

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy and Procedure Manual

SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS AND CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM

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408 SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS AND CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM

408.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) is comprised of two specialized teams: the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT). The unit has been established to provide specialized support in handling critical field operations where intense negotiations and/or special tactical deployment methods beyond the capacity of field officers appear to be necessary.

408.1.1 OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

The Policy Manual sections pertaining to the Special Weapons and Tactics are divided into Administrative and Operational Policy and Procedures. Since situations that necessitate the need for such a law enforcement response vary greatly from incident to incident, and because such events often demand on-scene evaluation, the Operational Policy outlined in this section serves as a guideline to department personnel, allowing for appropriate on-scene decision-making as required. The Administrative Procedures, however, are more restrictive and few exceptions should be taken.

408.1.2 DEFINITIONS

SWAT Team - Special Weapons and Tactics Teams are designated law enforcement teams whose members are recruited, selected, trained, equipped and assigned to resolve critical incidents involving a threat to public safety, which would otherwise exceed the capabilities of traditional law enforcement first responders and/or investigative units. SWAT is an accepted title for teams with specialized training, expertise and equipment as defined above and further defined within this policy. The primary characteristic of such teams that distinguishes them from other units is the focus of effort. Such teams are focused on incident resolution, as opposed to other functions, such as investigation. Their purpose is to increase the likelihood of safely resolving critical incidents.

CNT Team - A Crisis Negotiations Team is a group of trained professionals who respond to high-risk, high-profile cases of hostage-taking, suicide where the means of suicide represents a risk to the public or public order, barricaded criminals, as part of a pre-planned operation for large-scale civil unrest where the actors are open to a negotiated surrender or when there is a likelihood for a barricade or hostage situation as in a high-risk warrant service. A capable CNT Team can develop actionable intelligence regarding any negotiations or tactical problem, provide a risk assessment, open lines of communication with a suspect, and use active listening and bargaining techniques to negotiate a surrender. At the heart of the CNT response to a crisis is a belief that time is a precious commodity. The CNT Team works to buy time for the calming of emotion, the development of the best tactical plan, the creation of rapport between negotiator and suspect, to serve as a distraction of the suspect during tactical movements, and they are statistically the best chance for a safe resolution.

408.3 POLICY

It is the policy of this department to provide the equipment, manpower and training necessary to maintain a SWAT Team. The SWAT Team should develop sufficient resources to perform four basic operational functions:

- A. Command and control
- B. Containment
- C. Entry/Apprehension/Rescue
- D. Negotiations

It is understood that it is difficult to categorize specific capabilities for critical incidents. Training needs may vary based on the experience level of the team personnel, team administrators and incident commanders. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit individual teams from responding to a situation that exceeds their training levels due to the exigency of the circumstances. The preservation of human life is paramount.

408.3.1 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A needs assessment should be conducted to determine the type and extent of SWAT Missions and Operations that are appropriate to this department. The assessment should consider the team's capabilities and limitations and should be reviewed annually by the SWAT Commander or the authorized designee.

408.3.2 ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES

This department shall develop a separate written set of organizational procedures that should address, at minimum, the following:

- A. Locally identified specific missions the team is capable of performing
- B. Team organization and function
- C. Personnel selection and retention criteria
- D. Training and required competencies
- E. Procedures for activation and deployment
- F. Command and control issues, including a clearly defined command structure
- G. Multi-agency response
- H. Extra jurisdictional response
- I. Specialized functions and supporting resources

408.3.3 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

This department shall develop a separate written set of operational procedures, in accordance with its level of capability, using sound risk reduction practices. The operational procedures should be patterned after best practices recommended by the National Tactical Officers Association and the National Council of Negotiation Associations. Because such procedures are specific to tactical operations, they are classified as

confidential security data and are not included within this policy. The operational procedures should include, at minimum, the following elements:

SWAT Operational Procedures:

- A. Personnel responsible for developing an operational or tactical plan should be designated prior to, and/or during SWAT Operations (time permitting).
 - 1. All SWAT team members should have an understanding of operational planning.
 - 2. SWAT team training should consider planning for both spontaneous and planned events.
 - 3. SWAT teams should incorporate medical emergency contingency planning as part of the SWAT operational plan.
- B. A preoperational briefing should be conducted, unless circumstances require immediate deployment.
 - 1. Planned Operation:
 - a. A briefing should include incident details and an operation plan.
 - b. When reasonably possible, briefings should include the specialized units and supporting resources.
 - 2. Unplanned Operations:
 - a. First responding units should work to establish the following components as quickly as possible:
 - i. Containment
 - ii. Overwatch/Long Rifle Coverage
 - iii. React Team
 - b. Additional SWAT Members will begin to establish a Tactical Operations Center (TOC) and start coordinating the deployment of specialized equipment.
- C. Protocols for a sustained operation should be developed. These may include relief, rotation of personnel and augmentation of resources.
- D. A generic checklist to be worked through prior to initiating a tactical action should be developed. This will provide a means of conducting a threat assessment to determine the appropriate response and resources necessary, including the use of SWAT.
- E. A standard method of determining whether a warrant should be regarded as high risk should be developed.
- F. A method for deciding how best to serve a high-risk warrant should be developed, with all reasonably foreseeable alternatives being reviewed in accordance with risk/benefit criteria prior to selecting the method of response.
- G. The elements of post-incident scene management should include:
 - 1. Documentation of the incident.

2. Transition to investigations and/or other units.
3. Debriefing after every deployment of the SWAT team.
 - a. After-action team debriefing provides evaluation and analysis of critical incidents and affords the opportunity for individual and team assessments. It also helps to identify training needs and reinforces sound risk management practices.
 - b. Debriefing should not be conducted until involved officers have had the opportunity to individually complete the necessary reports or provide formal statements.
 - c. To maintain candor and a meaningful exchange, debriefing will generally not be recorded.
 - d. When appropriate, debriefing should include specialized units and resources.
4. Sound risk management analysis should be included.
5. Standardization of equipment should be addressed.

CNT Operational Procedures:

- A. Personnel responsible for developing a negotiation plan should be designated prior to, and/or during CNT operations (time permitting).
 1. CNT members should have an understanding of operational planning.
 2. CNT training should consider planning for both spontaneous and planned events.
- B. A preoperational briefing should be conducted, unless circumstances require immediate deployment.
 1. Planned Operation:
 - a. A briefing should include incident details and an operation plan.
 - b. When reasonably possible, briefings should include the specialized units and supporting resources.
 2. Unplanned Operation:
 - a. The first CNT Member on scene will serve as the Primary Negotiator, and their primary mission will be to establish communication with the suspect/subject.
 - b. The second CNT Member on scene will:
 - i. If contact is established, assume a Secondary Negotiator Role.
 - ii. If no contact is established, assume an Intelligence Role.
 - c. Additional CNT Members will begin to establish a Negotiations Operations Center (NOC) and start coordinating the deployment of specialized equipment.
- C. Protocols for a sustained operation should be developed. These may include relief, rotation of personnel and augmentation of resources.
- D. The appropriate role for a trained negotiator should be defined.

408.4 TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (33.6.2)

The SWAT Commander shall conduct an annual Training Needs Assessment to ensure that training is conducted within team capabilities and department policy. All personnel assigned to SWAT or CNT shall participate in regular training and readiness exercises.

At minimum, SWAT and CNT personnel shall train together every six months in an operational simulation/readiness exercise.

408.4.1 INITIAL TRAINING

SWAT Team Operators, CNT Negotiators, and SWAT/CNT Team Leaders should not be deployed in an operational setting until successful completion of an approved basic training course or its equivalent.

- A. To avoid unnecessary or redundant training, previous training completed by members may be considered equivalent when the hours and content or topics meet or exceed requirements determined by the Department.

408.4.2 UPDATED TRAINING

Appropriate team training for the specialized SWAT functions and other supporting resources should be completed prior to full deployment of the team.

SWAT team members and SWAT supervisors/team leaders should complete update or refresher training every 24 months.

408.4.3 SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Command and executive personnel are encouraged to attend training for managing a critical incident at the organizational level. This is to ensure that personnel who provide active oversight at the scene of tactical operations understand the purpose and capabilities of the team.

Command personnel who may assume incident command responsibilities should attend a SWAT or critical incident commander course or its equivalent. SWAT command personnel should attend a SWAT Commander or tactical commander course or its equivalent that has been approved by the department.

408.4.4 SWAT ONGOING TRAINING

SWAT Team: Training shall be coordinated by the SWAT Commander. The SWAT Commander may conduct monthly training exercises that include a review and critique of personnel and their performance in the exercise, in addition to specialized training. Training shall consist of the following:

- A. Each SWAT member shall perform a physical fitness test once each year. A minimum qualifying score must be attained by each team member.

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- B. Any SWAT team member failing to attain the minimum physical fitness qualification score will be notified of the requirement to retest. Within 30 days of the previous physical fitness test date, the member required to qualify shall report to a team supervisor and complete the entire physical fitness test. Failure to qualify after a second attempt may result in dismissal from the team.
- C. Those members who are on vacation, ill/injured on the test date shall be responsible for reporting to a team supervisor and taking the test within 30 days of their return to regular duty. Any member who fails to arrange for and perform the physical fitness test within the 30-day period shall be considered as having failed to attain a qualifying score for that test period.
- D. Bi-annually each SWAT team member shall perform a mandatory SWAT Firearm's Qualification Course on all issued weapons. The qualification course shall consist of the department's standard firearm courses for each respective weapon. Failure to qualify will require the officer to seek remedial training from a firearms instructor approved by the SWAT commander. Team members who fail to qualify will not be used in SWAT operations until qualified. Team members who fail to qualify must retest within 30 days. Failure to qualify within 30 days with or without remedial training may result in dismissal from the team.

CNT Team: A minimum of one training day per quarter will be required to provide the opportunity for role playing and situational training to maintain proper skills. This will be coordinated by the CNT Team Leader

Continual evaluation of a team member's performance and efficiency as it relates to the positive operation of the team shall be conducted by the CNT Team Leader. Performance and efficiency levels established by the SWAT Commander will be met and maintained by all team members. Any member of the CNT who performs or functions at a level less than satisfactory shall be subject to dismissal from the CNT

408.4.5 TRAINING SAFETY

Use of a designated safety officer should be implemented for all tactical training.

408.4.6 SCENARIO-BASED TRAINING

SWAT & CNT Teams should participate in scenario-based training that simulates the tactical operational environment. Such training is an established method of improving performance during an actual deployment.

408.4.7 TRAINING DOCUMENTATION

Individual and team training shall be documented and records maintained by the SWAT Quartermaster and CNT Supervisor. Such documentation shall be maintained in each member's individual training file. A separate agency training file shall be maintained with documentation and records of all team training.

408.5 UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT AND FIREARMS

408.5.1 UNIFORMS

SWAT teams from this department should wear uniforms that clearly identify team members as law enforcement officers. It is recognized that certain tactical conditions may require covert movement. Attire may be selected appropriate to the specific mission.

408.5.2 EQUIPMENT

SWAT teams from this department should be adequately equipped to meet the specific mission identified by the department.

408.5.3 FIREARMS

Weapons and equipment used by SWAT, the specialized units and the supporting resources should be department-issued or approved, including any modifications, additions or attachments.

408.5.4 OPERATIONAL READINESS INSPECTION

The SWAT Quartermaster shall perform an operational readiness inspection of all unit equipment at least annually. The result of the inspection will be forwarded to the SWAT Commander. The inspection will include personal equipment issued to members of the unit as well as special use equipment maintained for periodic or occasional use in the SWAT vehicle(s).

A copy of all SWAT related readiness inspections will be forwarded to the Accreditation Manager for proof of compliance purposes.

408.6 MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISION OF SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The commander of the SWAT Team shall be selected by the Chief of Police.

408.6.2 TEAM LEADERS

The CNT Team, the Rescue Team, the Arrest Team, and the Sniper/Containment Team will be supervised by a team leader who has been appointed by the SWAT Commander.

The following represent the Team Leader's Responsibilities:

- A. The CNT Team Leader's primary responsibility is to supervise the operations of the team, to include deployment, training, first-line participation and other duties as directed by the SWAT Commander.
- B. The SWAT Team Leader's primary responsibility is to supervise the operations of the team, which will include deployment, training, first-line participation and other duties as directed by the SWAT Commander.

408.7 SWAT TEAM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

SWAT: The SWAT Team was established to provide a skilled and trained team that may be deployed during events requiring specialized tactics, in situations where suspects have taken hostages and/or barricaded themselves, as well as prolonged or predictable situations in which persons who are armed or suspected of being armed pose a danger to themselves or others.

The following procedures serve as directives for the administrative operation of the SWAT team.

CNT: The CNT Team has been established to provide skilled verbal communicators, who may be utilized to attempt to de-escalate and effect surrender in critical situations where suspects have taken hostages, barricaded themselves or have suicidal tendencies.

The following procedures serve as directives for the administrative operation of the CNT.

408.7.1 SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

CNT Team Selection Process: Interested licensed personnel, who are off probation, shall submit a request to the SWAT/CNT Commander. Qualified applicants will then be invited to an oral interview. The oral board will consist of the SWAT/CNT Commander, the CNT Team Leader and additional members selected by the SWAT/CNT Commander. Interested personnel shall be evaluated by certain criteria, which include:

- A. Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance.
- B. Demonstrated good judgment and an understanding of the critical role of a negotiator and the negotiation process.
- C. Effective communication skills to ensure success as a negotiator.
- D. Special skills, training or appropriate education as it pertains to the assignment.
- E. Commitment to the unit, realizing that the assignment may necessitate unusual working hours, conditions and training obligations.

The oral board shall submit a list of successful applicants to the Operations Support Bureau Commander for final selection.

SWAT Team Selection Process: Interested licensed personnel who are off probation shall submit a request to their Bureau Commander, a copy of which will be forwarded to the SWAT commander and other SWAT supervisors. Those qualifying applicants will then be invited to participate in the testing process. The order of the tests will be given at the discretion of the SWAT commander. The testing process will consist of an oral board, physical agility test and a SWAT basic handgun and team evaluation.

- A. Oral board: The oral board will consist of personnel selected by the SWAT commander. Applicants will be evaluated by certain criteria, which include:
 - 1. Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance.
 - 2. Demonstrated good judgment and an understanding of the critical role of a SWAT team member.

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3. Special skills, training or appropriate education as it pertains to the assignment.
 4. Commitment to the unit, realizing that the additional assignment may necessitate unusual working hours, conditions and training obligations.
- B. Physical agility: The physical agility test is designed to determine the physical capabilities of the applicant as they relate to performance of SWAT-related duties. The test and scoring procedure will be established by the SWAT commander in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources. A minimum qualifying score shall be attained by the applicant to be considered for the position.
- C. SWAT basic handgun: Candidates will be invited to shoot the SWAT basic drill for the handgun. Team evaluation: Current team members will evaluate each candidate on field tactical skills, teamwork, ability to work under stress, communication skills, judgment and any special skills that could benefit the team.
- D. A list of successful applicants shall be submitted to the staff by the SWAT commander for final selection.

408.7.2 TEAM EVALUATION

Continual evaluation of a team member's performance and efficiency as it relates to the positive operation of the team shall be conducted by the SWAT commander. The performance and efficiency level, as established by the team supervisor, will be met and maintained by all members. Any member of the SWAT or CNT Team Members who performs or functions at a level less than satisfactory shall be subject to dismissal from their respective team.

408.8 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The following procedures serve as guidelines for the operational deployment of the Special Weapons and Tactics. Generally, the SWAT team and the CNT will be activated together. It is recognized, however, that a tactical team may be used in a situation not requiring the physical presence of the CNT, such as warrant service operations. This shall be at the discretion of the SWAT Commander.

408.8.1 ON-SCENE DETERMINATION

The supervisor in charge at the scene of a particular event will assess whether the Special Weapons and Tactics Team should respond. Upon final determination by the Watch Commander, the SWAT Commander will be notified.

408.8.2 APPROPRIATE SITUATIONS FOR USE OF A SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

Examples of incidents that may result in the activation of the Special Weapons and Tactics include:

- A. Barricaded suspects who refuse an order to surrender.
- B. Incidents where hostages have been taken.
- C. Cases of suicide threats.
- D. Arrests of persons reasonably believed to be dangerous.

- E. Any situation in which SWAT or CNT deployment could enhance the ability to preserve life, maintain social order and ensure the protection of property.

408.8.3 OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUESTS

Requests for deployment of the Columbia Police Department Special Weapons and Tactics by other agencies must be authorized by a Bureau Commander.

408.8.4 MULTIJURISDICTIONAL SWAT OPERATIONS

The SWAT team, including specialized units and supporting resources, should develop protocols, agreements, and memorandums of understanding, employment agreements or working relationships to support multijurisdictional or regional responses.

- A. If it is anticipated that multijurisdictional SWAT Operations will regularly be conducted, SWAT multi-agency and multidisciplinary joint training exercises are required.
- B. Members of the Columbia Police Department SWAT Team shall operate under the policies, procedures and command of the Columbia Police Department when working in a multi-agency situation.

408.8.5 MOBILIZATION OF SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The on-scene supervisor shall make a request to the Watch Commander for Special Weapons and Tactics to respond. The Watch Commander shall then notify the SWAT Commander. If unavailable, the Assistant SWAT Commander shall be notified. The SWAT Commander, based on the circumstances and nature of the event, will determine if CNT needs to be mobilized as well. A RAVE Alert Message will be sent to the appropriate Team(s) notifying them of the operation. The Watch Commander will then notify the Patrol Bureau Commander as soon as practicable.

The Watch Commander should brief the SWAT Commander with the following information, if available:

- A. The number of suspects, known weapons and resources
- B. If the suspect is in control of hostages
- C. If the suspect is barricaded
- D. The type of crime involved
- E. If the suspect has threatened or attempted suicide
- F. The location and safe approach to the command post
- G. The extent of any perimeter and the number of officers involved
- H. Any other important facts critical to the immediate situation, and whether the suspect has refused an order to surrender

408.8.6 FIELD UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

While waiting for the Special Weapons and Tactics and/or CNT, field personnel should, if safe, practicable and if sufficient resources exist:

- A. Establish an inner and outer perimeter.
- B. Establish a command post outside of the inner perimeter.
- C. Establish an arrest/response team. The team actions may include:
 - 1. Securing any subject or suspect who may surrender.
 - 2. Taking action to mitigate a lethal threat or behavior.
- D. Evacuate any injured persons or citizens in the zone of danger.
- E. Attempt to establish preliminary communications with the suspect. Once the SWAT has arrived, all negotiations should generally be halted to allow the negotiators and SWAT team time to set up.
- F. Be prepared to brief the SWAT commander on the situation.
- G. Plan for and stage anticipated resources.

408.8.7 ON-SCENE COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon arrival of the Special Weapons and Tactics, the Incident Commander shall brief the SWAT Commander and team leaders. Upon review, it will be the Incident Commander's Decision, with input from the SWAT Commander, whether to deploy the Special Weapons and Tactics. Once the Incident Commander authorizes deployment, the SWAT Commander will be responsible for the tactical portion of the operation. The Incident Commander shall continue supervision of the command post operation, outer perimeter security and support for the Special Weapons and Tactics. The Incident Commander and the SWAT Commander or the authorized designee shall maintain communications at all times.

408.8.8 COMMUNICATION WITH SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS PERSONNEL

All persons who are non-Special Weapons and Tactics personnel should refrain from any non-emergency contact or from interference with any member of the unit during active negotiations. Operations require the utmost in concentration by involved personnel. No one should interrupt or communicate with SWAT personnel directly. All non-emergency communications shall be channeled through the CNT Team Leader or the authorized designee.