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Barricaded Suspects
Entry Team
Hostage Negotiation Team
Hostage Situations
Sniper Team
Tactical Operations Team

TACTICAL OPERATIONS TEAM

The purpose of this order is to set forth Departmental policy regarding the Tactical Operations Team, consisting of Tactical Commanders, the Entry Team, Sniper Team and Hostage Negotiation Team, and to establish policy for deployment during high risk operations.

I. POLICY

- A. Recognizing that the use of specially trained and equipped police tactical operations teams during critical incidents has been shown to substantially reduce the risk of injury or loss of life to citizens, law enforcement personnel and suspects; and recognizing that a well managed team response usually results in the successful resolution of such incidents, the Department will utilize the Tactical Operations Team as a resource for the handling of appropriate critical incidents as described in this order.
- B. To ensure that team members have the opportunity to practice their special skills and develop their abilities to function effectively, all personnel assigned to the Tactical Operations Team shall engage in training and readiness exercises on a regular basis.
- C. Members of the Tactical Operations Team are specially trained and equipped, but they are most effective when deployed in team elements with proper support and command structure. Therefore, while it is appropriate for Incident Commanders to utilize individual Tactical Operations Team members for containment and/or response to exigent circumstances pending the arrival of the Tactical Operations Team, they

shall **not** build ad hoc teams to handle critical incidents or use Team specialized firearms or equipment in lieu of calling out the Tactical Operations Team.

- D. Upon the arrival of the Tactical Commander and team leaders, Tactical Operations Team members shall report to, and receive orders only from, the Tactical Operations Team chain of command, which is; team member, Team Leader, Tactical Commander, Incident Commander.

II. ORGANIZATION

- A. During Normal Operations (When Not Deployed)

The Tactical Operations Team is under the operational control of the Special Operations Section (SOS) of the Special Operations Division (SOD). The Special Operations Section Commander is the coordinator for pre-deployment operations to include: training, equipment, record keeping, operational planning, procedures, personnel staffing, and other functions as necessary to ensure the team's operational readiness. Tactical Operations Team membership is an auxiliary assignment, but when the Tactical Operations Team is activated, tactical operations take priority over all other assignments for team members.

- B. Upon Deployment

1. When tactical teams are deployed, they shall be under the command and control of a Tactical Commander. The primary Tactical Commander shall be the SOS Commander. Additional Tactical Commanders shall be designated by the Chief of Police to serve in the absence of the primary Tactical Commander, or to serve as Assistant Tactical Commanders during operations.
2. In all cases, the Tactical Commander shall be subordinate to the overall Incident Commander in terms of when and if tactical options will be initiated, not how they will be performed. The decision to deploy the Tactical Team on a course of action rests with the Incident Commander. Once deployed, the Tactical Commander is directly responsible for the methods and tactics used to accomplish the mission.

III. DEPLOYMENT

- A. The following types of incidents may warrant activation of the Tactical Team:
1. **Hostage Situations:** the holding of any person(s) against his or her will by an armed or potentially armed suspect.
 2. **Barricade Situations:** the standoff created by an armed or potentially armed suspect, who is refusing to comply with police demands for surrender, in any location, whether fortified or not.
 3. **Sniper Situations:** the firing upon citizens and/or police by an armed suspect, whether stationary or mobile.
 4. **High-Risk Warrant Service:** the service of search or arrest warrants where the risk analysis recommends or requires the use of a tactical team.
 5. **Suicidal Persons:** the threatened suicide of a person who has placed himself and/or others in immediate risk of death or serious injury if specialized crisis negotiation techniques or tactics are not employed.
 6. **As Directed:** any circumstances as directed by the Chief of Police or a Deputy Chief of Police.
- B. Activation of the Tactical Operations Team in the City of Oakland
1. The Tactical Operations Team may be activated at the discretion of the Patrol Division Watch Commander, or an Area Commander who is on the scene and assumes Incident Command.
 2. The Watch Commander/Incident Commander activates the Team for critical incidents by notifying a Communications Division supervisor, who initiates the call-out procedure. Unit

Commanders may request activation of the Team for planned operations, such as high-risk warrant service, by notifying the SOS Commander, or if he/she is unavailable, an Assistant Tactical Commander.

3. The Tactical Operations Team, when deployed on a planned operation will normally be task organized, consisting of only those elements and members required to perform the specific operation. Deployment of the Tactical Team for planned operations requires the approval of a Deputy Chief of Police.
 4. A Risk Assessment Overview and/or an Operations Plan shall be completed.
- C. Activation of the Tactical Operations Team in the City of Oakland for Outside Agency Assistance for Planned Operations.

Outside agencies serving high risk warrants in the City of Oakland should use their own tactical teams to the extent possible. A Deputy Chief of Police may authorize the use of the Tactical Operations Team in those situations when the outside agency does not have a tactical team, the distance involved makes their deployment to Oakland impractical, or when other extenuating circumstances are present.

- D. Activation of the Tactical Operations Team for Unplanned Incidents outside the City of Oakland.

The Tactical Operations Team will only be deployed to critical incidents in other jurisdictions (normally within adjoining counties) with the approval of the Chief of Police, a Deputy Chief of Police, or, if unavailable, the Patrol Watch Commander. The Chief, Deputy Chief or Watch Commander shall consider the following issues when making the decision:

1. The immediate need for a tactical team for the protection of life.
2. The availability of an outside agency's tactical team.
3. The need to support or relieve an outside agency tactical team during a prolonged incident (and reciprocal implications).

4. The need to support or protect any Oakland Police personnel already deployed in the agency's jurisdiction.
- E. Activation of the Tactical Operations Team for Planned Incidents outside the City of Oakland.
1. When planning a tactical operation in another jurisdiction, the primary investigator or the unit commander shall coordinate with the agency that has jurisdiction for that area and offer them the opportunity to handle the tactical entry or arrest.
 2. The Tactical Operations Team may deploy to nearby jurisdictions (normally within an adjoining county) for the service of Oakland Police Department initiated high-risk search and arrest warrants. Such deployment shall require the approval of the Chief of Police or a Deputy Chief.

IV. THE ENTRY TEAM

A. Mission Statement

The mission of the Entry Team is to resolve critical incidents using minimal force. They are the primary maneuver elements of the Tactical Operations Team, and are used to execute tactical actions such as building entries, searches for suspects, arrests, objective containment, rescues, and tactical responses to exigent circumstances.

- B. The Entry Team consists of 5 Sergeants of Police (non-probationary) assigned as Team Leaders and 24 Police Officers (non-probationary) assigned as Entry Team Operators.

C. Selection Process

1. Members of the Oakland Police Department with a minimum of three years service at the time of selection (less if special skills or experience exist) may apply to become members or leaders of the Entry Team by writing a memorandum to the SOS Commander.

2. The selection process will be coordinated with the Training Section Commander and will include:
 - a. Written examination
 - b. Shooting skills test
 - c. Physical proficiency test
 - d. Oral interview
 - e. Work history matrix
3. The SOS Commander shall submit a list of qualified candidates through channels to the Chief of Police, who will select which candidates will attend a Basic Entry Team Course.
4. Candidates who successfully complete the course will be ranked by the instructors based upon the skills, abilities and performance demonstrated during the course. The SOS Commander shall submit a list of members who successfully complete the course through channels to the Chief of Police, who will assign members to the team.

V. THE SNIPER TEAM

A. Mission Statement

1. The Sniper Team provides long range firepower when needed to incapacitate a suspect in accordance with the provisions of Departmental General Order K-3, THE USE OF FORCE. The Sniper Team also observes the tactical situation and provides intelligence information to the Tactical Commander.

2. Team Organization

The Sniper Team consists of one Sniper Team Leader with the rank of Sergeant of Police (non-probationary) and 11 Sniper Team Members with the rank of Police Officer (non-probationary).

B. Selection Process

1. Members of the Oakland Police Department with a minimum of three years service (less if special skills or circumstances exist) may apply to become members or leader of the Sniper Team by writing a memorandum to the Special Operations Section Commander.
2. The selection process will be the same as that for Entry Team candidates with the addition of a long rifle shooting skills test.
3. The SOS Commander shall submit a list of successful candidates through channels to the Chief of Police, who will select candidates to attend a Basic Sniper Course.
4. Candidates successfully completing the course will be ranked by the instructors based upon the skills, abilities and performance demonstrated during the course. The SOS Commander shall submit a list of members who successfully complete the course through channels to the Chief of Police, who will assign members to the team.

VI. THE HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION TEAM

A. Mission Statement

The Hostage Negotiation Team employs verbal and psychological tactics to assist in the resolution of hostage, barricaded suspects, attempt suicide and other critical incidents. The Team uses techniques and practices that will achieve this mission with the highest regard for the safety, dignity and liberty of all persons and with minimal reliance upon the use of physical force. The Hostage Negotiation Team also may be used to gather and compile tactical intelligence for the Tactical Operations Team.

B. Team Organization

The Hostage Negotiation Team consists of up to 15 members with the ranks of Police Officer, Sergeant of Police, Lieutenant of Police, and Captain of Police.

The Hostage Negotiation Team may be called out without the Entry and Sniper Teams for incidents that do not involve armed or potentially armed suspects, such as unarmed suicidal persons who are not a threat to officers or the public.

C. Selection Process

1. Members with a minimum of three years service at the time of selection (less if special skills or circumstances exist) may apply to become members of the Hostage Negotiation Team by forwarding a memorandum to the Special Operations Section Commander.
2. The selection process will be coordinated with the Training Section Commander and will include:
 - a. Oral interview
 - b. Work history matrix
3. The SOS Commander shall submit a list of successful candidates, in the ranking based upon the results of the selection process through channels to the Chief of Police, who will assign members to the team.
4. The Chief of Police may remove members from the team as necessary. The Tactical Commander, or a unit commander, may request a member be removed from the team by submitting a recommendation in writing through channels to the Chief of Police.
5. Based upon the recommendation by the SOS Commander, the Bureau of Field Operations Deputy Chief shall select a Hostage Team member as the Hostage Negotiation Team Leader/Program Coordinator. He/she shall assume all responsibilities for the Hostage Negotiation Team during normal operations (Part II, A) under the direction of the SOS Commander. During deployment the Hostage Negotiation Team Leader is subordinate to the Tactical Commander.

VII. TACTICAL COMMANDERS

A. Team Organization

The SOS Commander shall be the primary Tactical Commander. Up to two additional Tactical Commanders may be assigned.

B. Selection Process

1. The Tactical Commander shall be the Lieutenant of Police assigned by the Chief of Police to the SOS Commander position.
2. One or more Assistant Tactical Commanders may be selected by the Chief of Police, so that one is available to command the Team when the primary Tactical Commander is not available and to assist the Tactical Commander during operations.
3. Assistant Tactical Commanders shall hold the (non-probationary) rank of Lieutenant. Candidates may apply to become Assistant Tactical Commanders by submitting a memorandum through channels to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police may consider the following factors when selecting a Tactical/Assistant Tactical Commander:
 - a. Leadership experience and potential
 - b. Field leadership experience (patrol sergeant and lieutenant)
 - c. Crisis management capability
 - d. Motivation for the position
 - e. Willingness to participate in training and call-outs.
 - f. Prior Tactical Operations Team experience

C. Training

Upon selection, the member shall complete a POST-certified Tactical Commander's Course, and work under an experienced tactical commander for six months prior to operating as a primary Tactical Commander during an incident.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE INCIDENT SCENE

A. Incident Commander Responsibilities

1. Establish an inner perimeter to contain the incident, prevent escape and avoid unnecessary injuries to police personnel and citizens.
2. Establish an outer perimeter to control entry of unauthorized persons or vehicles into the critical area, and establish safe routes to the Command Post.
3. Establish an Incident Command Post in a strategic location, usually between the inner and outer perimeter, as soon as practical. He/she shall manage the command post operations and normally conduct operations from that location.
4. Assume overall command of the entire incident, to include all support functions. Remain on the scene until he/she is properly relieved or the incident is resolved.
5. Act as the focal point of all directives or orders from any Departmental, City, or outside agency official.
6. Ensure the evacuation of any injured parties and ensure medical aid is provided as needed.
7. Designate a dedicated arrest team to take custody of the suspect(s) should he/she surrender or attempt to escape, and to react to exigent circumstances until the arrival of the Tactical Operations Team.

8. Ensure the safe and orderly evacuation of bystanders and residents who may be in danger.
9. Request standby assistance from outside agencies, such as ambulances and the Fire Department when necessary, and establish a communication system with them. This is normally accomplished by having an agency representative from each outside agency at the Incident Command Post.
10. Gather available intelligence information, including information about suspect(s) and hostages, and prepare exterior and interior scene diagrams.
11. Direct personnel at the scene **NOT** to take individual action which may jeopardize anyone's safety (nothing in this order should be interpreted to prevent an officer from acting in the event his/her, or someone else's life, is in immediate danger). The Incident Commander's intent is normally to avoid confrontation in favor of controlling and containing the situation until the arrival of the Tactical Operations Team.
12. Issue appropriate fire control orders/rules of engagement using the following terminology:
 - a. **Red Light:** No firing except in immediate defense of life
 - b. **Green Light:** Fire upon a designated target if an opportunity presents itself. This order is normally given to selected personnel such as snipers.
13. Notify those Departmental personnel or resources, normally through the Communications Division, needed at the scene, such as Investigators, Canine Officers, Helicopters, Public Information Officer (PIO), and Intelligence and Vice/Narcotics surveillance teams.
14. As soon as practical, notify the Chief of Police via the chain of command. This can usually be accomplished by notifying the Area Commander of the Area where the incident is located.

15. If necessary, establish a media staging area, a media access policy and designate a Press Officer (while awaiting the arrival of the PIO, or if the PIO is not called out). Normally, the incident scene, which includes the area from the inner perimeter to the location of the situation, is considered a crime scene and is therefore off limits to the media.
16. Ensure the media understands that any live broadcasts of tactical personnel or police actions could seriously jeopardize the lives of people involved.

B. Tactical Commander Responsibilities

1. Receive a briefing from the Incident Commander and once he/she deploys the Tactical Operations Team, assume tactical responsibility of the incident scene (normally defined as the area from the inner perimeter in).
2. Designate a Tactical Command Post if different from the Incident Command Post.
3. Designate an assembly area for arriving Tactical Team personnel.
4. Deploy an Emergency Response Team (ERT)—a team of Entry Team (and at times Snipers) officers with a team leader that responds to the objective as soon as they are dressed and equipped to relieve and take over the duties of the dedicated arrest team and other responsibilities as determined by the situation.
5. Assign team leaders, within their areas of expertise, to the following positions. (These assignments may be different than their positions during pre-deployment operations):
 - a. Emergency Response Team Leader
 - b. Hostage Negotiation Team Leader
 - c. Entry Element Team Leader

- d. Sniper Team Leader
- e. Inner Perimeter Team Leader
- 6. Develop tactical plans and courses of action.
- 7. Establish operations-specific Rules of Engagement, which may be more restrictive than those set forth in Departmental General Order K-3, USE OF FORCE.
- 8. Assume *Tactical Command* of the tactical operation upon the execution of the authorized course of action.
- 9. When possible, avoid allowing the incident to become mobile unless there is a clear advantage to do so. If the situation does become mobile, develop a plan to cover the following, at minimum:
 - a. Pursuit Vehicles
 - b. Surveillance Vehicles
 - c. Control of the travel routes
 - d. Pursuit Intervention Techniques

IX. REMOVAL FROM THE TEAM

- A. A team member may be considered for removal from the Tactical Operations Team under any of the following circumstances:
 - 1. A substandard performance evaluation.
 - 2. An established pattern of failure to attend Team training sessions.
 - 3. Failure to progress in training as documented by the Tactical Team Leader.
 - 4. Failure to satisfactorily complete a physical fitness or shooting proficiency evaluation and subsequent remediation.

5. Failure to maintain proper training records.
 6. Exhibiting a pattern of unsafe tactics during actual deployments as documented by the Tactical Team Leader or Tactical Commander.
- B. The Tactical Team Leader or Tactical Commander shall notify the Special Operations Division (SOD) Commander of the occurrence(s) of any of the circumstances outlined in Part IX, A, 1-6 of this order. The Tactical Team Leader, Tactical Commander and the SOD Commander shall determine if remedial training would rectify the problem(s) or if the member should be removed from the Team immediately. If it is determined the member should be removed from the Team immediately, the SOD Commander shall forward a memorandum to the Deputy Chief of the Bureau of Field Operations detailing the circumstances, and recommending the removal of the member from the Team.
- C. In the event remedial training is prescribed, the Team Leader shall schedule the appropriate training with the subject member. The Team Leader shall notify the Tactical Commander and SOD Commander when the remedial training has been satisfactorily completed, and the member will be retained on the Team. If remedial training has not been satisfactorily completed, the Team Leader shall notify the Tactical Commander and SOD Commander who will forward a memorandum to the Bureau of Field Operations Commander, detailing the remedial training prescribed and the failure to satisfactorily complete the training, and recommending the removal of the member from the Team.
- D. The Chief of Police may remove members from the team as necessary. The Tactical Commander, or a unit commander, may request a member be removed from the team by submitting a recommendation in writing through channels to the Chief of Police.

X. IX. INCIDENT RESOLUTION

A. Incident resolution will be accomplished through courses of action appropriate for the circumstances. In any event, a resolution will be accomplished with the utmost consideration given to the safety of citizens, police personnel and all involved parties. Common courses of action, which may be used alone or in combination, are as follows:

1. Containment
2. Evacuation
3. Wait the situation out
4. Establish control over “environmental conditions,” (e.g., alter telephone service, cut off water/gas/electricity, add spotlights or sound at night to deprive subject of sleep.
5. Negotiations
6. Order subject(s) to come out and surrender.
7. Use of chemical agents and/or other less than lethal weapons
8. Sniper employment
9. Breach and entry of objective site
10. Mobile operations

B. Tactics

The Incident Commander is responsible for determining and approving the appropriate course of action and the concept of the operation, based upon recommendations from the Tactical Commander and other Incident Command staff. Once deployed, the Tactical Commander is responsible for directing and controlling tactical resources, and for the methods and tactics used to accomplish the mission.

C. Post Operation Procedures

The Incident Commander is responsible for management of post-operation procedures. This includes the immediate follow-up procedures put into effect upon resolution of the incident to control activities at the incident site and the resumption of normal operations (e.g. the return of evacuees, the removal of traffic barricades), and completion of all appropriate reports, such as crime reports, supplemental reports, use of force reports, etc.

D. After Action Reports

1. The Tactical Commander shall direct Team Leaders to prepare after action reports detailing the actions utilized to resolve the incident, including any recommendations for improvement. After action reports shall be submitted to the Tactical Commander within five business days of the incident. The Tactical Commander shall compile the after action reports, add his/her comments and observations and forward the complete report through channels to the Chief of Police.
2. The Bureau of Field Operations Deputy Chief or an Area Commander may direct the Incident Commander to also prepare an after action report.
3. A Major Incident Board of Review may be convened to review the incident and actions of personnel in accordance with the provisions of Departmental General Order G-6, MAJOR INCIDENT BOARD OF REVIEW.

XI. SPECIAL OPERATIONS SECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Special Operations Section Commander shall ensure the preparation and maintenance of a written Tactical Team Policy and Procedure Manual containing the standard operating procedures for the Entry Team, Sniper Team and Hostage Negotiation Team. A copy of all policies and procedures shall be forwarded to the Bureau of Field Operations Deputy Chief for inclusion in the BFO Policy Manual.

XII. REFERENCES:

- General Order A-16, Public Information
- General Order J-4, Emergency Driving & Pursuit Regulations
- General Order K-3, Use of Force
- General Order K-4, Reporting and Investigating Use of Force
- Training Bulletin III-P, Hostage and Barricaded Suspect Situations
- Tactical Operations Team Policy and Procedure Manual
- Law Enforcement Guide for Emergency Operations, State of California Office of Emergency Services.

By order of

Richard L. Word
Chief of Police