

## Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT)

1. The Department and our testing contractor, ACT want to begin working with posts to prepare for the October 1-8, 2011 administration of the FSOT. This message provides the deadlines for this testing window, as well as a re-cap of the procedures and useful information about the test. Test Administrators and proctors are ineligible to take future FSOTs for a period of one year. Family members of test-takers may not serve as proctors or test administrators. Basic testing routines and duties remain as instituted in June 2009.

2) ACT training and test materials for Test Administrators and Proctors are now posted on Diplopedia. They are not sent via email. All relevant training documents can be found at "Administering the FSOT Overseas" on Diplopedia ([http://diplopedia.state.gov/index.php?title=Administering the FSOT Overseas](http://diplopedia.state.gov/index.php?title=Administering_the_FSOT_Overseas)). This allows post personnel to access these large documents when convenient, without clogging their email in boxes.

3) Posts are no longer able to verify examinees' passwords. Examinees are required to bring their username and password with them to the testing center. If they do not bring this information with them. They will not be able to take the test.

### DEADLINES

4. Deadlines: The following deadlines will apply to the October 1-8, 2011 test window, both domestic and overseas. Note that some of these require specific action by posts. All deadlines, except as noted. Are COB Washington time. - Friday, July 29 OOB: Deadline for posts to notify Department and ACT of their intent to offer the FSO Test in October. Responses should be sent to the following mailboxes: [FSOTadministration@state.gov](mailto:FSOTadministration@state.gov) and [CentersAssistance@act.org](mailto:CentersAssistance@act.org). Within two business days, ACT will then send instructions for completing their site activation. Posts new to the FSOT will be required to run a sample test and complete an activation worksheet. Posts which offered the FSOT in the past. But which have undergone facility or technical changes. Will need to request a sample test to ensure successful delivery.

- Monday, August 15, 2011 : Final day for posts to complete required steps *and or* enter all required information into ACT ALM. - Monday, August 22, 2011: The list of overseas diplomatic posts offering the test in October will be posted on the Department's website: [careers.state.gov](http://careers.state.gov). Once this list is posted no changes will be permitted. - Monday, August 29, 2011: ACT begins to invite applicants (on a staggered basis, according to career track) to schedule a seat at domestic and overseas locations. Management and Economic candidates will receive invitations first, followed by Consular candidates, and then Political and Public Diplomacy (PO) candidates. - Monday, September 19, 2011: Last date for candidates intending to test overseas to submit completed registration forms. - Friday, September 23, 2011: Deadline for Proctors to complete training. - Friday, September 23, 2011 (at 9:00 AM COT): Deadline for candidates to schedule test seats at overseas sites. NOTE: In the past, some candidates waited until the last minute and either missed deadlines or found that desired testing locations were full. Please emphasize to inquiring candidates that they schedule test seats early. Unscheduled candidates will be invited to test during the following window if overall scheduling capacity is reached before September 23. - Wednesday, September 28, 2011 (9:00 AM COT): Last date for

applicants intending to test in the United States to submit completed registration form .- Forty-eight hours prior to test date: Deadline for candidates testing in the United States to schedule a test seat. This means a candidate can reserve a seat for a October 1 test in the United States as late as 11 :59 PM COT on September 28. (NOTE: U.S. test takers can schedule this close to test day because they are using dedicated ACT Test Centers. Posts may counsel prospective test takers that they have the option to schedule to test at a U.S. site as on October 6. if seats are available.

5. Informative documents related to the FSOT can be found on Diplopedia, including: Administering the FSOT Overseas, FSOT FAQs, FSOT Basic Guidance, FSOT Proctor Checklist, and FSOT Best Practices. Detailed information on the overall selection process can be found at <http://careers.state.gov>. Please note that the following information for posts can also be found on Diplopedia. Posts planning to offer the FSOT in October are encouraged to consult Diplopedia resources, many of which are in the process of being revised. Updated versions will be posted to Diplopedia prior to the deadlines for site preparation.

6. Proctoring Requirements: Posts need to provide one Proctor for every eight test takers. Proctors must confirm the identity of each test taker and ensure that no inappropriate activity takes place during the test. Proctors must train in advance on how to log into the ACT system on test day to unlock the test for identified test takers and how to instruct test takers to log in themselves to take the test. Training materials are located on Diplopedia. Therefore, all Proctors must have access to the DoS intranet. Proctors should be FS Generalists, FS Specialists, or Eligible Family Members (EFMs). When using EFMs, give priority to U.S. citizen EFMs. NOTE: Since Proctors have access to the FSOT, they must wait one year before taking a future FSOT. Family members or dependents of test takers may not serve as proctors or test administrators.

7. Efficient Scheduling: Posts can cluster test takers on the fewest number of test days possible. ACT will allow qualified applicants to go online and schedule their test only for the dates/times that post has chosen. Some posts may want initially to cluster all test takers in one session only, and open additional sessions only when the previous session fills up.

8. Communication with candidates: All scheduling is done through ACT and posts should not communicate directly with candidates about seat availability or cancellations. Instead, candidates should be advised to use the ACT system to find openings and to schedule. Please note there is no "waiting list" for either overseas or domestic slots, and posts should proactively inform candidates regarding whether the testing site is filled to capacity. Once the deadline to schedule an appointment at an international post is reached, ACT turns off the international scheduling program and scheduling is closed. At this point there may be no additions to the post's scheduled candidates, regardless of unfilled seats.