OVERVIEW

A practical way to work with Vigilant Aerospace Systems through an Other Transaction (OT) is to use a SOSSEC consortium vehicle that matches the mission need. SOSSEC describes OTs as flexible agreements used by federal agencies for research and development or prototypes, rather than standard contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements. The SOSSEC member list lists Vigilant Aerospace Systems as a consortium member in capability areas including sensors, situational awareness, surveillance warning, search capabilities, perimeter security, and systems integration.

HOW TO GET STARTED

1. Confirm That the Requirement Fits an OTA Prototype

Start by confirming that the effort is a prototype project, not routine production or a standard service buy. The DoD OT Guide exStart by confirming that the effort is a prototype project and not a routine service purchase or standard production buy. For Vigilant Aerospace, that usually means framing the effort around a defined mission need such as airspace awareness, onboard or ground-based “detect-and-avoid” (DAA), sensor integration, situational awareness, autonomy support, or mission software demonstration.

The key is to define a real capability gap and a prototype outcome. In SOSSEC’s process, the effort begins with mission thread identification, where the government identifies the mission need and decides whether to use a plug-fest, a project announcement with white papers, or both. SOSSEC also notes that classified development requirements, foreign participation limits, DD254 requirements, and government purpose rights (GPR) and intellectual property (IP) objectives should be addressed early.

2. Match the Requirement to the Right SOSSEC Vehicle

Next, identify which SOSSEC OTA vehicle best matches the mission area and technical scope of the project. For Vigilant Aerospace, the strongest overall fit is likely SCEC, especially for projects centered on sensing, situational awareness, software integration, and related C4ISR-type capabilities. A strong secondary fit is AFRL OTAFI when the effort is specifically structured as an Air Force prototype involving autonomy, sensing, or related software and systems work.

This step matters because the project has to fit the scope of the specific consortium vehicle before it can move forward through the SOSSEC process. In practice, that means choosing the vehicle before white paper and proposal development so the requirement is aligned with the right technical lane from the start.

3. Define the Mission Need with Vigilant Aerospace Early

Before any white paper is written, define the mission need clearly with Vigilant Aerospace. SOSSEC’s process shows that early-stage planning should cover the mission thread, the likely solicitation path, teaming needs, security requirements, data rights, and collaboration needs. SOSSEC also states that it supports outreach, technology scouting, collaboration, one-on-one meetings, and teaming webinars to help shape project concepts before formal submissions begin.

For a Vigilant Aerospace project, that early discussion should define the problem to be solved, the operating environment, the intended users, the expected prototype result, required data or deliverables, and the likely transition path if the effort succeeds. The clearer this is up front, the smoother the white paper and proposal stages will be.ort should go through a plug-fest, a white paper call, or a direct project announcement path.

4. Follow the SOSSEC Intake Path From White Paper to Proposal

Once the requirement is framed and the correct vehicle is identified, the project moves into the SOSSEC intake path. SOSSEC's published 9-step process shows two common entry paths. One is a plug-fest or plug-test, where vendors demonstrate capability in a government-supported setting. The other is a project announcement and white paper process. SOSSEC states that it issues project announcements, publicizes them, assists members in preparing white papers, offers webinars and one-on-one mentorship, and helps participants establish teaming arrangements.

If the white paper or plug-test is successful, SOSSEC then requests a project-level proposal. SOSSEC's process says it supports proposal preparation, reviews technical and cost proposals, checks compliance, reviews data rights and DD254 issues, performs cost and price analysis, and submits proposals to the OTA customer for evaluation.

5. Move From Selection to Project Approval

Once SOSSEC and the customer identify the most promising solution, the project moves into government evaluation and project approval. SOSSEC's process shows that the government notifies SOSSEC that a Project Level Order (PLO) is forthcoming, and SOSSEC then works with the customer to finalize terms and conditions, resolve remaining issues, request any needed proposal revisions, and prepare draft PLO documents.

At this stage, the effort should be largely defined. The technical approach, pricing, milestones, deliverables, security requirements, and data rights position should already be clear enough to support project approval. The goal is to close out open issues before award, not to restart the project definition process.

6. Understand How the Award is Issued

After approval, the government issues the Project Level Order to SOSSEC, and SOSSEC then issues a Project Level Agreement to the selected member or members. SOSSEC states that this agreement includes the project-specific statement of work or performance work statement, subcontract terms and flow-downs, DD Form 1423 data deliverables, milestone delivery schedule, and applicable cybersecurity provisions. SOSSEC also enters the project into its internal systems for milestone, deliverable, invoicing, and payment tracking.

For a customer engaging Vigilant Aerospace, this is the point where the effort becomes a live project under the consortium structure. In practical terms, the government works through SOSSEC, and SOSSEC manages the performer-side agreement with Vigilant Aerospace.

7. Execute the Project Against Milestones and Deliverables

Once the agreement is in place, the focus shifts to project execution. SOSSEC's process says it conducts a kick-off meeting with government personnel and the performer, enters the project parameters into its financial and milestone systems, participates in technical progress reviews, and supports communication between the government and performer throughout the effort. SOSSEC also tracks milestones, reporting, deliverables, and invoicing, and works to surface issues early.

For Vigilant Aerospace, this means the project should be managed around clear technical milestones, reporting expectations, and agreed deliverables from the start. A strong OTA project is not just a good idea with funding behind it. It is a defined prototype effort with measurable progress points, clear communications, and a shared understanding of what successful performance looks like.

8. Plan for Payment Around Milestone Completion

SOSSEC's payment step is straightforward. It states that invoices map to project milestones, that the government approves delivery before payment, and that SOSSEC supports prompt invoicing and payment to project performers.

That makes milestone design especially important early in the process. If the milestones are vague, payment timing and performance tracking can become harder to manage. For a Vigilant Aerospace project, milestone structure should reflect real technical progress, clear acceptance points, and practical deliverables that the customer can evaluate.

9. Build the Transition Path Before the Prototype Ends

The final SOSSEC step is transition. SOSSEC states that, after successful completion of the prototype project, it conducts project closeout, ensures the government has the information needed to transition to the appropriate platform or information system, works with the customer to assess the most effective acquisition strategy, provides draft acquisition documentation to support sole-source follow-on production if needed, assists with required testing and accreditation, and documents lessons learned.

This is an important point for a Vigilant Aerospace engagement. The project should not be treated as a one-off demonstration with no next step. The prototype should be structured from the beginning so the customer can evaluate results, capture the right data, and decide what comes next. That next step could be additional prototyping, fielding, integration into a larger program, or follow-on production, depending on the mission need and the project outcome.