

Special Weapons and Tactics Team

404.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the Elkton Police Department in handling critical field operations where intense negotiations and/or special tactical deployment methods beyond the capacity of field officers appears to be necessary.

404.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Negotiation team - Designated officers, including those in a multijurisdictional team, who are specifically trained and equipped to provide skilled verbal communications to de-escalate or effect surrender in situations where suspects have taken hostages, barricaded themselves or who are suicidal.

Tactical team - Designated officers, including those in a multijurisdictional team, who are specifically trained and equipped to resolve critical incidents that are so hazardous, complex or unusual that they may exceed the capabilities of first responders or investigators. This includes, but is not limited to, hostage taking, barricaded suspects, snipers, terrorist acts and other high-risk incidents. As a matter of department policy, a tactical team may also be used to serve high-risk warrants, both search and arrest, where public and officer safety issues necessitate such use.

404.2 POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Elkton Police Department to request the assistance of a designated Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) team to handle critical field incidents where special tactical deployment methods or intense negotiations are beyond the capacity of the department.

404.3 MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION

Any SWAT team utilized and called upon by the Elkton Police Department for assistance will be under the direct supervision of their originating agency.

404.4 PROCEDURES

Situations that necessitate the need for a SWAT response vary greatly from incident to incident and often demand on-scene evaluation. The following guidelines allow for appropriate on-scene decision-making and development of organizational and operational procedures.

404.5 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines for the operational deployment of SWAT. Generally, the tactical team and the negotiation team will be activated together. It is recognized, however, that the teams can be activated independently as circumstances dictate. The tactical team may be used in a situation not requiring the physical presence of the negotiation team, such as warrant service operations. The negotiation team may be used in a situation not requiring the physical presence of the tactical

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team, such as handling a suicidal person. Operational deployment of the specialized teams shall be at the discretion of the SWAT Commander.

404.5.1 APPROPRIATE USE

Incidents that may result in the activation of SWAT include:

- (a) Barricaded suspects who refuse an order to surrender.
- (b) Incidents where hostages are taken.
- (c) Individuals who are threatening suicide and have refused to surrender.
- (d) Arrests of potentially armed or dangerous persons.
- (e) Any situation that could threaten or undermine the ability of the Department to preserve life, maintain social order, and ensure the protection of persons or property.

Requests by field personnel for assistance from SWAT must be approved by the Duty Officer.

404.6 FIELD PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES

While waiting for SWAT to respond, field personnel should, if safe, practicable, and sufficient resources exist:

- (a) Establish an arrest/response team in case the suspect takes action. The response team's tasks may include:
 - 1. Taking action to mitigate a deadly threat or behavior either inside or outside the location.
 - 2. Securing any subject or suspect who may surrender or attempt to escape.
- (b) Evacuate any injured persons in the zone of danger.
- (c) Evacuate or provide safety instructions to other people in the zone of danger.
- (d) Establish an inner and outer perimeter.
- (e) Establish a command post outside of the inner perimeter.
- (f) Attempt to establish preliminary communication with the suspect. Once SWAT has arrived, all negotiations should generally be halted to allow the negotiation and tactical teams time to organize, position, and assume the appropriate roles and responsibilities.
- (g) Plan for, and stage, anticipated resources.

404.7 ON-SCENE COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon arrival of SWAT at the scene, the IC shall brief the SWAT Commander and team supervisors. Upon review, it will be the SWAT Commander's decision, with input from the IC, whether to deploy SWAT. Once the SWAT Commander authorizes deployment, the SWAT Commander or the authorized designee will be responsible for the tactical response and negotiations. The IC shall continue supervision of the command post-operation, outer perimeter security and evacuation,

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media access and support the SWAT. The IC and SWAT Commander or the authorized designee shall maintain direct communication at all times.

404.8 COMMUNICATIONS WITH SWAT MEMBERS

All persons who are non-SWAT members should refrain from any non-emergency contact or interference with any SWAT member during active negotiations. SWAT operations require the utmost in concentration by involved members and, as a result, no one should interrupt or communicate with SWAT members directly. All non-emergency communications shall be channeled through the negotiation team or tactical team supervisor or the authorized designee.