

Adopted BOD April 2008



Position Statement CST Performing Dual Roles Intraoperatively

The Association of Surgical Technologists recognizes the potential risk of errors in the perioperative setting and the team work necessary to minimize the risk of errors in order to prevent harm to the patient and surgical team members. AST realizes that the CST and CFA perform intraoperative tasks that are specific to their roles in order to contribute to the efficient and safe conduct of the operation. This includes the separation of the roles and duties for each surgical procedure when the CST or CFA do not perform dual roles intraoperatively. AST defines dual roles as the simultaneous performance of the role of first scrub and surgical assistant by one person during a surgical procedure.

The CST is primarily utilized in the first scrub role; however, it is common practice for the CST to perform dual roles during particular surgical procedures, specifically what are referred to as minimally invasive/minor procedures. AST recognizes that the intraoperative responsibilities of the CST require an intense awareness of the entire surgical environment and that specific attention is essential for the CST to adequately anticipate the needs of the patient, surgeon, and other surgical team members. When the CST is utilized in a dual role, effective case management, organization of thoughts and activities critical to safe and efficient patient care, awareness of aseptic technique by all surgical team members, and quality of surgical patient outcomes may be compromised.

Therefore, it is the position of AST that individuals who have attained the credential of CST or CFA, have the knowledge, training and experience to competently perform those tasks that are specific to their designated roles. CSTs and CFAs should function separately and be independent of dual role responsibilities according to the specific role description and competencies established by the *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology* and *Core Curriculum for Surgical Assisting*.