



## SO CAREER PATH



Special Warfare Operators (SO). SOs are responsible for training and preparation for execution of special operations in maritime, urban, desert, jungle, arctic and mountain environments. SOs are experts in special operations tactics and technical knowledge; mission planning; cultural awareness; small-unit leadership; operational risk management; tactical, operational and strategic thinking; tactical communications; tactical air control/terminal guidance; combat diving; para-drop operations; small boat operations; tactical ground mobility; small arms and crew-served weapons; fast roping and rappelling; demolitions/explosive breaching; trauma care; intelligence gathering and interpretation; transportation and logistics; and chemical/biological/radiological/nuclear defense measures. The SO rating is Sea-duty intensive.

YEARS OF SERVICE	CAREER MILESTONES	AVERAGE TIME TO PROMOTE	COMMISSIONING OR SPECIAL PROGRAMS	SEA SHORE FLOW	TYPICAL CAREER PATH DEVELOPMENT
25-30	FORCM CMDCM	26 Yrs 22	CMC	48	6 <sup>th</sup> Operational or Non Operational Tour Billet: FORCM, CMDCM, SEA. Duty: Team, Squadron, SRT, CNSWC, NSWEN, TRADET, NSW Group, NSW Unit/Det, or TSOC
21-25	CMDCM SOCM	22 Yrs 20.1	CWO, CMC	48	5 <sup>th</sup> Operational or Non Operational Tour Billet: SEA, CMDCM, Staff Dept/DIV SEL. Duty: Team, Squadron, SRT, CNSWC, NSWEN, TRADET, NSW Group, NSW Unit, or TSOC
17-21	SOCM SOCS SOC	20.1 Yrs 16.5 11.9	CWO, CMC	36	4 <sup>th</sup> Operational Tour Billet: PLT LCPO, TRP LCPO, OPS LCPO, TM LCPO Duty: Team, Squadron, SRT, or TSOC. Qualification: <b>E8 to E9</b> should have a minimum of 3 core and 3 advance qualifications (para 5a)
14-17	SOCS SOC	16.5 Yrs 11.9	CWO, OCS	60	3 <sup>rd</sup> Operational Tour Billet: PLT LCPO, TM LCPO, TRP LCPO Duty: Team, Squadron, or SRT Qualification: <b>E7 to E8</b> should have a minimum of 3 core and 2 advanced qualifications (para 5a)
10-14	SOCS SOC SO1	16.5 Yrs 11.9 6.1	CWO, OCS	36	1 <sup>st</sup> Non Operational Tour Billet: Instructor, Div or Phase LPO/LCPO, TRNG LPO/LCPO, Staff LPO/LCPO. Duty: NSWEN, TRADET, NSW Group, or NSW Unit/Det. Qualification: <b>E7 to E8</b> should have a minimum of 3 core and 2 advance qualifications (para 5a)



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YEARS OF SERVICE	CAREER MILESTONES	AVERAGE TIME TO PROMOTE	COMMISSIONING OR SPECIAL PROGRAMS	SEA SHORE FLOW	TYPICAL CAREER PATH DEVELOPMENT
2-10	SOC SO1 SO2 SO3	11.9 Yrs 6.1 3.2 2	STA-21, OCS	60	1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> Operational Tour Billet: Operator, ASST LPO, PLT LPO, PLT LCPO Duty: Team, Squadron, or SRT Qualification: <b>E6 to E7</b> should have a minimum of 2 core and 2 advance qualifications (para 5a)
1-2	Accession training, SEAL pipeline training. SEAL NEC 5326 awarded upon completion of SQT.	Advancement to SO3 upon completion of BUD/S.	Special Operations Combat Medic - SNEC 5392 SOT-M SEAL Delivery Vehicle (SDV) Pilot/Navigator - SNEC 5323.		Recruit Training. Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training. Military Static Line/Free-Fall parachute training. SEAL Qualification Training (SQT)

Notes:

- Blk 29 (OP LPO/SQD LPO) – Squad LPO and Operational LPO are legacy leadership positions used between 16 NOV 2014 to 15 NOV 2017 and are considered MILESTONE COMPLETE to determine “BEST QUALIFIED” per para 2 below.
- A Performance Information Memorandum (PIM) or Memorandum for Record (MFR) on command letterhead, signed by the CO, validates LPO/LCPO milestone completion during a time frame that is not annotated in a regular report. Selection Board eligible members can include a copy of the PIM/MFR in their Letter to the Board package.

1. Operator development notes:

- Assistant LPOs (ASST LPO) positions are considered a developmental leadership opportunity in order to prepare our future enlisted leaders for one of the LPO Milestone positions (para 6a).
- Member **SHOULD** have completed two deployments as an Operator prior to an ASST LPO tour.
- The only authorized ASST LPO positions are those aligned to LPO positions in (para 6a)
- A typical model for an enlisted SO is to serve two tours as an Operator, followed by a third tour as ASST LPO, then a fourth tour, if ready, in one of the LPO milestone positions (para 6a).
- In addition to the above career path, our warfighters **MUST** embody the character traits outlined in our SEAL Ethos.

2. Considerations for determining “best qualified” for advancement from E6 to E7

- **SHOULD** have successfully served at least **16 months** in a LPO milestone leadership position (para 6a), but **MUST** have at least **12 months**. Members serving in a TAC D&E SQDN milestone position (para 6a) **SHOULD** have successfully served **12 months**. The time between the evaluation end date and the date of the promotion board should be added to the calculation for time successfully served in the milestone position.



- **SHOULD** complete a diversity tour to one of the following commands: any NSW Group, NSW Unit/Det, TSOC, CNSWC, Special Reconnaissance Team (SRT), Special Boat Team (SBT), any Training Command or Development Group.
- **SHOULD** have a minimum of 2 core and 2 advance qualifications (para 5a). Member should have Letters of Designation where appropriate.
- **SHOULD** complete a minimum of three operational deployments. Deployment lengths must be at least four months to qualify. SEAL Delivery Vehicle (SDV) deployment counter, commences once in standby phase, due to deploy for purpose vice steady rotations.
- **SHOULD** complete the NSW LPO Course or Development Group LPO Course, and **SHOULD** complete the Career Education Program (CEP 1) Joint Fundamentals.

3. **Considerations for determining “best qualified” for advancement from E7 to E8**

- **SHOULD** have successfully served at least **20 months** in an operational leadership milestone position as a LCPO/E7 of a SEAL PLT, Special Reconnaissance Platoon, TAC D&E SQDN Team, or SDV PLT (para 6b).
- **MUST** complete the NSW Platoon Leaders Course or Development Group Team Leader Course, and **SHOULD** complete the Career Education Program (CEP 2) Enterprise Management.
- **SHOULD** complete a diversity tour in their career to one of the following commands (Any NSW Group, NSW Unit, TSOC, CNSWC, Special Reconnaissance Team (SRT), Special Boat Team, any Training Command, Development Group, Navy Personnel Command, Bureau of Naval Personnel, or Recruit Training Command Great Lakes).
- **SHOULD** have a minimum of 3 core and 2 advance qualifications (para 5a).

4. **Considerations for determining “best qualified” for advancement from E8 to E9**

- **SHOULD** have successfully served at least **20 months** in an operational leadership milestone position as a LCPO/E8 of a SEAL Troop, Special Reconnaissance Troop, TAC D&E/SQDN Troop, or SDV Troop (para 6c).
- **SHOULD** complete the NSW Troop Leaders Course or the Development Group Troop LCPO Course and the Career Education Program (CEP 3) Joint Special Operations Forces Senior Enlisted Academy (JSOFSEA) or the Navy Senior Enlisted Academy.
- **SHOULD** have a minimum of 3 core and 3 advance qualifications (para 5a).
- *Strong consideration* **SHOULD** be given to successful *post milestone* E8s that go on to fill Joint Assignments, such as CJSOTFs, TSOCs or billets where that E8 acts as the sole SEA in a location removed from its higher headquarters.



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5. Our operators will have a diverse background and have completed the prescribed PME. Additional qualifications are listed below.

a. Qualifications:

### Core Qualifications

SLJ - Static Line Jump Master  
NDSV - NSW Diving Supervisor  
RSO:  
    SRSO - Small Arms  
    DMRG - Demolition Range  
    RRSO – Rockets  
HRST - HRST/C Master

### Advance Qualifications

MIFJ - Military Freefall Jump Master  
HRSTI - HRST/C Master Instructor  
NAOT - NSW Air Ops Trainer  
TNBM - Military Tandem/Tethered Bundle Master  
NAOTE - NSW Air Ops Trainer Examiner  
NSNP - NSW Sniper NEC O19A  
NCM - NSW Communicator  
NBRC - NSW Breacher  
JTAC - Joint Terminal Air Controller NEC 822A  
JTACI - Instructor NEC 823A  
JTACE - Evaluator NEC 836A  
SDV – SDV Operator NEC O23A  
SDSP – SDV Diving Sup  
SOCM – Special Op Combat Medic NEC O92A  
RSO:  
    DYRG - Dynamic Range  
    CQCR - Close Quarters Combat  
    IRSO - Indirect  
    DYGM - Dynamic Ground Mobility  
    EXBR - Explosive Breaching  
ROIC - Range Officer In-Charge  
TSO - Tactical Surveillance Operations  
IQC - NSW Instructor NEC 805A  
MTS - Master Training Specialists  
OOM - Outboard Overhaul Mechanic  
Language Qualification  
Lead Combat Swimmer

**\*\* RSO and ROIC will not account for more than one even though there are multiple categories \*\***



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### 6. SO Milestone Leadership Positions:

#### a. E6 Milestone Positions

##### Command

##### Block 29 Short Title

SEAL Team

PLT LPO

\*See Notes above (OP LPO / SQD LPO, 16 NOV 2014 to 15 NOV 2017)

NSWDG

S&T LPO

TACD&E SQDN (2,3,4,5)

SQDN LPO

TRP LPO

OUTSTATION LPO

- *OUTSTATION LPO not to exceed 2 per SQDN*

AIROPS DIV LPO

EXPL DIV LPO

- *(BREACHING Div LPO (LEGACY))*

SDV Team

PLT LPO

SRT Team

PLT LPO

TRNG LPO

ATC

SNIPER DIV LPO

ATC Det Coronado

AIROPS DIV LPO

ATC Det Ft. Story

AIROPS DIV LPO

ATC Det Ft. Story

EXPL DIV LPO

ATC Det Hawaii

SDV DIV LPO

ATC Det Stennis

SOTM DIV LPO

BTC

NSWO DIV LPO

BTC

1<sup>ST</sup> PHASE LPO

BTC

2<sup>ND</sup> PHASE LPO

BTC

3<sup>RD</sup> PHASE LPO

BTC

ASSLT DIV LPO

BTC

L/W DIV LPO

BTC

MAROPS DIV LPO

BTC Det Kodiak

DET LPO

NSWG-1 TRADET

ASSLT DIV LPO

NSWG-1 TRADET

L/W DIV LPO

NSWG-1 TRADET

MOB DIV LPO

NSWG-2 TRADET

ASSLT DIV LPO

NSWG-2 TRADET

L/W DIV LPO

NSWG-2 TRADET

MOB DIV LPO

NSWG-3 TRADET

MAR DIV LPO

NSWG-3 TRADET

LAND DIV LPO

NSWG-3 TRADET

SDV DIV LPO

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NSWU OR DET

UNIT OPS LPO

b. E7 Milestone Positions

**Command**

**Block 29 Short Title**

SEAL Team  
TACD&E SQDN  
SDV Team  
SRT (1 & 2)

PLT LCPO  
TEAM LCPO  
PLT LCPO  
PLT LCPO

c. E8 Milestone Positions

**Command**

**Block 29 Short Title**

SEAL Team  
TACD&E SQDN  
SDV Team  
SRT (1 & 2)

TRP LCPO  
TRP LCPO  
TRP LCPO  
TRP LCPO