



# BARRICADED PERSONS HOSTAGE SITUATIONS

**General Order Number: 9.2**

**Effective Date: December 28, 2016**

## **POLICY:**

The first fifteen to forty-five minutes of a hostage/barricaded person situation (excluding a rescue attempt) are the most dangerous. The actions taken by the first responding officer may affect the eventual outcome of the incident. Safety and control must always be the prime consideration in the decision making process. Disciplined communication, coordination, and control, are paramount to a successful resolution. This is truly a team effort incident. Normally there is **NO NEED TO RUSH** to a tactical solution. Studies show that responding officers can resolve most of these incidents through negotiations. The passage of time may reduce levels of stress, facilitate intelligence gathering, and foster sound communications and coordination. It is the policy of the Brookline Police Department to use the following tested guidelines in response to a hostage or barricaded person incident while maintain the highest regard for the sanctity of life.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **1. CONSIDERATIONS:**

- A. One of the most basic tenets of law enforcement is the protection of life. "To serve and protect" is probably the most universal mission statement of American law enforcement. In that regard, the first responding officers should apply the "Priorities of Life," demonstrated in this order:

Hostages/Victims  
Innocent by-standers  
Police/First Responders  
Suspects/Subjects

- B. It is also very important to emphasize that police officers should not lower themselves on that priority list by unnecessarily exposing themselves to danger simply to capture a suspect. Officers should tactically approach these situations with the "Four C's" in mind:

C-Contain (Locate, Isolate, Evacuate, Leave if safe to do so.)  
C-Control (Address possible contingencies, Control radio traffic, Traffic control)  
C-Communicate (Update personnel of plans, Intelligence, Contact suspect)  
C-Call (SRT and/or other appropriate resources)

- B.** Officers should establish inner and outer perimeters of safety. Once the situation is confirmed, the Patrol Supervisor should notify the Commanding Officer – Platoon on Duty. They should next immediately notify the Commanding Officer – Patrol Division, who may request the Special Response Team (SRT), hostage negotiators, available officers and any outside assistance if deemed necessary. Officers located in the inner perimeter should maintain a position of cover. Less lethal options should be deployed around the inner perimeter as soon as possible. Efforts should be directed to contain and to negotiate. Officers should make an initial determination into the motivation of the barricaded person, and should try to determine whether the individual is in a state of mental health crisis or is criminally motivated.
- C.** If it becomes apparent that a timely resolution is not imminent, a central command post should be considered. The central command post is that location from which all organized and controlled police activities originate. It should be located inside the outer perimeter but outside the inner perimeter. It should be located near the staging area where arriving personnel can report and remain until given specific assignments. If a fixed structure is not available, a police cruiser or patrol wagon equipped with cellular telephone communication may suffice.
- D.** Fire suppression equipment, ambulance service, and surveillance equipment should be requested and directed to a staging area. The staging area should be located near the scene and out of view of the suspect. Additional assistance and the media should also be directed to this area. The use of blue lights and sirens should be discouraged.
- E.** When dealing with firearms or explosives, consideration should be given to the evacuation of all innocent persons and bystanders from the inner and outer perimeter areas. All evacuations should be conducted in an organized, preplanned manner. Any innocent bystanders who cannot be immediately evacuated should be instructed to seek protection where they are.
- F.** Once containment is secured, a **SLOW DOWN** process should begin. Speed is usually not a factor. Time is on your side. Attempt to calm the suspect and talk him or her out of their barricaded position.
- G.** Every effort should be made to keep a hostage/barricaded person situation from becoming mobile. Any mobility on the part of the suspect(s)/hostage(s) increase(s) the difficulty of containing and managing the situation and

substantially increases the element of danger. Should a situation become mobile in spite of efforts to the contrary, the Incident Commander shall immediately notify the Dispatcher, and assign an unmarked unit to follow and maintain surveillance of the situation.

- H.** Maintain a low profile. Keep all marked police cars and uniform personnel out of sight of the suspect if possible. Do not overwhelm the suspect with an excessive show of force.
- I.** No law enforcement officer shall willingly become a captive or hostage of the suspect.
- J.** It will be the responsibility of the Commanding Officer - Platoon on duty to designate the on scene supervisor. The on scene supervisor shall be in command of all police operations and make all decisions regarding police action taken. They shall be the liaison between the officers and negotiation teams and all assisting outside agencies. The supervisor shall have the final say relative to the use of force, chemical agents and tactical assault.
- K.** The on scene supervisor or their designee may be authorized to address the media. All dealings with the press or television shall be in compliance with Brookline Police Department media policy.
- L.** Use of a trained negotiator is preferred. However prior to the arrival of a hostage negotiator, or if one is not available, the first responding officers should attempt to begin a dialogue with the suspect. Communication should be established utilizing the best means possible. The following suggestions may help the first responding officers during negotiations:
  - 1. Ask them to come out;
  - 2. Ask suspects why they are doing what they are doing;
  - 3. Make no suggestions;
  - 4. Keep suspect in a decision-making mode;
  - 5. Never negotiate weapons;
  - 6. Say you are working for them but you have to get higher approval;
  - 7. Never give them something without getting something;
  - 8. Stall for time;
  - 9. Gather as much intelligence about the suspect as possible.
- M.** First responding officers should not take aggressive action unless they have attempted all reasonable negotiations and. there is immediate danger to others or themselves.
- N.** When an assault alternative is selected proper planning must be conducted. Sufficient personnel must be assigned, timing must be carefully chosen, and

proper equipment must be utilized. The successful execution of an assault is a direct consequence of the attention given to its preparation.

- O. All responding officers will submit a report relative to their incident involvement. Copies of the report will be forwarded to the on scene supervisor. The on scene supervisor will review the submitted reports and write an after action report. The after action report will be completed and submitted to the Deputy Superintendent-Patrol Division for review. A debriefing meeting will be scheduled for all participants to discuss possible future operational improvements.

## **2. SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM:**

The Brookline Police Department's Special Response Team (SRT) has been established in order to provide a highly trained and skilled unit to support the Department with a tactical response to critical incidents. The SRT falls under the command of the Deputy Superintendent- Patrol Division, who is the designated SRT Commander.

When activated for operation, the SRT Commander, or the Tactical Commander (when the Commander is absent) reports directly to the Incident Commander, where one has been designated. The SRT commander is responsible for deployment of the SRT, tactical decision-making and tactical resolution of the incident.

The SRT commander is subordinate to the Incident Commander in terms of when and if the tactical option will be initiated, not how it will be performed. Unless the SRT Commander relinquished his control to another person outside the SRT, no other person, who is not in a leadership position within the SRT, will attempt to direct, supervise, or control any element or member of the SRT during a tactical operation (when a SRT ranking officer is present). If no SRT ranking officers are present, members fall under the supervision of the on-scene ranking officer. If and when a SRT ranking officer arrives, he shall assume tactical command of the incident. The other ranking officer(s) present may then concentrate on other responsibilities, i.e. logistic support, communications, and overall incident command. SRT members become subordinate to the SRT Commander until he/she determines that the activation is over.

Prior to a SRT ranking officer arriving on-scene, the Patrol Supervisor will:

1. Establish Inner and Outer Perimeters
2. Establish a Command Post
3. Arrange for an ambulance(s) to be on scene
4. Coordinate a staging area for arriving personnel, medical assistance, media, etc.
5. Develop appropriate intelligence
6. Begin evacuation (if necessary)

When a SRT ranking officer arrives on scene, the patrol supervisor will:

1. Brief the SRT Coordinator/Supervisor of the situation outlining known factors.

2. Control of the Inner Perimeter will be released to the SRT Commander/Supervisor who will be responsible for containment and apprehension of the suspect(s). Outer perimeter will remain the responsibility of the Patrol Supervisor until otherwise relieved.

### **3. ACTIVE SHOOTER:**

There may be situations that require an immediate police response in order to preserve lives and eliminate threats. When officers respond to a scene where an active shooter is present, it is imperative that the active shooter be located, engaged, and neutralized as quickly as possible. In these situations officers should proceed quickly, utilizing the tactics and techniques in which they have been trained.