



# GENERAL ORDER

DURHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT  
DURHAM, NC

NUMBER:

4030 R-4

## HOSTAGE AND/OR BARRICADED SUSPECT INCIDENTS

Effective Date: 12/15/1995

Revision Dates: R-1 03/01/1996; R-2 09/01/2002; R-3 01/10/2005; **R-4 05/29/2017**

### INTRODUCTION

Specialized personnel of the Durham Police Department (DPD) shall respond immediately to incidents involving a hostage and/or barricaded suspect. The primary goal is the safe release of all hostages and the successful termination of the operation without loss of life. This policy supplements G.O. [4021 Unusual Occurrences & Incident Command](#) by specifying incident command procedures and considerations for hostage and/or barricaded suspect incidents.

### DEFINITIONS

*Arrest Team:* A team of at least two officers that are prepared to take persons into custody. In the context of perimeter operations, the arrest team should have a plan that includes responding to both planned and spontaneous surrenders. The plan should include force option assignments, verbal command assignments, and identification of optimum location of arrest.

*Barricaded Suspect Incident:* An incident involving a non-compliant suspect that is subject to being taken into law enforcement custody, who has threatened or implied violence towards him/herself or law enforcement if attempts to effectuate custody are taken, and who has taken a position with a tactical advantage such as a structure or vehicle that would likely require forced entry or an open area that would require law enforcement to approach without the benefit of protective cover.

*Emergency Reaction Team:* A team of at least two officers that are prepared to react to predictable emergencies within the inner perimeter. In the context of perimeter operations, the emergency reaction team should have a plan that includes responding to officer/citizen rescues (officer down situation), and the imminent or in-progress harm to hostages. In the event that hostages are being harmed prior to the arrival of the Selective Enforcement Team, the emergency reaction team may need to establish control of the scene in a manner consistent with Active Assailant training. The emergency reaction team will need to develop a plan that considers manpower needs, forced entry/breaching capability, and specific conditions that would trigger action.

*Hostage:* A person held by force, or threat of force, against their will, and threatened with death or serious injury unless certain stipulations are met.

*Hostage Incident:* An incident where probable cause exists that there is at least one hostage, at least one hostage taker, and the hostage taker has means to cause death or serious injury to the hostage.

*Hostage Taker:* A person who is directly holding, or acting in concert or conspiracy with a person to hold, an individual hostage.

*Inner Perimeter:* The area of containment closest to the suspect. The intent of establishing containment is to reduce the possibility that the incident will impact people beyond the containment perimeter and to allow resources to be amassed and directed at effective resolution.

*Outer Perimeter:* The area of isolation that prevents outsiders from interfering with the hostage or barricaded suspect incident. The intent of establishing isolation is to reduce the possibility of indirectly threatened people being harmed, providing an environment conducive to a cohesive and focused response, and to enhance operational security.

*Stand-off Distances:* A security measure that focuses on positioning personnel to protect them from physical injury while a situation is resolved. The appropriate stand-off distance is determined by the known or anticipated threat from the scene such as small arms fire, explosives, HAZMAT, or other hazards.

## **INCIDENT COMMANDER**

When a supervisor establishes that an actual or potential hostage or barricaded suspect situation exists, he or she will notify the Watch Commander. If unable to respond, the Watch Commander will ensure that a supervisor establishes Incident Command until an officer of higher rank can respond and assume command. As reasonably possible, the Incident Commander will:

- Initiate Emergency Officer/Citizen Rescues
  - Any officer or citizen that is in a position that is under direct threat from the scene and is in need of immediate evacuation should be the first priority for response.
- Establish Effective Inner Perimeter
  - Confirm Visual and Physical Containment
  - Consider using Patrol Riflemen and Canine Handlers due to increased stand-off capability
- Establish Incident Command Post
  - Identify an appropriate incident command post location considering stand-off distances, required security, and other hazards. If possible, the command post should be between the Inner and Outer Perimeter, and should not have line of sight to the scene.
  - Identify a staging area for tactical assets considering stand-off distances, required security, and other hazards. If possible, the staging area should be between the Inner and Outer Perimeter, should not have line of sight to the scene, and should allow for efficient access to the scene by assets at the staging area.
  - Identify safe routes to the command post and staging area
  - Designate a scribe to document the incident
- Establish Effective Outer Perimeter
  - Consider traffic and pedestrian access control
  - Consider preventing line of sight to Inner Perimeter
- Establish Immediate Action Teams
  - Arrest Team with sufficient personnel and plan (including force options, verbal direction, arrest location)
  - Emergency Reaction Team with sufficient personnel and plan (including triggering events, breaching capability, and defined objectives)

- Initiate Evacuations as Appropriate
  - Consider persons within the Outer Perimeter that may actively or predictably be in danger of being killed or seriously injured.
  - Consider Shelter-in-Place options
- Make Appropriate Notifications
  - Hostage Negotiations Team (HNT) – The Incident Commander contact the on-call Hostage Negotiator and the Hostage Negotiation Team Coordinator and have them respond to the Command Post.
  - SET - The Incident Commander will contact the Selective Enforcement Team (SET) and have them respond to the Command Post.
  - PAU - The Public Affairs Unit Manager will also be requested to respond to the Command Post to take charge of news media relations.
  - BCERT, EMS, Fire, DCSO HDU, CIT, Mutual Aid Resources (SWAT, Aviation, etc.), as needed
- Attempt to establish contact with suspect promptly, but do not negotiate unless required by the situation in order to keep the hostages and the community safe until the HNT team can take over.
  - Attempt to deescalate - Make no threats and use no intimidating phrases;
  - Gather and record tactical intelligence as possible;
  - Consider assigning an Intel Unit or CID officer as Intelligence Officer;
  - Complete accurate descriptions of hostages, suspects, and unknown others;
  - Develop threat assessment (consider history, weapons, crisis state);
  - Contact key holder and obtain floor plans/site plans;
  - Identify witnesses and associates that may have tactical intelligence.

## **COMMAND POST OPERATIONS**

All outside agencies or persons requested to respond by the Incident Commander will provide a representative at the command post. The representatives will keep their particular personnel on the scene informed of their role and responsibilities, and will be available to assist the Incident Commander with information from their specialized field.

Outside agencies include, but are not limited to, other police agencies and fire and rescue personnel. Outside persons will include civilians with special or pertinent knowledge concerning the incident.

The Incident Commander will ensure that the District Commander is notified whenever a situation develops to the point of establishment of a command post and the response of specialized individuals and units.

## **NEGOTIATION PHILOSOPHY**

The overall philosophy of DPD is one of “buying time” through the use of specialized communication by trained personnel.

As a general rule, the more time a suspect has to discuss and consider solutions for resolving conflicts, the greater the success rate for obtaining the peaceful surrender of the suspect and/or the safe release of any

hostages. The saving of human life, whether it is the life of the hostages, the suspects, the involved police officers, or the innocent bystanders, is the primary goal in dealing with hostage and/or barricaded suspect situations.

All demands are negotiable, except for the following situations:

- Situations that would increase the firepower or deadly force capabilities of the suspect or suspects.
- Situations where the movement or relocation of the suspect(s) and hostage(s) poses an unreasonable further risk to the public.
- Trading of hostages.
- Controlled substances or alcohol. Medications that are prescribed for any hostage may be considered.

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF HOSTAGE NEGOTIATOR**

The HNT Coordinator will be responsible for hostage negotiation needs and resources to ensure efficient and effective operations. The HNT Coordinator will act as an advisor to the Incident Commander.

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

The Selective Enforcement Team (SET) Commander will report to the Command Post and act as an advisor to the Incident Commander. The SET Commander will advise the Incident Commander regarding resources and capabilities.

The SET Team Leader will be responsible for collecting and analyzing available tactical intelligence and establishing operational plans for resolution. Although these incidents are unique and therefore provide very specific conditions that must be considered when developing operational plans, there are certain overall objectives that can be applied to most responses.

*Emergency Actions* – The SET Team Leader will be responsible for developing an emergency response plan for any reasonably foreseeable contingencies. The SET Team Leader will discuss triggering events with the SET Commander. In the event that SET initiates an emergency assault or other emergency action, SET may use any Department approved weapon or device that is available to them in order to maximize the successfulness of their action.

*Deliberate Actions* – The SET Team Leader will be responsible for developing deliberate tactical options for resolution of the incident. The SET Team Leader will notify the SET Commander when these tactical options are available. In the event that SET initiates a deliberate assault or other deliberate action, SET may use any Department-approved weapon or device that is available to them in order to maximize the successfulness of their action.

## **PATROL SERVICES BUREAU RESPONSIBILITIES**

Uniform Patrol will be initially responsible for all necessary operations relating to the management and control of the incident. As specialized personnel arrive and assume their specific duties, Uniform Patrol will be relieved of individual duties. The Incident Commander will manage Uniform Patrol committed to the incident.

The responsibility for securing and maintaining the outer perimeter will remain with Uniform Patrol throughout the duration of the incident.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES PROVIDER**

A psychological services provider, under contract with the City of Durham, may be used during any phase of a hostage and/or barricaded suspect situation. The Incident Commander or HNT member will have the DECC contact the psychological services provider to respond to the Command Post if needed.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

A Public Information Officer (PIO) will be identified. The Public Affairs Manager will typically fill the PIO role; however another Department member may serve as the PIO. After obtaining an initial briefing, the PIO will establish a media briefing area away from the Command Post.


The PIO will obtain updated information from the command post at appropriate times, and will release information to the media in compliance with departmental guidelines. Identities of hostage(s) and suspect(s) will not be provided until the conclusion of the incident and after any necessary family notifications.

## **POST-OCCURRENCE DUTIES / AFTER-ACTION REPORTS**

The Incident Commander will ensure that post-occurrence duties and after-action reports are completed following the conclusion of the occurrence. He or she will also schedule a critique of the incident.

## **ANNUAL REVIEW**

Both the HNT Leader and the SET Commander will review this policy annually.

  
Cerelyn J. Davis  
Chief of Police