enforcement officers still have the right to serve criminal or civil warrants for offenses that took place outside the federal area. They can also give “hot pursuit” onto the property. An example of hot pursuit is when local law enforcement is pursuing a suspect in a reported stolen vehicle. If the driver of the vehicle enters property with exclusive federal jurisdiction, the local law enforcement can continue the pursuit and stop or arrest the suspect even on property covered by exclusive jurisdiction, because the crime occurred outside the property.

E.2 Concurrent Jurisdiction

Applies to areas where the federal government owns the property but where both the federal government and the state/locality have agreed to exercise their respective law enforcement authority. In concurrent jurisdiction areas, both federal law enforcement personnel and state and local law enforcement officers may exercise all the law enforcement authority granted to them.

E.3 Proprietary Jurisdiction

Applies to areas where the federal government has acquired some right or title to property (such as a lease), but the state, county, or local jurisdiction has retained law enforcement authority. Many federally leased facilities are covered by proprietary jurisdiction, and the state/local law enforcement are primarily responsible for exercising law enforcement authority. Federal law enforcement officers only have authority to enforce federal crimes of generality and federal regulations on property covered by proprietary jurisdiction unless a state, county, or local jurisdiction has granted federal law enforcement officers authority to enforce state, county, or local law. These grants of authority vary from state to state.

In all three legislative jurisdictions, state, county, and local law enforcement officers may enter federal property with their weapons only in the course of official law enforcement business. In nearly every situation where a state, county, or local law enforcement officer enters property covered by exclusive jurisdiction, a federal law enforcement officer will accompany them.⁶

⁶ Federal Protective Service – PSO Smart Book.