



J Band Supervisory Federal Air Marshal Promotion Process Preparation Manual

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Transportation Security Administration

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Introduction

Purpose of this Manual

The purpose of this manual is to help you understand the J Band Supervisory Federal Air Marshal promotion process. The pages that follow will familiarize you with the components of the promotion process, including the online application, computer based testing, the accomplishment record and the structured interview. This manual will explain each step of the process and offer tips and strategies for success.

The appendices include detailed information related to the two computer-based tests. If you have not had much experience taking multiple-choice assessments, you will have an opportunity to see what these assessments look like and to practice answering questions similar to those on the assessments.

Organization of this Manual

This manual is organized into the following sections:

Section I: Online Application

- Eligibility Criteria

Section II: Accomplishment Record (AR)

Section III: Computer Based Assessments

- Logic Based Reasoning Test (LBR)
- Supervisory Situational Judgement Test (SSJT)

Section IV: Structured Interview

- How you will be evaluated
- How the evaluation benchmarks were developed

Section V: J Band Supervisory Federal Air Marshal Promotion Process

Appendices: Computer Based Assessments Information Guides & Developmental Activities

- Appendix A: Promotion Process Workflow
- Appendix B: Test Taking Tips
- Appendix C: Logic Based Reasoning Test (LBR)
- Appendix D: Supervisory Situational Judgment Test (SSJT)
- Appendix E: How to Access Developmental Activities

Section I: Online Application

Purpose of this Section

The purpose of this section is to guide you through the online application, the first step of the J Band Supervisory Federal Air Marshal (SFAM) Promotion Process.

Eligibility Requirements

To be promotion eligible, you must currently be serving as a credentialed Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service (LE/FAMS) Federal Air Marshal. In addition, applicants must possess a minimum of one year of federal primary/rigorous law enforcement experience at the SV-1801- I band or equivalent (GS-13) level.

Application Steps

There are three components of the online application process:

- ✓ Complete the online application for the J Band SFAM Rating and Ranking Process by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on the closing date of the Job Opportunity Announcement (JOA).
- ✓ Submit a current resume
- ✓ Submit a completed Accomplishment Record which will be hyperlinked in the JOA or available on the LE/FAM promotion website [here](#).

All applications will be reviewed by an HR Specialist to verify eligibility criteria and completion. Applicants who submit incomplete packages without a resume and/or Accomplishment Record will not continue in the promotion process for the JOA to which they applied.

Section II: Accomplishment Record (AR)

Purpose of this Section

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the Accomplishment Record (AR).

Application Steps and Process

Listed below are important pieces of information to know when submitting an AR:

- Applicants must submit their Accomplishment Record at the time they submit their application package on USAJobs, however, their Accomplishment Record will not be scored until later in the assessment process.
- Applicants will not be permitted to resubmit or make changes to an Accomplishment Record once submitted with their application package for a specific vacancy announcement.
- Applicants who do not submit complete packages (i.e., do not include a resume and/or Accomplishment Record) will not continue in the promotion process for the JOA to which they applied.
- Applicants who complete and pass the computer-based assessments **and** are referred on a Certificate of Eligibles will have their Accomplishment Record scored by a trained panel consisting of LE/FAMS Subject Matter Experts at the duty office to which the candidate applied.

The Accomplishment Record

The Accomplishment Record is a systematic procedure used to collect information about applicants' training, education, experience, and past achievements related to critical job competencies needed upon entry for the Supervisory Federal Air Marshal position. Applicants will be asked to submit information on personal accomplishments to best illustrate their proficiency on critical job competencies.

How you will be Evaluated

Applicants will be presented prompts targeting critical competencies and will be required to provide one-page written descriptions of what was accomplished, including detailed information about the problem or situation, the specific actions taken, and the results or outcomes achieved by those actions.

****Please note: You are required to use the provided AR template. Your AR should NOT exceed 1 page per competency. Any additional material beyond 1 page per competency will not be evaluated.***

For the AR, the following competencies will be assessed:

- Law Enforcement Proficiency
- Leadership
- Stress Tolerance
- Time Management
- Written Communication

A Selection Recommendation Panel (SRP) will convene to evaluate Accomplishment Records using standardized benchmarks that were created with the guidance of LE/FAMS Subject Matter Experts. These benchmarks provide examples of minimal, satisfactory, and exemplary demonstrations of the competencies addressed in the Accomplishment Record. Prior to scoring responses, all assessors will have received training on the use of benchmarks in the evaluation process.

How to Prepare

The key to a well-written Accomplishment Record narrative is to give evaluators specific information about your achievements. Be sure to include relevant work-related, professional, and/or volunteer experience, training, education, and/or awards that demonstrate your experience in a particular competency.

Follow the assessment instructions provided on the Accomplishment Record template and adhere to any other applicable limitations as detailed on the Accomplishment Record.

Your Accomplishment Record narrative should include no more than two examples of relevant experience per competency. Keep in mind that evaluators are looking for specific problems/situations, tasks, actions, and results. Please see the model below to assist you with developing your accomplishment record narrative:

Accomplishment Record Statement Model

Part I: General Statement/Situation.

Describe a problem, goal or situation. Talk about the individuals and groups you worked with (please do not use specific names), and/or the environment in which you worked, to tackle a particular challenge (e.g., local police, co-workers, low morale, etc).

Part II: Accomplishment Statement (comprised of 2 components below)

Action. Discuss the specific actions you took to address a challenge.

Outcome. Give specific examples of the results of your actions. These accomplishments demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of your leadership skills.

Listed below are a few tips and suggestions when writing your narratives for the accomplishment record:

- Ensure your experience matches the competency.
- Use clear and concise statements written in first person.
- Avoid using an identical example for more than one competency.
- Avoid using vague language, your statements should be specific and clear to provide a concrete understanding of your achievements.
- Avoid listing duties instead of accomplishments. Rather than just saying what your role was, focus on what you accomplished in that role.
- Avoid statements that describe your personal beliefs or philosophies; focus on specific challenges and results.
- Include special assignments (e.g., details, task forces, committees) if they are relevant to the competency.
- Include awards that relate specifically to a competency. Avoid choosing meritorious accomplishments that do not clearly reflect the intended competency.
- Adhere to the page limitations as detailed in the instructions.
- Quantify your accomplishments.
- Do not exaggerate your accomplishments.

Section III: Computer Based Assessments

Purpose of this Section

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the two computer-based assessments measured in the FAMS J Band Assessment Battery: the Logic Based Reasoning Test (LBR) and the Supervisory Situational Judgment Test (SSJT).

The Computer Based Assessment Process

- The opportunity to complete the computer-based assessments will be given with every Job Opportunity Announcement (JOA) for applicants who meet all eligibility criteria, submit a complete application package, and have not yet completed the computer-based assessments.
- Applicants who **have not yet completed** the computer-based assessments for the J Band SFAM promotion process:
 - Will be invited to complete the computer-based assessments at their local duty station field or program office.
 - Applicants who do not complete the computer-based assessments by the end of the provided testing window will not proceed through the process for the Job Opportunity Announcement (JOA) they applied for.
 - If you fail to appear for your scheduled testing session, or fail to cancel or reschedule within 24 hours of your scheduled testing session, you will no longer be considered.
 - If you are unexpectedly scheduled for mission status or required by your supervisor to perform work-related duties, you may be allowed to reschedule your test session, provided that you can document your on-duty status, with your local program or field office and the date by which you needed to complete the assessment has not passed.
 - If you experience an unexpected event (e.g., car accident, sickness) and are unable to reschedule your test session within the allotted time, you will be allowed to reschedule provided that you notify your local field or program office within 24 hours

of your scheduled test session and the date by which you needed to complete the assessment has not passed.

- Applicants who **have previously completed** the computer-based assessments for the J Band SFAM promotion process as part of another JOA application, will have their prior scores reused for the current JOA.
- The computer-based assessments have the following reuse timeframes:
 - Passing scores remain valid for 2 years from the date the assessment were completed.
 - Failing scores remain valid for 6 months from the date the assessment were completed.

The Logic Based Reasoning Test (LBR)

The Logic Based Reasoning Test assesses your ability to think logically and solve problems, which are skills that Supervisory Federal Air Marshals must possess to perform their everyday duties. Specifically, the competencies measured in the LBR are:

- Attention to Detail
- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Reading
- Reasoning

The LBR presents a reading passage with inferences or conclusions based upon that passage. Applicants need to determine whether or not the inference is true, false, or cannot be determined based on the information in the passage.

The Supervisory Situational Judgment Test (SSJT)

The Supervisory Situational Judgment Test assesses critical competencies common to the Supervisory Federal Air Marshal position. Specifically, the competencies measured in the SSJT are:

- Accountability
- Flexibility
- Interpersonal Skills
- Problem Solving

The SSJT presents realistic work-related scenarios and asks applicants to indicate how they would respond in that situation. The SSJT is a multiple choice test consisting of text based items. Applicants are instructed to indicate the option that is most and least effective in response to the presented scenario.

How to Prepare

The Appendix of this manual provides information guides for the Logic Based Reasoning Test and the Supervisory Situational Judgment Test. The guides provide background information on the topics being tested and include sample items. If you have not had much experience taking multiple-choice assessments, you will have an opportunity to see what these are like with a few sample items. In addition, detailed explanations are provided for the correct answers to each sample item.

Section IV: Structured Interview (SI)

Purpose of this Section

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the Structured Interview.

The Structured Interview

The optional panel Structured Interview involves a set of standardized, job-related questions, which each question being linked to a job-related competency. Specifically, the competencies measured in the SI are:

- Decisiveness
- Resilience
- Team Building
- Tactical Operations
- Oral Communication

Applicants who are referred on a Certificate of Eligibles **may** be invited to participate in the structured interview. Following the Selection Recommendation Panel's evaluation of the Accomplishment Records, the Selecting Official (i.e., the Special Agent in Charge (SAC) for the hiring office) will decide whether to interview some, none, or all candidates, as outlined in TSA Management Directive 1100.30-26, *Interviews and/or Other Final Selection Processes*.

Should you need to reschedule your structured interview, a request must be made with the duty office at least 48 hours in advance of your scheduled appointment. Waivers may be granted in emergency situations and are at the discretion of the duty office. You will be allowed only two schedule changes. If you are unable to make your appointment after two changes, that session will be counted as a no-show.

How you will be Evaluated

Your interview responses will be evaluated by the panel based upon a series of standardized, predetermined benchmarks. These benchmarks, which provide examples of minimal, satisfactory, and exemplary demonstrations of the competencies addressed in the interview questions, were created with the guidance of FAMS Subject Matter Experts, and are based upon their experiences in, and knowledge of, the SFAM position. Prior to participating in the structured interview, all panel members will receive training on how to conduct the interview session and evaluate the interview responses against rating scales.

Section V: J Band Supervisory Federal Air Marshal Promotion Process

Purpose of this Section

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of how the components of the SFAM promotion process will work together. Please see Appendix A for a diagram of the hiring process flow.

Promotion Process Workflow

The SFAM promotion process has 4 phases:

Phase 1 – Job Opportunity Announcement (JOA)

- Hiring Office submits JOA request to fulfill a hiring need.
- Applicants submit Accomplishment Record (AR) as part of their application package.

Phase 2 – Qualifications Review

- Service provider completes qualifications/eligibility review.
- All eligible and qualified applicants will be invited to complete FAMS J Band Assessment Battery.

Phase 3 – FAMS J Band Assessment Battery (i.e., computer-based assessments or CBT)

- Local office responsible for scheduling and proctoring the FAMS J Band Assessment Battery.
- Consists of Supervisory Situational Judgment Test (SSJT) and Logic Based Reasoning Test (LBR).
- Applicants must meet a minimum passing rating on each assessment to move forward in the hiring process.
- Each assessment will be equally weighted (50% for LBR and 50% for SSJT) to create a composite score for use in Phase 4.

Phase 4 – Certificate of Eligibles/Selection

- System calculates a composite rating for applicants who pass both the LBR and SSJT.
- Service provider generates a Certificate of Eligibles by identifying the natural break in composite score rankings.
 - A natural break involves identifying a group of top performers in an applicant pool who have successfully completed the CBT.
 - The natural break for a JOA is based on the ratings of the applicant pool for that particular vacancy. Therefore, it is possible to be referred for one vacancy and not another.

- Once applicants are referred on the Certificate of Eligibles, all applicants are considered equally qualified for consideration.
- The hiring office must convene a Selection Recommendation Panel (SRP); SRP must review and rate Accomplishment Records (AR) of all referred candidates.
- Results from the AR can be used to determine which candidates proceed to the optional Structured Interview. Results from the AR do not feed into the overall composite rating.
- The Selecting Official makes a final selection.

Results and Reuse of Assessment Ratings

Applicants will be informed of their pass/fail results on the computer-based assessments. Specific information on numerical ratings from the computer-based assessments will not be provided to applicants, as sharing scores could compromise the objectivity and/or integrity of the testing process. More importantly, the computer-based assessment ratings are only used to determine who will be referred on the Certificate of Eligibles. Once candidates are placed on the Certificate, they will be listed in alphabetical order and are considered equally qualified for further evaluation. The Selecting Official and SRP will not know the candidates' computer-based assessment ratings.

Results from the computer-based assessments will be used for all J Band SFAM vacancies. Applicants who do not successfully pass the assessments will not be able to retake them for six (6) months from when they were most recently completed. For the computer-based assessments, the test reuse timeframes are as follows:

- 2 years for passing scores
- 6 months for failing scores

There is no reuse timeframe for the Accomplishment Record and Structured Interview. Following the Certificate of Eligibles, the results of the Accomplishment Record and Structured Interview are updated for each position applied for.

Appendices: Computer Based Assessments Information Guides & Developmental Activities

Purpose of these Appendices

The purpose of these appendices are to help you prepare for the computer based assessments used in the J Band Supervisory Federal Air Marshal Promotion Process. The pages that follow will provide you with materials covering the topics evaluated in the SSJT and LBR. In addition, practice and sample items are provided with detailed explanations of the answers. Moreover, there are instructions on how to access the SFAM career portal for self-assessment and development activities.

Organization of this Manual

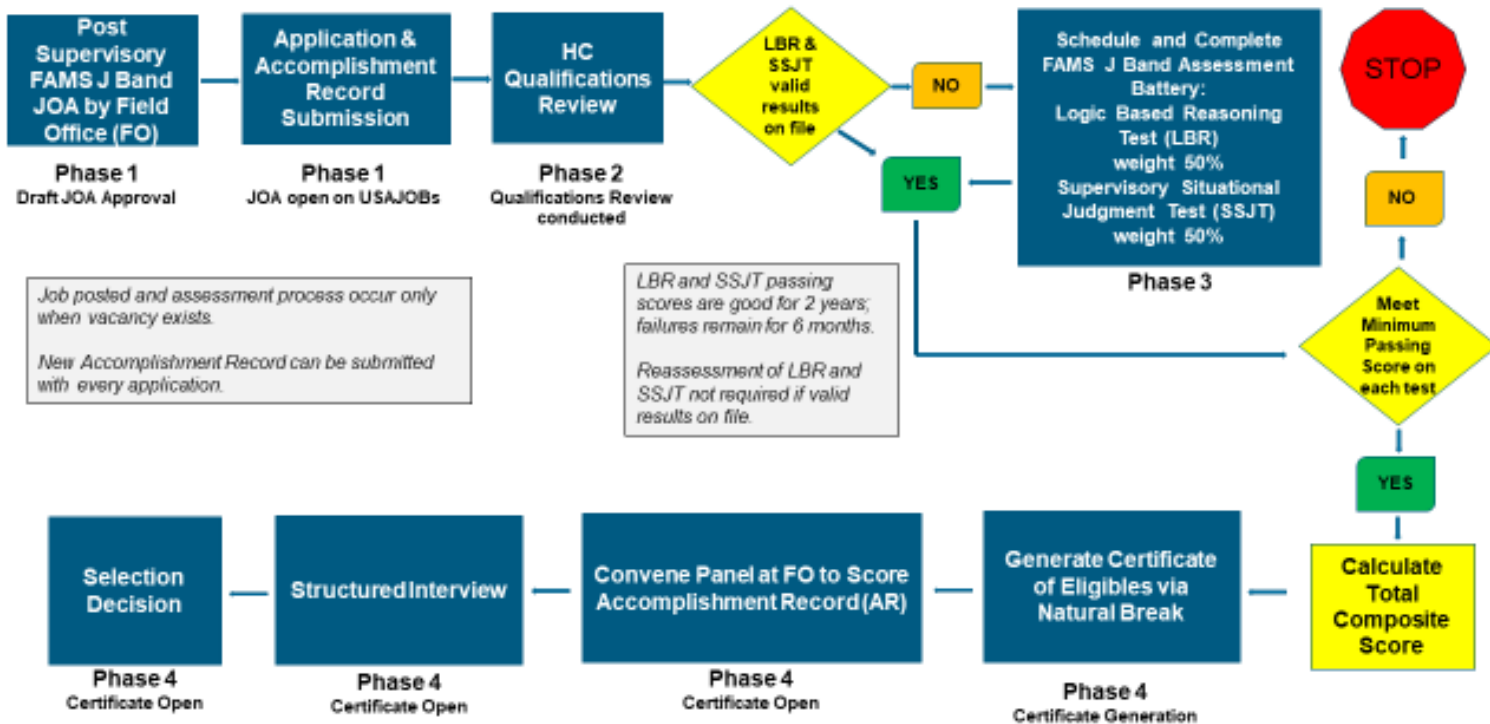
This manual is organized into the following sections:

- Appendix A: Promotion Process Workflow
- Appendix B: Test Taking Tips
- Appendix C: Logic Based Reasoning Test Information Guide
- Appendix D: Supervisory Situational Judgment Test Information Guide
- Appendix E: How to Access Developmental Activities

Appendix A:

Promotion Process Workflow

Supervisory FAMS J Band Workflow



Appendix B:

Test Taking Tips

- 1.** You will do your best on the test if you stay calm and relaxed. Take a few deep, slow breaths to help you maintain your calm.
- 2.** Pay careful attention to all directions before beginning the test.
- 3.** For each question, read the entire question and all response options carefully before deciding upon an answer.
- 4.** If you do not know the answer to a question, eliminate the response options that you know to be incorrect or probably incorrect and then guess from the remaining response options.
- 5.** Your score is based only upon the number of questions you answer correctly. You are not penalized for answering questions incorrectly. Therefore, you should answer every question.
- 6.** Ignore any response patterns. The correct answer positions are chosen randomly and there is no way to improve your chances by guessing based on an answer pattern.

Appendix C

Logic Based Reasoning Test Information Guide

Purpose of this Section

The purpose of this section is to help you prepare for the Logic Based Reasoning (LBR) Test. Reasoning is a critical competency for successful performance as a Supervisory Federal Air Marshal. Being an SFAM requires on-the-spot, logical decision making and problem solving. These reasoning skills become even more important at the supervisory level.

Specifically, the competencies measured in the LBR are:

- Attention to Detail
- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Reading
- Reasoning

Logical Reasoning, or logic-based reasoning, requires us to use the information we have to make inferences about what could be. Often we are presented with information that is incomplete, and yet we must make decisions based on that information. We must determine whether an inference or related conclusion can be true, based on the information we have; or whether the information we have dictates that the conclusion must be false. We must also know when we just do not have enough information to know whether an inference or conclusion is true or false. Being able to determine whether there is enough information to conclude whether something is true or false is critical, especially in a law enforcement context.

When trying to make inferences or come to a logical conclusion based on information that we have, we use two main types of reasoning: Deductive Reasoning and Inductive Reasoning. Deductive reasoning requires us to apply a general rule to a specific situation. For example, perhaps we are told that All men are mortal; and we are told that John is a man. From this information, we can deduce that John is mortal. Inductive reasoning is the opposite of deductive reasoning. Instead of going from the general to the specific, we go from the specific to the general. Perhaps you learned that All swans are white. At a later date, you see a bird that looks like a swan but it is not white. You

would conclude that since this bird is not white, and all swans are white, this bird is not a swan.

The Practice Test in this guide contains two passages, each with eight inferences (also called conclusions). You are to read each passage and based only on the information presented in the passage, you are to determine whether each of the eight conclusions presented is true, false, or cannot be determined based upon the information provided in the passage. You will also be presented with the correct answer and a detailed explanation. By working through this practice test, evaluating your responses, and reading the explanations, you will not only learn whether your response was correct, but you will also learn why.

In addition, this guide includes a discussion of the logical forms that underlie each of the inferences you are required to evaluate in the practice test. This will help you prepare the reasoning forms that you will encounter in the actual test.

The Test

The time allowed to complete the Logic Based Reasoning (LBR) Test is 1.5 hours. The LBR test consists of seven question sets, each of which contains a reading passage and inferences or conclusions that are the items of the test. Taken together, the seven question sets contain 53 items. For each item, you will need to evaluate whether or not the inference is valid based upon the passage; that is, you will need to determine whether it is true, false, or cannot be determined based on the information in the passage. The items will vary in difficulty level, but they will not be presented in order of difficulty level. Easier items and more difficult ones will be interspersed.

The Reading Passage and Response Choices

All questions on the test are based on subject matter relevant to the SFAM occupation; however, you will not be evaluated based upon your knowledge of policies and procedures. Instead, your score will be based upon your ability to reason based on the presented facts. Note that the information contained in the passages may not always reflect current job policies and procedures. Therefore, it is important when answering the questions that you use only the information provided in the passage, and that you accept every fact in the reading passage as true. Remember, this is not a job knowledge test and you will not be judged on your knowledge of policies and procedures. You will be evaluated on your ability to reason based on the presented facts.

Each reading passage is approximately one to three paragraphs in length. Each passage is then followed by items or inferences that

are based only on information provided in the passage. Your task is to evaluate each item/inference and decide whether it is true, false, or cannot be determined, based strictly on the information provided in the passage.

When deciding that an inference is true, you should make sure that the inference follows from the information given in the passage. In other words, the inference should be equivalent to the information provided in the passage. For example,

- *All aircraft that are allowed to use large U.S. airports fall under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures* is the exact equivalent of each of the following:
 - *All aircraft that fall outside the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures are not allowed to use large U.S. airports.*
 - *No aircraft that is allowed to use large U.S. airports falls outside the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures.*

When deciding that an inference is false, you should make sure that the inference is contrary to— or is an outright contradiction of— the information provided in the passage. For example,

- *At least some aircraft that are allowed to use large U.S. airports fall outside the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures* contradicts the following statement:
 - *All aircraft that are allowed to use large U.S. airports fall under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures.*

Lastly, you may decide that there is insufficient information to determine whether an inference is true or false. There is not enough information provided in the passage to draw a conclusion.

For instance, in the example given above - *All aircraft that are allowed to use large U.S. airports fall under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures* - there is insufficient information to determine whether or not the following statement is true:

- *All aircraft that fall under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures are allowed to use large U.S. airports.*

The passage against which we are comparing the above conclusion does not state that the ONLY criterion for allowing aircraft to use large U.S. airports is that they fall under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures. It could well be that there are additional criteria as well. For example, perhaps they must be large aircraft and under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures. The fact that all aircraft that are allowed to use large U.S. airports fall under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures does not mean that all aircraft that fall under the jurisdiction of U.S. security measures are allowed to use large U.S. airports. Consider this statement: *All German Shepherds are allowed to use the dog park.* Does this mean that the conclusion *All users of the dog park are German Shepherds* is equally true? No. It might be true, but it might be false. We just do not have enough information to determine whether it is true or false.

As you work through the sample test questions and read the explanation of the correct answers, there will be more discussion of the three types of inferences illustrated above (true, false, and insufficient information/cannot be determined).

The sample test is presented in the next section.

Note: notations associated with formal logic are used in the explanations.

Logic Based Reasoning Practice Test

The sample questions included below appear in exactly the same format that they will appear in the test. This will help you to familiarize yourself with the test.

When completing this practice test, you should:

Read the passage and then decide whether each conclusion is

*A) **True**, which means that you can infer the conclusion from the facts given*

*B) **False**, which means that the conclusion cannot be true given the facts*

*C) **Cannot be determined**, which means that there is insufficient information for you to determine whether the conclusion is true or false.*

All passages are based on subject matter relevant to the job, but do not require job knowledge and do not always reflect true-to-fact job procedures. To identify the correct conclusion, it is essential that you use **ONLY** the information presented in the passage and that you do not use any outside information whatsoever.

Once you have completed all of the items, check your answers against the correct answer provided. Be sure to read the explanations for each answer. Note: you should read the entire explanation carefully, regardless of whether your answer was correct.

Instructions - For each of the following passages:

1. Read the passage
2. Determine whether each conclusion is:

A) True, which means that you can infer the conclusion from the facts given

B) False, which means that the conclusion cannot be true given the facts

C) Cannot be determined, which means that there is insufficient information for you to determine whether the conclusion is true or false.

Passage 1

Federal Air Marshals (FAMs) will be allowed to participate in any fitness training and in Quarterly Fitness Assessments (QFAs) if and only if they are medically approved to do so and are current with their mandatory recurrent medical examinations.

The pre-employment medical examination for newly hired FAMs serves as clearance for participation in the QFA. Prior to conducting a QFA, one of two officers, the Physical Fitness Coordinator (PFC) or the Physical Training Instructor (PTI), will measure a FAM's resting blood pressure. If the FAM's blood pressure exceeds 140/90, then whoever performed the first measurement will re-measure the blood pressure after a short rest period. If the blood pressure then measures 140/90 or less, the FAM will be allowed to participate in the QFA. But if the blood pressure remains greater than 140/90, the PFC or the PTI will refer the FAM to the clinical staff, who will review the FAM's medical history, will consult with the FAM, and will perhaps refer the FAM to his/her physician for additional evaluation. As a result of these steps, the FAM will face one of the following mutually exclusive situations: (1) he/she may be cleared for all physical fitness training, (2) he/she may be cleared for limited physical activity, (3) he/she may be restricted from all physical activity, or (4) he/she may be recommended for restricted physical activity until the medical issue is resolved.

-
1. Prior to a QFA, a FAM's resting blood pressure will not be measured by the PTI if it has been measured by the PFC.
 2. If a FAM does not receive the required medical approval, then he/she will not be allowed to participate either in fitness training or in QFAs.
 3. Prior to a QFA, if a specific FAM's blood pressure remains greater than 140/90 after re- testing, he/she will be cleared by the clinical staff for limited physical activity.
 4. Prior to a QFA, if a FAM is not referred to the clinical staff after his/her resting blood pressure has been measured, it can be assumed that the FAM's blood pressure was not equal to or lower than 140/90.

5. In at least some cases, the mandate for recurrent medical examinations is a requirement that occurs in conjunction with the requirement for medical approval to participate in any fitness training.
6. A FAM who is restricted from all physical activity after consultation with the clinical staff will not necessarily be excluded from any physical fitness training.
7. Whenever a FAM is referred to his/her physician, it can be assumed that he/she has obtained a blood pressure reading that exceeds 140/90.
8. Once they receive clearance after the pre-employment physical examination, FAMs will not undergo any medical examination other than blood pressure measurements.

Passage 2

Federal Air Marshals (FAMs) are authorized by Federal law to make arrests based on an outstanding warrant and to make arrests without a warrant for offenses committed in their presence. Due to the mission of the Federal Air Marshal Service, most arrests made by FAMs are not based on a warrant.

After making an arrest, a FAM must take the arrested person before a magistrate judge without unnecessary delay and, if and only if the arrest was made without a warrant, must file a complaint satisfying the probable cause requirements of Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

Both FAM A and FAM B were assigned to numerous flights during a two-month period, although they were never assigned to the same flight. FAM A made five arrests during this period, none of which was based on a warrant. FAM B made one arrest during the same time period.

-
9. No arrests based on a warrant were made by FAM A in the two-month period.
 10. All warrantless arrests in the two-month period were made by FAM A.
 11. FAM A needed to file a complaint for most but not all of the five arrests made in the two-month period.
 12. It is more likely than not that the arrest made by FAM B was not based on a warrant.
 13. All of FAM A's arrests in the two-month period required that FAM A file a complaint.
 14. It is more likely than not that FAM B did not need to file a complaint for the one arrest made in the two-month period.
 15. Some arrests in the two-month period that required filing a complaint were not made by FAM A.
 16. Every arrest made by an officer other than FAM A in the two-month period was based on a warrant.

Answers to the Logic Based Reasoning Practice Test

ANALYSIS OF PASSAGE 1

1. Correct Answer: A) True

According to the information provided in the passage (second sentence of the second paragraph), one of two officers, the Physical Fitness Coordinator (PFC) or the Physical Training Instructor (PTI), will measure a FAM's resting blood pressure prior to a Quality Fitness Assessment (QFA). Accordingly, if the measurement has been carried out by the PFC, then it will not be carried out by the PTI.

Discussion

Stated in symbols, the logic inherent in this reasoning is of the following form: *events p and q cannot occur together* [one of the two officers (not both) will measure the FAM's resting blood pressure prior to conducting a QFA]. If p has occurred (one of the officers) then q cannot occur (the other one of the officers); conversely if q has occurred, then p cannot occur, then p cannot be true. *Therefore, if p then not q or if q then not p.*

So, a FAM's resting blood pressure will not be measured by the PTI [not p] if it has been measured by the PFC [if q].

Whenever you find information to the effect that two events cannot occur together, you will be able to infer that if one of the events has occurred, then the other event cannot occur.

2. Correct Answer: A) True

According to the information provided in the passage (first sentence), FAMs will be allowed to participate in any fitness training and in QFAs if and only if they are medically approved to do so. Inference # 2 reiterates this information, but in negative form. This negative form (If a FAM does not receive the required medical approval, then he/she will not be allowed to participate in fitness training or in QFAs) is an equivalent of the affirmative version.

Discussion

Why are these affirmative and negative statements equivalent? When we say that *FAMs will be allowed to participate both in all fitness training and in QFAs if and only if they are medically approved to do so*, what we are saying is that *if a FAM is medically approved to do*

so then he/she can participate both in all fitness training and in QFAs and vice-versa, that if a FAM can participate both in all fitness training and in QFAs then he/she is medically approved to do so. This kind of statement is called a bi-conditional statement, usually formulated as *p if and only if q* (the symbols *p* and *q* stand for the two statements linked by *if and only if*).

To say *p if and only if q* is to say *if p then q and if q then p*, which means that *p* cannot be given without *q* and *q* cannot be given without *p*. Accordingly, to negate one statement (as in inference #2) is to negate the other statement.

The preceding paragraphs are very important. To say that the affirmation or negation of one statement entails the affirmation or negation of the other statement is to say that the two are coextensive. In other words, there is absolutely nothing that is not common to both. It's important to note that this feature of the bi-conditional distinguishes it from the simple conditional (*if p then q*), which establishes simply that *p* cannot be given without *q*, but does not establish for certain that *q* can be given without *p*. That is, *if p then q* is not equivalent to *if q then p*.

Let us consider the following simple example:

If a person is a Spaniard, then he/she is European [if p then q].

This statement clearly establishes that all Spaniards are European, but does not establish anything else about the set "European." It may be that there are non-Spaniard Europeans (as indeed is the case). We can also infer from this statement that *if a person is not European then he/she is not a Spaniard [if not p then not q]*. However, we cannot infer that *if a person is European [if q] then he/she is a Spaniard [then p]* or that *if a person is not a Spaniard [if not p] then he/she is not European [then not q]*.

The rather simplistic example above serves to illustrate what inferences are valid for the conditional. In the test you will find more complex conditionals. To process these it will be useful to bear in mind a recap of the above discussion in symbolic form:

Conditional: *If p then q; therefore:*

If not-q then not-p (correct inference)

If not-p then not-q (cannot be determined - insufficient information)

If q then p (cannot be determined - insufficient information)

Bi-conditional: *p if and only if q; therefore:*

If p then q (correct inference)

If q then p (correct inference)

If not-p then not-q (correct inference)

If not-q then not-p (correct inference)

Our discussion of the conditional in inference #2 above will be taken up again immediately below in inference #3.

3. Correct Answer: C) Cannot Be Determined (Insufficient Information)

According to the information in the passage (last two sentences), if a FAM's blood pressure remains greater than 140/90 after retesting, after consultation with the clinical staff one of the following may occur: 1) he/she may be cleared for training; or 2) he/she may be cleared for limited physical activity; or 3) he/she may be restricted from all physical activity; or 4) he/she may be recommended for restricted physical activity until the medical issue is resolved. Therefore, the consequence of consistently elevated blood pressure will not necessarily be clearance for limited physical activity (as claimed in inference #3).

Discussion

Stated in symbols, the logic inherent in this reasoning is of the following form: *If p* (the FAM's blood pressure remains elevated) *then either q* (the FAM is cleared for limited physical activity) *or r* (the FAM is cleared for all physical activity) *or s* (the FAM is restricted from all physical activity) *or t* (the FAM is recommended for restricted physical activity until the medical issue is resolved). Because there are four possible consequences for condition *p*, it is not possible to affirm any one of these consequences over the others; any of these may have occurred and therefore, we do not have enough information to determine whether the inference claimed in #3 is true.

Note that once again we find the conditional in this inference. You will find it again and again in this test, as indeed you will find it again and again in real-life. It has been said that the conditional is the most fundamental and prevalent form of human reasoning. Let us discuss this further.

As you will recall from our discussion of inference #2, when we say *if p then q* we mean that two statements are joined by the condition *if/then*. To use the same example we used in the discussion of inference #2, the statement *If a person is a Spaniard, then that person is a European* consists of two statements (*a person is a Spaniard* and *a person is a European*) joined by the condition *if/then*. If we were to translate this *if/then* form into what is called "set form," we would have the statement *All Spaniards are European* (*All P are Q*), from which you can correctly infer that *No Spaniards are non-European* (*No P are non-Q*) and that *All non-Europeans are non-Spaniards* (*All non-Q are non-P*).

If you recall our discussion of the conditional in inference #2, you will note the following set-form equivalences:

If p then q = All P are Q

If q then p = All Q are P

If not-q then not-p = All non-Q are non-P

If not-p then not-q = All non-P are non-Q

p if and only if q = All P are Q and All Q are P

The only instances in which logical reasoning cannot be expressed in conditional form are instances in which the available evidence comprises only *some* members of a set and nothing is known about whether or not there are other members of the set that may (or may not) share the same characteristic.

4. Correct Answer: B) False

According to the information provided in the passage (second paragraph, fourth and fifth sentences), if a FAM's blood pressure is equal to or lower than 140/90, then he/she will be allowed to participate in the QFA. However, if it is higher than 140/90, he/she will be referred to the clinical staff. Inference #4 runs contrary to this information by claiming the opposite - that if a FAM is not referred to the clinical staff, it is because his/her blood pressure is higher than 140/90 (to say that the blood pressure "was not equal to or lower than 140/90" is the same as saying that it was higher).

From our previous discussion of the conditional, you may have recognized the logical fallacy that underlies this inference. The passage states that if p then q (if the FAM's blood pressure is higher than 140/90, then he/she will be referred to the clinical staff). The correct inference, stated in negative form, would be if not-q then not-p (if the FAM is not referred to the clinical staff, then his/her blood pressure was not higher than 140/90), not if not-q then p (inference #4).

5. Correct Answer: A) True

According to the information provided in the passage (first sentence), all FAMs must be current with their mandatory recurrent medical examinations and must also be medically approved to participate in any fitness training. It follows (as stated in inference #5) that, in at least some cases (i.e., that of FAMs), the mandate for current medical examinations is a requirement that occurs in conjunction with the requirement for medical approval to participate in any fitness training.

Discussion

This item uses the limited quantifier *some*, as inference #5 begins "in at least *some cases*...." Why is this limited quantifier used in inference #5 when the two statements from the passage that support the inference both use the unlimited quantifier *all*? To answer this question, we

should recall that when we say *All P are Q*, what we are saying is that absolutely all members of *P* are included in the set of *Q*, and nothing more. In other words, we are saying nothing at all about *Q* other than that it contains all of *P*.

The two statements from which inference #5 derives are both *All* statements: *All P are Q* (All FAMs must be current with their mandatory recurrent medical examinations) and *All P are R* (All FAMs must be medically approved to participate in fitness training). The fact that all *P* are both *Q* and *R* means, incontrovertibly, that at least some *R* (namely those that are *P*) are also *Q*, as affirmed in inference #5. Beyond the confines of inference #5, what else can we say about the inferential processes involving the quantifier *some*?

Although *some* is in and of itself a vague quantifier, there are several inferences that we can legitimately make. Let us illustrate these inferences with a basic example: *Some animals are rational* (*Some P are Q*). From this given statement we can infer that *some rational beings are animals* (*Some Q are P*) in which we are referring to exactly the same individuals, those that are both rational and animal. We can also infer that *some animals are not irrational* (*Some P are not non-Q*) which is synonymous with the original statement *some animals are rational*.

What can we not legitimately infer from *Some P are Q*? The most obvious incorrect (false) inference would be *No P are Q*, which contradicts *Some P are Q*. An almost equally obvious and false inference would be *All P are Q*. From the fact that we know some *P* to be *Q* we cannot extrapolate to the entire set of *P* (from the given fact that *some animals are rational*, we cannot extrapolate rationality to all animals).

Not as clear as these two false inferences are the following three inferences that are also false: (1) *Some P are not Q*; (2) *Some non-Q are non-P*; and (3) *Some non-P are non-Q*; all of which are not able to be determined. Let us discuss them one by one.

In the case of *Some P are not Q* (*Some animals are not rational*), this inference does not follow from *Some P are Q* (*Some animals are rational*). Often the assumption is that if we know that *some* animals are rational, then we also know that *some* animals are not rational. This is not the case. What the statement *some animals are rational* means is that there is evidence about the rationality of *some* portion of the animal kingdom; but there is no evidence about the remaining or entire portion of the animal kingdom (the portion other than *some*). Thus, when we say that we know that *some* animals are rational, what we are saying is that we only know about the rationality of that portion of the animal kingdom, and we have no information about the remaining portion. Therefore, we do not have enough information to determine whether the remaining portion of the animal kingdom is rational or not.

In the case of *some non-Q are non-P* (*some irrational beings are non-animals*), the original statement *some P are Q* (*some animals are rational*) indicates absolutely nothing about *non-Ps* and *non-Qs* or about their possible relationship. Exactly the same can be said about the third inference that is unable to be determined listed above, *some non-P are non-Q* (*some non-animals are irrational*).

In summary, inference #5 presents two new inferential situations. One relates to inferences

containing three sets. The other relates to inferences that include the quantifier *some*. We have discussed both above.

A final note, however, relates to inferences about three sets. As discussed above, inference #5 is an example of an inference in which the three sets are connected by the quantifier *all*, but lead only to a valid inference when quantification is reduced to *some*. Are there inferences about three sets which permit the general quantification *all*? The answer is yes. Here is an example:

All national industries are included in the list of worker fatalities for last year.

(All P are Q).

All manufacturers are national industries (All R are P).

Therefore, all manufacturers are included in the list of worker fatalities for last year

(All R are Q).

In this case, all of *P* (*national industries*) is included in *Q* (*the list of worker fatalities for last year*) and all of *R* (*manufacturers*) is included in *P*. Of necessity therefore all of *R* must be included in *Q*.

A similar case can occur with the general quantifier *none*. An example is:

No underground businesses are subject to official productivity measures (No P are Q).

All tax-avoidance schemes are underground businesses (All R are P).

Therefore, no tax-avoidance schemes are subject to official productivity measures

(No R are Q).

In this case, all of *P* is totally excluded from all of *Q*, while all of *R* is totally included in *P*. Therefore, all of *R* must be totally excluded from all of *Q*.

A similar case can occur with the general quantifier *none*. An example is:

No underground businesses are subject to official productivity measures (No P are Q).

All tax-avoidance schemes are underground businesses (All R are P).

Therefore, no tax-avoidance schemes are subject to official productivity measures

(No R are Q).

In this case, all of *P* is totally excluded from all of *Q*, while all of *R* is totally included in *P*. Therefore, all of *R* must be totally excluded from all of *Q*.

6. Correct Answer: B) False

According to the information provided in the passage (second paragraph, last sentence), after consultation with the clinical staff, a FAM will face one of four mutually exclusive situations.

Inference #6 bluntly contradicts this information by claiming that two of the situations can be given in conjunction: a FAM who is restricted from all physical activity will, at the same time, not necessarily be excluded from any physical fitness training.

7. Correct Answer: C) Cannot Be Determined (Insufficient Information)

According to the information provided in the passage (second paragraph, fourth sentence), if a second blood pressure reading still yields a result greater than 140/90, then the FAM may be referred to his/her physician. If you recall our discussion of the conditional in inference #2, you will recognize the conditional form *if p then q*. As you may recall, the statement *if p then q* indicates that condition *p* is totally encompassed by condition *q*, but it indicates nothing about whether *q* is reciprocally encompassed by *p*. Therefore, we do not have enough information to infer that *if q then p*.

If we apply this logic to the specific case of inference #7, the statement that *if a second blood pressure reading still yields a result greater than 140/90 (if p), then the FAM may be referred to his/her physician (then q)* does not allow us to infer the reversed statement *if a FAM is referred to his/her physician (if q), then he/she has obtained a blood pressure reading that exceeds 140/90 (then p)*. The FAM in question may be referred to his/her physician for many other reasons. Therefore, we cannot determine whether inference #7 is true or false because we have insufficient information.

8. Correct Answer: B) False

According to the information provided in the passage (first paragraph), FAMs must undergo recurrent medical examinations. Response #8 directly contradicts this statement by claiming that once FAMs undergo the pre-employment physical examination, they will not undergo any medical examinations other than blood pressure measurements.

General Note on Passage 1

This sample question and the discussion of its inferences should have shown you (1) that recognizing “false” inferences is a question of recognizing contrary or contradictory statements and (2) that identifying “true” and “insufficient information (cannot be determined)” inferences entails a more difficult analysis of complex logical forms and inferential processes. The discussion of these processes has provided you with the basic inferential forms that you will find in the test.

In the next sample question set you will revisit some of the inferential forms you have already seen, but you will be introduced to a new approach to these forms - namely applying these forms, particularly the conditional, to situations involving probability. Also, in situations involving probability, the quantifier *some* no longer signifies some vague amount (some, not all) but rather, numerical values.

ANALYSIS OF PASSAGE 2

9. Correct Answer: A) True

According to the information provided in the second sentence of the last paragraph, FAM A made five arrests during the two-month period discussed, and none of these arrests was based on a warrant. Therefore, we can conclude that no arrests based on a warrant were made by FAM A in the two-month period.

Discussion

This inference is based on the logic of sets. The two sets that are being related to each other are the sets of “arrests made by FAM A in the two-month period” and “arrests made on the basis of a warrant.” The passage tells us that there is no overlap between these two sets because it says that none of the arrests made by FAM A in the two-month period belongs to the set of arrests made on the basis of a warrant. It is because of this non-overlap between the two sets that we can conclude that no arrests based on a warrant were made by FAM A in the two-month period.

The two-set premise is: *None of the arrests made by FAM A in the two-month period was based on a warrant (No R are P).*

The valid conclusion is: *No arrests based on a warrant were made by FAM A in the two-month period (No P are R).*

10. Correct Answer: C) Cannot Be Determined (Insufficient Information)

As noted in the discussion of inference #9, the passage states that none of the arrests made by FAM A in the two-month period was based on a warrant. This is the same as saying that all of FAM A’s arrests were warrantless. Based on the information that was provided, we do not have enough information to determine whether Inference #10 is true or false. There is nothing in the passage that would allow us to conclude definitively one way or the other whether all of the warrantless arrests in the two-month period were made by FAM A.

Discussion

The meaning of an “All are” statement such as “All of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period were warrantless” was explained in the discussion of inference #5 of Question Set 1. In the present case, it means that absolutely all of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period are included in the set of “warrantless arrests.” It says nothing about the set of “warrantless arrests” other than that it includes all of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period. Therefore, we do not have sufficient information to conclude that all of the members of the set of warrantless arrests are also included in the set of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period.

The two-set premise is: *All of FAM A's arrests in the two-month period were warrantless (All R are non-P).*

The non-decidable conclusion is: *All warrantless arrests in the two-month period were made by FAM A (All non-P are R).*

11. Correct Answer: B) False

The second paragraph of the passage states that a FAM must take an arrested person before a magistrate judge and, if and only if the arrest was made without a warrant, must file a complaint satisfying the probable cause requirements of Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. The third paragraph provides the information that FAM A made five arrests during a two-month period, none of which was based on a warrant. The correct conclusion from this information is that FAM A needed to file a complaint for each one of these arrests because each one of them was not based on a warrant. Inference #11 is false because it represents a contrary conclusion, namely that FAM A needed to file a complaint for most, but not all, of the five arrests.

Discussion

The second paragraph in the second reading passage contains a bi-conditional statement, which was discussed very thoroughly with respect to inference #2 (Question Set 1).

The bi-conditional statement from the second reading passage is: *if and only if the arrest was made without a warrant, the arresting FAM must file a complaint satisfying the probable cause requirements of Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure (q if and only if non-p).*

Additional information: *FAM A made five arrests without a warrant (non-p).*

False conclusion: *FAM A does not need to file a complaint for all of the arrests (non-q).*

12. Correct Answer: A) True

The second sentence of the first paragraph provides the information that most arrests made by FAMs are not based on a warrant. When we use the word “most,” we mean “the greater part of” or “more than 50% of.” Therefore, we must conclude that there is a greater than 50% chance that the arrest made by FAM B was not based on a warrant. This is the same as saying that it is “more likely than not” that the arrest was made without a warrant.

Discussion

Inference #12 is concerned with the interaction of two sets with the quantifier “most.” The two sets are “arrests made by FAMs” and “arrests made without a warrant.” The arrest made by

FAM B is a member of the first set. The quantifier “most” is much more informative than the quantifier “some,” which was discussed with reference to inference #5 (Question Set 1). The use of “most” tells us that more than half of the arrests made by FAMs are not based on a warrant. Inference #12 uses that information to make a statement about the probability that the arrest made by FAM B was not based on a warrant. We are able to conclude that it is more likely than not that this arrest was not based on a warrant.

13. Correct Answer: A) True

The second paragraph of the passage states that whenever a FAM makes an arrest without a warrant, the FAM must file a complaint that satisfies the probable cause requirements of Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. This is the same as saying that all arrests made without a warrant require that the FAM file a complaint. When this information is combined with the information in the third paragraph, that all of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period were made without a warrant, one can conclude that all of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period required that FAM A file a complaint.

Discussion

The logic behind this inference illustrates a conclusion based on three sets. This type of conclusion was explained in the discussion of inference #5 (Passage #1).

*All of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period were made without a warrant
(All R are non-P).*

All arrests made without a warrant require that the FAM file a complaint (All non-P are Q).

Therefore, all of FAM A’s arrests in the two-month period required that FAM A file a complaint (All R are Q).

In this case, both premises have the quantifier “All,” as does the conclusion. All of R are included in non-P and all of non-P are included in Q. Therefore, all of R are included in Q.

14. Correct Answer: B) False

As we saw in the discussion of inference #12, most arrests made by FAMs are not based on a warrant, and therefore, it is more likely than not that the arrest made by FAM B was made without a warrant. The passage also tells us that a FAM must file a complaint if an arrest was made without a warrant (see discussion of inference #11). Therefore, it is valid to conclude that, more likely than not, FAM B needed to file a complaint for the one arrest made in the two-month period. However, inference #14 makes the contrary conclusion that, more likely than not, FAM B did not need to file a complaint. Therefore, inference #14 is a false conclusion from the information in the passage.

Discussion

The bi-conditional statement is: *If and only if the arrest was made without a warrant, the arresting FAM must file a complaint satisfying the probable cause requirements of Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure (q if and only if non-p).*

Additional information: *FAM B, more likely than not, made an arrest without a warrant (non-p, with a probability greater than .5).*

False conclusion: *It is more likely than not that FAM B did not need to file a complaint (non-q, with a probability greater than .5).*

15. Correct Answer: C) Cannot Be Determined (Insufficient Information)

Inference #15 is based on the same given information as inference #13. This information is not sufficient to support the conclusion in inference #15. The premises are:

All of FAM A's arrests in the two-month period were made without a warrant

(All R are non-P).

All arrests made without a warrant require that the FAM file a complaint

(All non-P are Q.)

As we saw in inference #13, these premises support the conclusion that *all of FAM A's arrests in the two-month period required that FAM A file a complaint (All R are Q)*. From this "All are" statement, we could validly infer that *At least some arrests in the two-month period that required filing a complaint were made by FAM A (Some Q are R)*, but we cannot validly infer that *At least some arrests in the two-month period that required filing a complaint were not made by FAM A (Some Q are not R)* because the original information (All R are Q) provides no information about the extension of Q. (See discussion for inference #5, Passage #1, which illustrates the concept of the extension of sets.)

16. Correct Answer: C) Cannot Be Determined (Insufficient Information)

According to the information provided in the last paragraph, none of the arrests made by FAM A during the two-month period was based on a warrant. In inference #16, a conclusion is drawn about arrests that were made by officers other than FAM A in the two-month period. However, the passage does not give us specific information about those arrests, so we cannot

conclude, as inference #16 does, that those arrests were based on a warrant.

The two-set premise is: *None of the arrests made by FAM A during the two-month period was based on a warrant (No R are P).*

The conclusion that cannot be determined is: *Every arrest made by an officer other than FAM A in the two-month period was based on a warrant (All non-R are P).*

Appendix D: Supervisory Situational Judgment Test Information Guide

Purpose of this Section

The purpose of this section is to prepare you for the Supervisory Situational Judgment Test. The SSJT measures leadership potential by presenting work related problems or scenarios related to the SFAM position and asks what responses are most and least effective.

Specifically, the competencies measured in the SSJT are:

- Accountability
- Flexibility
- Interpersonal Skills
- Problem Solving

The Practice Test in this guide contains sample questions. You are to read the scenario and then consider possible responses to the situation described. You will also be presented with the correct answer and a detailed explanation. By working through this practice test, evaluating your responses, and reading the explanations, you will not only learn whether your response was correct, but you will also learn why.

The Test

The SSJT consists of 20 work-related scenarios targeting competencies. The entire test contains 40 items and asks applicants to indicate what response is most effective and least effective to the presented situation. For each item, no special training or experience is required to answer the questions in the assessment. The items will vary in difficulty level, but they will not be presented in order of difficulty level. Easier items and more difficult ones will be interspersed.

Preparing for the SSJT

The time allowed to complete the Supervisory Situational Judgment Test (SSJT) is 1 hour. You should read the scenarios and items carefully and answer every question. There is no penalty for guessing.

You are encouraged to develop a preparation plan leading towards your scheduled test date. This plan includes becoming

familiar with the expectations and skills of a Supervisory Federal Air Marshal. Familiarizing yourself with the expectations and the role will allow you to better diagnose the most appropriate response to the work-related scenarios.

You should also keep in mind the competencies that are being measured, then brainstorm and develop a list of effective and ineffective behaviors of an SFAM using the competencies being measured. Using this strategy will help you your preparation for this type of test.

The Response Choices

Understanding the question format will help save you some time. When completing the SSJT, you will be presented with four options that you could take in a given work related challenge. You are to select the most effective or least effective response to the given situation.

Be sure to identify the problem the work-related scenario is highlighting. Try to clarify what specifically needs your attention. If you skim through the work-related problem being addressed, then you will be in a weaker position to tackle the question.

Some decisions have short-term benefits, but consider the long term consequences of your actions before making a decision.

As you work through the sample test questions and read the explanation of the correct answers, there will be more discussion why certain answers are most appropriate.

The sample questions are presented in the next section.

Supervisory Situational Judgment Test

Sample Questions

For each passage, you are asked to select which of the described actions you think would be the most effective action to take and which would be the least effective. Select the best answer choices.

Passage 1

You notice that one of your employees is working slower this week. He seems unfocused and is less productive than usual. When you speak to him about it, he says that he is having a hard week due to personal problems.

Which of the following is the most effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Speak with your employee; discuss ways that can make work hours easier and help them focus.
- b) Show empathy but still remind your employee that they need to complete their responsibilities.
- c) Refer your employee to the HR department. As a supervisor, you are responsible for work productivity; HR is more qualified to handle the situation and can help your employee get back to working as usual.
- d) Let this week slide; everyone has bad days. Be patient and it will probably pass.

Which of the following is the least effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Speak with your employee; discuss ways that can make work hours easier and help them focus.
- b) Show empathy but still remind your employee that they need to complete their responsibilities.
- c) Refer your employee to the HR department. As a supervisor, you are responsible for work productivity; HR is more qualified to handle the situation and can help your employee get back to working as usual.
- d) Let this week slide; everyone has bad days. Be patient and it will probably pass.

Passage 2

You manage a program that is comprised of 4 teams. Things go rather smoothly - your teams are productive, the atmosphere is good and the team members manage to meet its mission milestones. You know that things go fine but think that the team leaders are resting on their laurels. You believe they can do better and productivity can be higher.

Which of the following is the most effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Set a goal to increase productivity by next month and provide an incentive.
- b) Tell the team leaders that you feel they are not motivated enough and that you are not pleased.
- c) Speak openly with the team leaders – tell them that they perform well but could do better and ask them to improve.
- d) Give them a motivational speech in which you focus on how competent the team leaders are.

Which of the following is the least effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Set a goal to increase productivity by next month and provide an incentive.
- b) Tell the team leaders that you feel they are not motivated enough and that you are not pleased.
- c) Speak openly with the team leaders – tell them that they perform well but could do better and ask them to improve.
- d) Give them a motivational speech in which you focus on how competent the team leaders are.

Passage 3

Vanessa is a relatively new employee in your team. Yesterday you have given her a task that should be ready by the end of today. At lunch, she approaches you and says that it took her a long time to familiarize herself with the task and now she is worried that she won't finish on time. Up until now, Vanessa has proved to be a competent employee and has never failed to meet deadlines.

Which of the following is the most effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Ask her to finish the task and let her know that you are not pleased that she may not meet the deadline.
- b) Work alongside Vanessa to finish the task on time, so that she knows that her supervisor is familiar with her regular work as well.
- c) Ask her to finish the task and stay longer if needed. It's your job to monitor your employees' performance not to complete it for them.
- d) Work alongside Vanessa to finish the task on time. She would appreciate the help and learn that she could ask for it.

Which of the following is the least effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Ask her to finish the task and let her know that you are not pleased that she may not meet the deadline.
- b) Work alongside Vanessa to finish the task on time, so that she knows that her supervisor is familiar with her regular work as well.
- c) Ask her to finish the task and stay longer if needed. It's your job to monitor your employees' performance not to complete it for them.
- d) Work alongside Vanessa to finish the task on time. She would appreciate the help and learn that she could ask for it.

Supervisory Situational Judgment Test

Detailed Answer Key

Passage 1

You notice that one of your employees is working slower this week. He seems unfocused and is less productive than usual. When you speak to him about it, he says that he is having a hard week due to personal problems.

Which of the following is the most effective and least effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Speak with your employee; discuss ways that can make work hours easier and help them focus.
➤ **MOST EFFECTIVE**
- b) Show empathy but still remind your employee that they need to complete their responsibilities.
- c) Refer your employee to the HR department. As a supervisor you are responsible for work productivity; HR is more qualified to handle the situation and can help your employee get back to working as usual.
➤ **LEAST EFFECTIVE**
- d) Let this week slide; everyone has bad days. Be patient and it will probably pass.

Explanation

This is a question about handling employees' personal needs. Like everyone else, your employees have personal lives and they could sometimes affect their work. Employees' personal matters should be handled with sensitivity – you want to be caring and helping as much as possible, without giving an inquisitive feeling.

In **Response A**, discussing ways to help the employee shows understanding of your employee's situation and willingness to help. You use creative problem solving and adapt to your employee's needs. This also shows understanding that work affects employees' personal lives just as much as their personal lives affect their work (responsibility for subordinates). **This is the most effective response.**

Response B shows less adaptability, yet it's still appropriate. In some positions and situations, you don't have the option to be as flexible as in response

Response C seems cold. It creates the impression that your function is only to supervise your employees' productivity, and neglects your responsibility for them. Notice that the action itself – referring the employee to the HR department – is not bad in itself, but the rationale behind it, as presented in the answer

choice, doesn't show empathy and respect for your employee and lacks any consideration of your relationship with him. **This response is least effective.**

Response D is another response that could be appropriate in some situations, but generally it's not ideal. Most importantly, in the test context what this response actually says is "do nothing". This response doesn't show any competency. As response C creates damage (it hurts your relationship with your employee), while response D seems to not have any particular effect at this point, response C the least effective.

Passage 2

You manage a program that is comprised of 4 teams. Things go rather smoothly - your teams are productive, the atmosphere is good and the team members manage to meet its mission milestones. You know that things go fine but think that the team leaders are resting on their laurels.. You believe they can do better and productivity can be higher.

Which of the following is the most effective and least effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Set a goal to increase productivity by next month and provide an incentive.
➤ **MOST EFFECTIVE**
- b) Tell the team leaders that you feel they are not motivated enough and that you are not pleased.
➤ **LEAST EFFECTIVE**
- c) Speak openly with the team leaders – tell them that they perform well but could do better and ask them to improve.
- d) Give them a motivational speech in which you focus on how competent the team leaders are.

Explanation

This is a question about motivation and means to improve productivity. In **Response A**, setting specific goals and providing incentives creates clear expectations and motivates the team leaders to try harder, aiming for clear goals. **This is the most effective response.**

Response B provides false feedback and is demotivating – the team leaders don't have a motivational problem (we are not told that they don't work well or that they are being lazy, but simply that they don't try to improve). This feedback might feel like a reprimand. **This response is least effective.**

Response C increases motivation but lacks a distinct strategy to improve productivity. It could work, but asking the team leaders to improve is rather vague and might not achieve the desired goals.

Response D Giving a motivational speech about the competence of the team leaders indeed could motivate them, but it could also reinforce the current state – the feeling that the team is good enough, and instead of pushing higher the team leaders may continue to rest on their laurels.

Passage 3

Vanessa is a relatively new employee in your team. Yesterday you have given her a task that should be ready by the end of today. At lunch, she approaches you and says that it took her a long time to familiarize herself with the task and now she is worried that she won't finish on time. Up until now, Vanessa has proved to be a competent employee and has never failed to meet deadlines.

Which of the following is the most effective and least effective action to take in this situation?

- a) Ask her to finish the task and let her know that you are not pleased that she may not meet the deadline.
➤ **LEAST EFFECTIVE**
- b) Work alongside Vanessa to finish the task on time, so that she knows that her supervisor is familiar with her regular work as well.
- c) Ask her to finish the task and stay longer if needed. It's your job to monitor your employees' performance not to complete it for them.
- d) Work alongside Vanessa to finish the task on time. She would appreciate the help and learn that she could ask for it.
➤ **MOST EFFECTIVE**

Explanation

This is a question about the chain of command and your relationship with your employees. We are told about a competent, reliable employee who doesn't manage to finish her task on time due to difficulties in learning her task.

Notice that there are in fact only two options of actions in the answer choices, and every couple of answer choices which suggest the same action, differ in their rationalization. Therefore, when choosing your response, you should take both elements into consideration: action and rationalization.

Response A emphasizes criticism; it reflects worry that Vanessa would make it a habit not to finish her own tasks. Since we are told that she is usually independent and competent, you can feel comfortable that she won't rely too much on your help next time, but rather would learn to inform you when something is not working and to ask for help. Moreover, this response is harmful since it could create the impression of criticism – in fact, Vanessa was responsible enough to point out the problem in advance. **This is the least effective response.**

Response B suggests an appropriate action, but its rationalization is flawed. Helping your employee is valuable for the sake of work progress, employee development, and relationship with your employees. In this response, you help your employee for the sake of your ego and the impression you make on your employees. At the beginning of working with you, your employees probably believe you are familiar with their work. When you do notice that your employees feel otherwise, this implies a lack of trust and such a situation requires more thorough treatment.

Response C has a valid rationalization and in some positions, it's possible that you won't be able to work alongside your employees. However, since we are told about an exceptional situation and about an employee who is relatively new and still learning her job, leaving her with the problem seems inflexible.

Response D emphasizes your relationship with your employees: you want your employee to know she can ask for help and can rely on you. Working alongside her is a good opportunity to see what went wrong, where were her difficulties and tutor her. Notice that this answer choice does not suggest that you do her work instead of her, but rather working together in a way that allows you to see what she is doing, each step of the way and vice versa, she has a chance to watch closely and how you perform the task. **This is the most effective response.**

References:

<https://www.jobtestprep.com/sjt-supervisory-test>

[Free Situational Judgement Test for Managers Practice 2024](#)

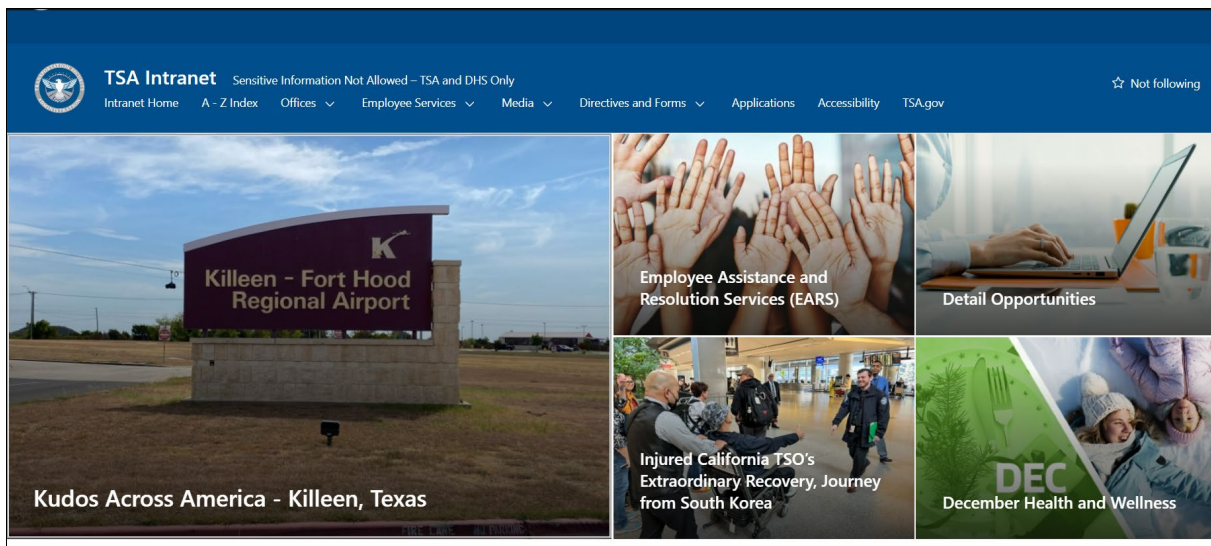
Appendix E: How to Access Developmental Activities

The purpose of providing information about the TSA Career Management site is for SFAM applicants to focus on self-assessment and development. We want applicants to focus on obtaining critical competencies and skills necessary to be successful in the SFAM position rather than the assessment itself. In conjunction with the Career Management Portal, we encourage you to meet with a supervisor, trusted coach, or mentor, to identify a development plan for best results.

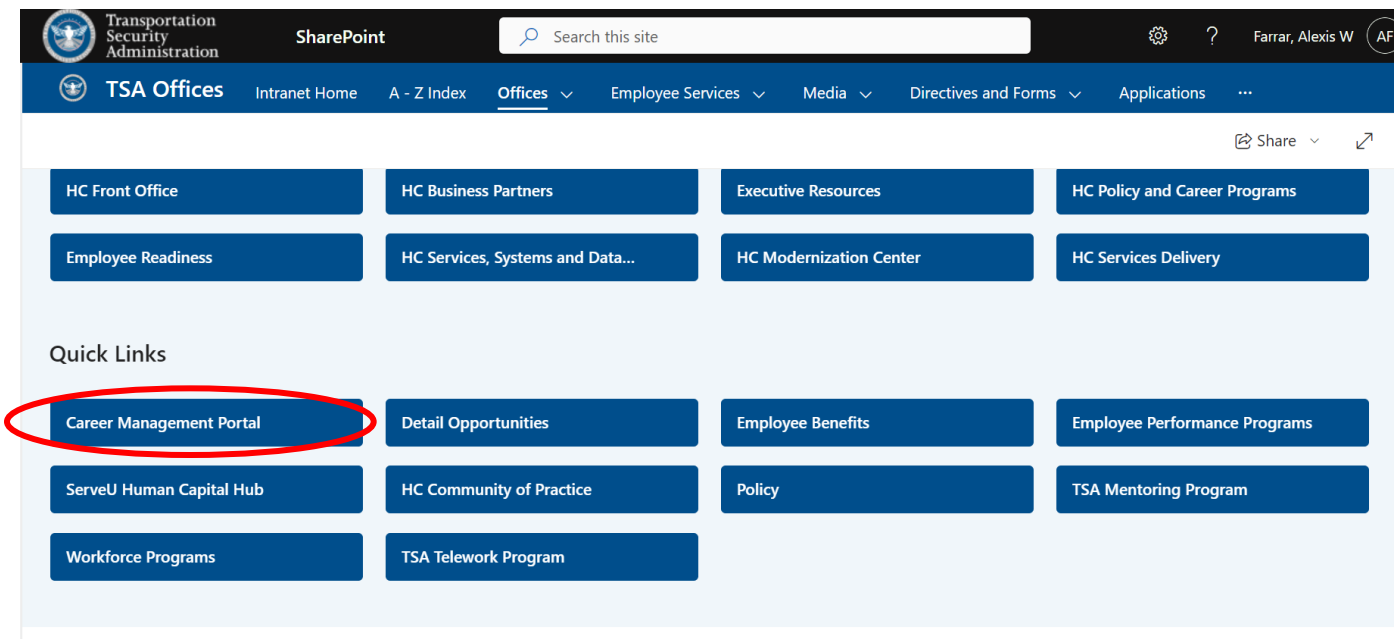
How to Access Developmental Activities

A good resource to further your understanding and development for the critical SFAM competencies is located on Sharepoint (intranet). You can go directly to the following URL: [TSA Intranet - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com). You may follow the procedures listed below to navigate the career portal.

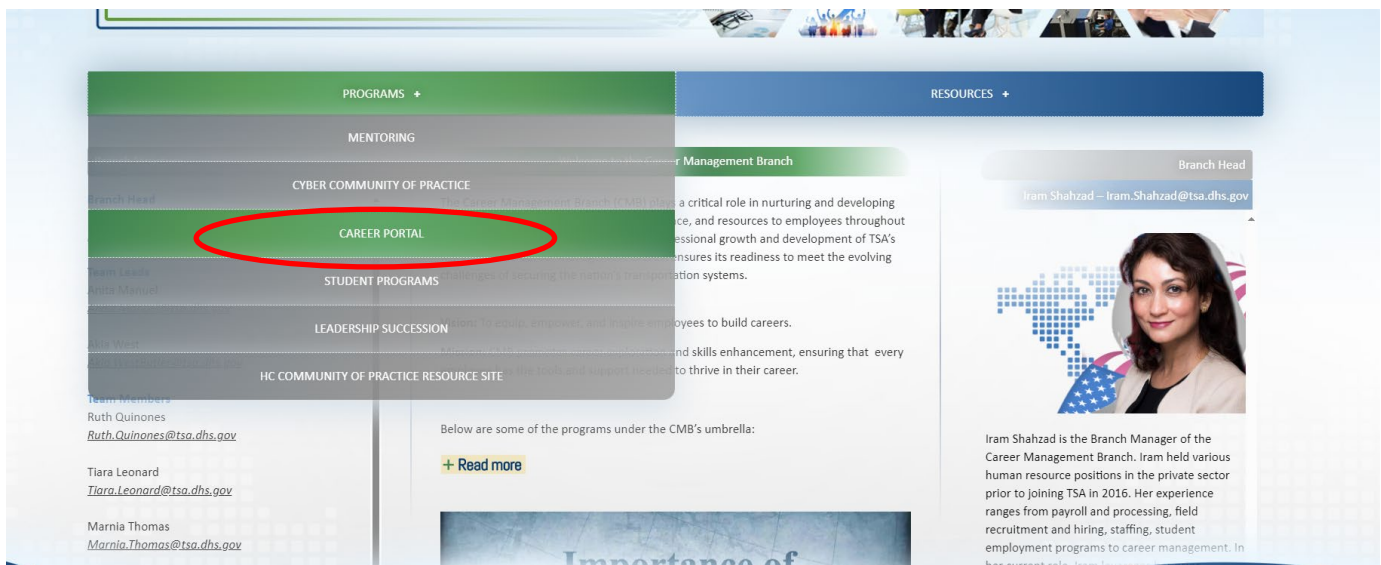
Step 1: Go to [TSA Intranet - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com). From there go to “Offices” → “Enterprise Support” → “Human Capital”




Step 2: From the Human Capital site, scroll down and click on “Career Management Portal”.



Step 3: Go to “Programs,” then select “Career Portal.”



Step 4: Provide your consent to access the [Career Portal](#).




TSA Career Portal

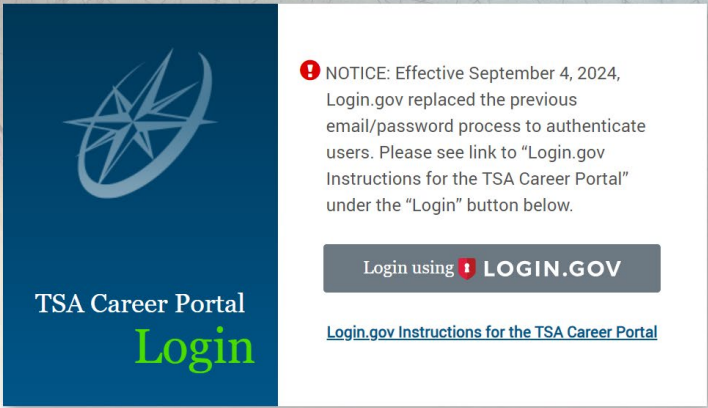
You are accessing a U.S. Government information system, which includes (1) this computer, (2) this computer network, (3) all computers connected to this network and (4) all devices and storage media attached to this network or to a computer on this network. This information system is provided for U.S. Government-authorized use only. Unauthorized or improper use or access of this system may result in disciplinary action, as well as civil and criminal penalties. By using this information system, you understand and consent to the following: You have no reasonable expectation of privacy when you use this information system; this includes any communications or data transiting, stored on, originated from or directed to this information system. At any time, and for any lawful government purpose, the government may monitor, intercept, search and seize any communication or data transiting, stored on, originated from or directed to or from this information system. The government may disclose or use any communications or data transiting, stored on, originated from or directed to or from this information system for any lawful government purpose. You are NOT authorized to process classified information on this information system. By logging into this system you agree to all statements listed in the DHS Rules of Behavior located on DHS Connect:
<https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/4300A-Handbook-Attachmentt-G-Rules-of-Behavior.pdf>

☐ I consent to the terms above.


Step 5: Login with your credentials or PIV card on the TSA Career Portal Login screen.



TSA Career Portal



NOTICE: Effective September 4, 2024, Login.gov replaced the previous email/password process to authenticate users. Please see link to "Login.gov Instructions for the TSA Career Portal" under the "Login" button below.

Login using  **LOGIN.GOV**

[Login.gov Instructions for the TSA Career Portal](#)

Step 6: Click on New User to create a new account.

https://tsacareemap.usalearning.gov/register.aspx

TSA Career Portal

Create New User Account

Welcome, new user!

To create your account on the TSA Career Portal System, please fill in all information below, then select **Submit**.

Note: You must have a valid @TSA.DHS.GOV email address in order to register on this site.

Email Address:

Re-enter Email Address:

First Name:

Last Name:

Series/Title: [Expand Series/Title](#)

Pay Plan:

Pay Band:

Job Position:

Field/HQ:

Supervisory Status:

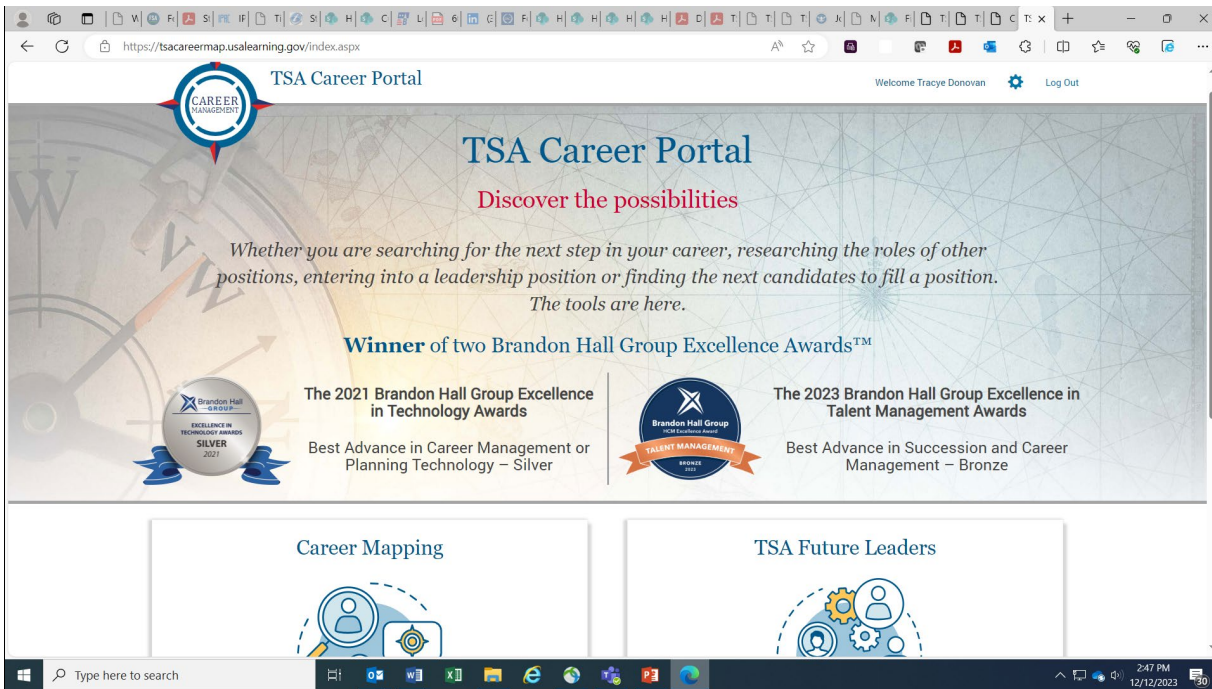
Where do you work?

Program Office:

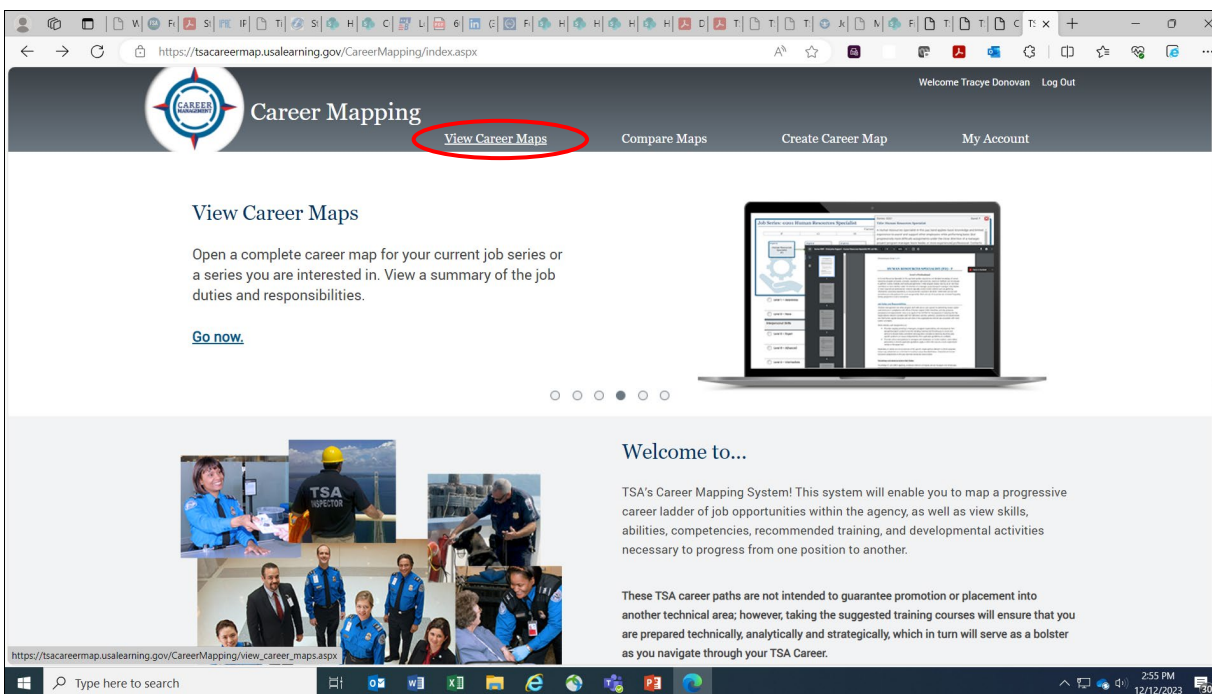
Step 7: Answer each question and Click on Submit.

Step 8: Check your email to complete the registration process and add other relevant information.

Step 9: Proceed to the TSA Career Portal. Select “Enter” under Career Mapping (all Bands).



Step 10: On the Career Mapping site, you may view career maps or scroll to the bottom of the page to peruse the various career development activities, information and tools. To view the SFAM career map, click on “View Career Maps”.

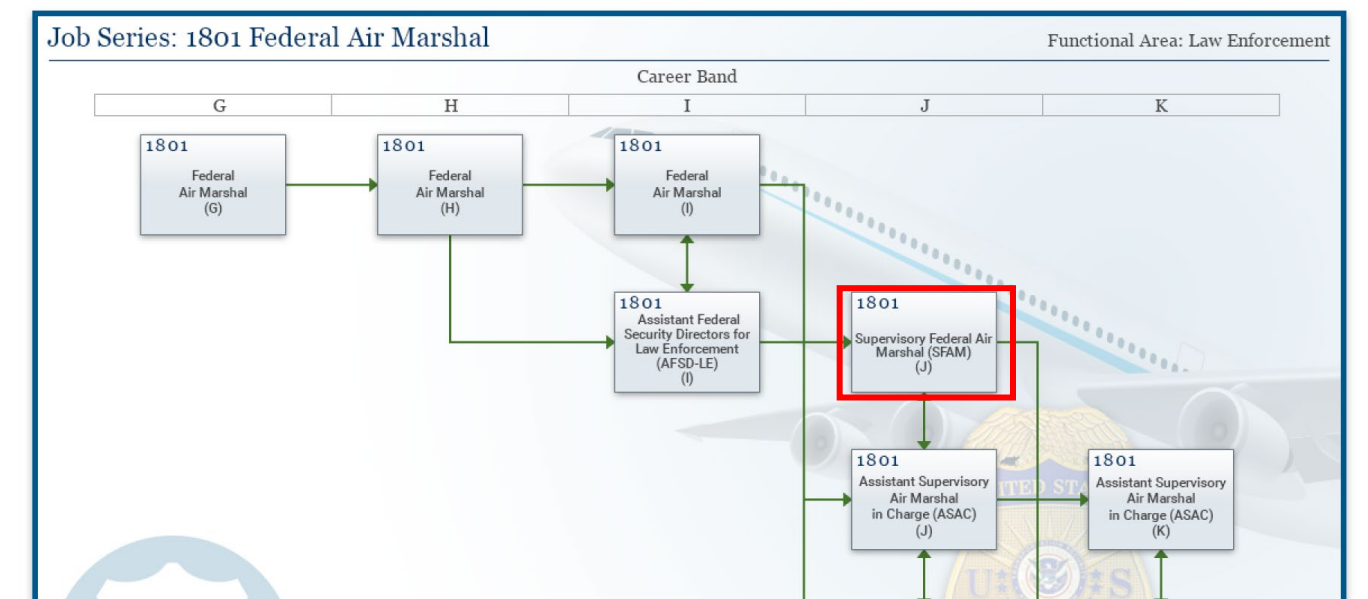


Step 11: Choosing “View Career Maps” takes you to the list below. Select 1801 Federal Air Marshal. There is no separate career map for the SFAM position because they are part of the natural career progression of the Federal Air Marshal position.

Enterprise Support	0501	Financial Specialist
Enterprise Support	0510	Accountant
Enterprise Support	0511	Auditor
Enterprise Support	0560	Budget Analyst
Legal Counsel	0905	Attorney-Advisor
Enterprise Support	1102	Contract Specialist
Enterprise Support	1712	Training Specialist/Training Instructor
Security Operations	1801	Assistant Federal Security Director
Law Enforcement	1801	Federal Air Marshal
Security Operations	1801	Transportation Security Inspector
Security Operations	1801	Transportation Security Specialist
Security Operations	1801	Transportation Security Manager
Security Operations	1801	Security Support Assistant
Security Operations	1802	Transportation Security Officer
Law Enforcement	1811	Criminal Investigator
Enterprise Support	2210	Information Technology Specialist

Showing 1 to 36 of 36 series

Step 12: A sample career map for 1801 Federal Air Marshal is shown below. Choose the title you are interested in learning about. For SFAM choose “1801 Supervisory Federal Air Marshal (SFAM) (J)”. Clicking on a job title will result in a pop screen with the job description. At the bottom of the pop up box are two choices: View / Print Full Position Description or Competency Self-Assessment.



Step 13 : Select “Competency Self-Assessment”.

Click on a job title to view a summary of the job duties and responsibilities. You can also view/print the full position description.

Series: 1801 Band: J

Title: Supervisory Federal Air Marshal (SFAM)

Applies an expert knowledge and mastery of advanced principles, concepts, regulations, practices, and analytical methods and techniques and often serves as the TSA agency lead subject-matter expert and principal point of contact. Serves as a principal or team leader for challenging projects/programs/activities under minimal direction. Provides well-seasoned and expert consultative advice, guidance, and instruction, both within TSA and as part of Homeland Security or inter-agency task forces or groups, to address diverse, complex issues which often cross multiple projects/programs or functional areas.

Broad policies and objectives provide guidance for addressing issues but allow for considerable discretion to develop new and innovative approaches; draws on experience to solve unusual problems and may create new solutions and policy interpretations as the situation arises. Work is typically reviewed through status reports and at project completion to ensure technical compliance and alignment with requirements of the project or other work activity.

Work is characterized by such assignments as:

View/Print Full Position Description

Competency Self-Assessment

Functional Area: Law Enforcement

Peer Band

I	J	K
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Choosing Competency Self-Assessment will take you the start of the self-assessment tool. The self-assessment will ask you questions related to each of the competencies belonging to SFAM position. The self-assessment will gauge where you currently are and to identify gaps between current state and the level best suited for your chosen job title.

Once completed, the self-assessment report will create a file report. Also, the option to use courses on the Percipio (TSA's online learning platform) tied to the specific competencies is available.

At this point you have the freedom to use your feedback information in various ways: some candidates look at their weaknesses and try to build on them. Others will look to work on their strengths and some will try to achieve a mix of the above strategy.

You are free to share this report with your direct supervisor, a coach, and/or a mentor, to create a developmental plan and identify how you can use this information.