

# Combat and Operational Stress Control (COSC)

**AIR FORCE**

COSC	Program developed to prevent, identify, and manage adverse combat and operational stress reactions (COSRs) in individuals/units; enhance mission performance; increase individual and unit resilience; conserve fighting strength; prevent or minimize adverse effects of combat stress on members' physical, psychological, behavioral, and social health; and to return the unit or service member to duty. The Air Force COSC program borrows upon the standardized DoD (Army) COSC materials.
COSRs	The physical, emotional, cognitive, or behavioral reactions, adverse consequences, or psychological injuries of service members who have been exposed to stressful or traumatic events in combat or military operations. COSRs vary in severity as a function of operational conditions, such as intensity, duration, frequency of combat exposure, rules of engagement, leadership, effective communication, unit morale, unit cohesion, and perceived importance of the mission. COSRs do not represent mental health disorders or medically diagnosable conditions and concerns. Posttraumatic stress disorder is not equivalent to or another name for COSR.
Purpose of COSC	COSC seeks to prevent and manage stress reactions through increasing psychological resilience and skill building both prior to and after exposure in a wartime environment. The Air Force's proactive strategies to respond to stress and minimize the likelihood of longstanding or debilitating stress are encompassed in both their COSC program as well as their Disaster Mental Health (DMH) response program. Individuals directly involved in combat and operational stress are provided the opportunity to access mental health services, which can include Pre-Exposure Preparation (PEP), education, screening and referrals. Thus, where PEP and DMH seek to prevent or minimize responses to stressors prior to any type of potentially traumatic exposure, COSC seeks to prevent and manage stress reactions both prior to and after combat exposure.
Goal of COSC	COSC, in concert with other prevention efforts, seeks to mitigate the risk of potential longer-term physical and psychological consequences of combat and other military operations.

## Mental health professionals assisted by:



## Relevant Policy:

- AFI 44-153, 2014: Disaster Mental Health Response & Combat and Operational Stress Control
- AFI 44-172, 2015: Mental Health

## Relevant Web Links:

- Wingman Toolkit [wingmantoolkit.org](http://wingmantoolkit.org)
- Air Force Resilience [resilience.af.mil/](http://resilience.af.mil/)

## Reaching Out:

- Make the Connection
- DSTRESS Line
- Military OneSource
- Sexual Harassment/Assault Response & Prevention
- The Real Warriors Campaign
- inTransition
- Military Crisis Line