

	Greenville, SC Police Department GENERAL ORDER		
	Subject: Specialized Equipment	Number 203A5	Type Operational
Effective Date 2/26/2026	Amends/ Rescinds 203A4	Pages 1 of 7	Re-evaluation October
References CALEA			Notes Changed Policy name; added wording throughout for specialized equipment and a Ballistic Shields section.

1.0 **POLICY:** The availability of specialized equipment and weapons can assist officers in de-escalation, enhance officer and public safety, and provide additional alternatives to the use of deadly force. Officers are authorized to employ specialized weapons and equipment in accordance with provisions of this policy and this department's overall policy on use of force.

2.0 **DEFINITIONS:**

Force: Use of force is defined in General Order 200 Use of Force.

Ballistic Shield: A shield constructed of ballistic resistant materials intended to protect users from small arms fire in situations where cover is limited.

Less-Lethal Force: A level of force with the intended and probable consequence of temporarily incapacitating a subject without causing death or serious bodily injury to the subject.

Less-Lethal Weapon: Any type of weapon or ammunition that is designed and intended primarily for use to temporarily incapacitate or disable a subject without causing death or serious physical injury to the subject.

Kinetic Energy Impact Weapon: Flexible or non-flexible projectiles which are intended to incapacitate a subject with minimal potential for causing death or serious physical injury when compared to conventional projectiles.

Impact Projectile: Projectiles designed for use in a 12 gauge shotgun, or 40mm munitions gun. These projectiles are designed to incapacitate a subject with minimal potential for causing death or serious physical injury when compared to conventional projectiles.

Bean Bag Rounds: A generic term used for impact projectiles which are typically filled with lead shot and designed for use in a 12 gauge shotgun, or 40mm munitions gun.

3.0 **KINETIC ENERGY WEAPONS/EQUIPMENT:**

3.1 Impact projectiles are an important component of this agency's less-lethal force equipment.

3.1.1 Dedicated shotguns will be maintained for deployment of kinetic energy impact and other less-lethal munitions. Remington model 870 12 gauge shotguns will be uniquely marked with orange or yellow stocks and fore grips so that they are easily distinguishable from regular patrol shotguns. Dedicated shotguns for kinetic energy impact munitions will be kept unloaded and will only be used with less-lethal munitions. Kinetic energy impact rounds will be stored in clearly marked cases with weapons dedicated for less-lethal munitions. The SWAT Team may employ additional less-lethal weapons for specialty munitions,

3.1.2 At least one 40mm weapon will be maintained for deployment of 40mm munitions. This weapon will be stored in the SWAT locker at 204 Halton Road.

3.1.3 Less-lethal munitions will be stored in the SWAT locker at 204 Halton Road. An adequate supply of these munitions will be stored in tactical bags ready for deployment. Only less-lethal and gas munitions are to be stored in these deployment bags. Kinetic energy impact munitions will be stored in a separate container clearly marked to indicate the types of rounds in the container.

3.1.4 Officers who have been trained in the use of 12 gauge kinetic energy impact weapons may be issued these types of rounds.

3.1.5 A dedicated and uniquely marked shotgun should be used when deploying kinetic energy impact weapons. An exception is allowed for exigent circumstances when it would not be feasible to delay deployment of the rounds in order to obtain a dedicated shotgun. SWAT officers may utilize an unmarked shotgun to deploy kinetic energy impact rounds in some circumstances when needed. The SWAT Commander or a SWAT supervisor will make this decision.



3.2 KINETIC ENERGY WEAPON TRAINING:

- 3.2.1 Only officers who have been trained in the use of kinetic energy impact weapons and have qualified in their deployment may deploy these weapons.
- 3.2.2 SWAT Officers will receive training in the use of kinetic energy impact munitions and their deployment.
- 3.2.3 Officers who have been trained in the use of kinetic energy impact munitions will qualify annually in the use of these munitions.

3.3 KINETIC ENERGY WEAPON DEPLOYMENT:

- 3.3.1 **Deployment Authorization:** Any supervisor may authorize the use of kinetic energy impact weapons. The decision to deploy kinetic energy impact weapons is based on General Order 200 Use of Force policy. Kinetic energy impact weapons are considered a level of force equivalent to impact weapons and subject to the same procedural requirements.
- 3.3.2 **Deployment Considerations:** Kinetic energy impact weapons are primarily designed for use against subjects who appear to pose a threat of death or serious bodily harm to themselves or others. Use of kinetic energy impact weapons may be considered when the supervisor reasonably believes that such weapons are a safe alternative to the use of deadly force.
- 3.3.3 **Loading:** Precautions must be taken to ensure that lethal rounds are not inadvertently loaded into the weapon. For this reason, two officers must load and verify the load of the weapon. The following procedures are to be followed when loading the weapon.
 - 3.3.1.1 The officer who will deploy the weapon ensures that the weapon is completely empty by both visually and manually checking the chamber and the magazine tube.
 - 3.3.1.2 If the weapon is not a dedicated less lethal platform as described above, a second officer will check to ensure that the weapon is completely empty by both visually and manually checking the chamber and the magazine tube.
 - 3.3.1.3 The second officer will verify each round is the correct kinetic energy impact round type and hand each round to the deployment officer individually.



- 3.3.1.4 The deployment officer will verify each round is the correct kinetic energy impact round type and then load each round into the weapon.
- 3.3.1.5 Once the weapon is loaded the deployment officer is to keep the weapon in his/her immediate possession until the weapon is either deployed or unloaded and given to another officer.
- 3.3.1.6 If the deployment officer gives the weapon to another officer, it must be unloaded and reloaded following the above guidelines. An exception is made for exigent circumstances if the deployment officer must pass the weapon to another officer for tactical considerations during an incident or if the officer is one of the original pair that loaded the weapon and they are properly trained.

3.4 DEPLOYMENT TACTICS:

- 3.4.1 The potential for causing death or serious physical injury with kinetic energy impact munitions is a reality. This potential is greatly reduced when impacts to the head and neck are avoided. Deliberate impact to the head and neck are considered a use of deadly force and governed by General Order 200 Use of Force. Officers should aim at center body mass or at an extremity depending upon the circumstances of the incident.
- 3.4.2 Prior to firing the less-lethal weapon the deploying officer will, where possible, warn other officers in the immediate vicinity that impact rounds will be deployed in order that the shot does not precipitate the use of firearms by other officers.
- 3.4.3 When engaging a target, the deploying officer should evaluate the effectiveness of each round. Compliance and/or incapacitation are the desired goal. Alternative target areas and/or responses should be considered when rounds are not effective.
- 3.4.4 The deploying officer should utilize cover whenever possible when deploying a less-lethal weapon. Ballistic shields deployed by trained officers should be considered when deploying less-lethal weapons.
- 3.4.5 At least one officer will provide cover with a lethal weapon for the officer deploying a less-lethal weapon. Additionally, one officer should be prepared to restrain the subject upon deployment of less lethal weapons at the direction of the less-lethal weapon operator by



maintaining their duty weapons in a holstered status.

3.5 **AFTER DEPLOYMENT ACTION:**

- 3.5.1 Any subject shot with a less-lethal kinetic energy weapon will be restrained as necessary and will be transported to a medical facility by EMS for examination and/or treatment if necessary.
- 3.5.2 Any subject shot with a less-lethal weapon will be photographed to document the extent of any injuries from the weapon.
- 3.5.3 Deployment of less-lethal weapons must be documented in accordance with force policies.

3.6 **KINETIC ENERGY WEAPON SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- 3.6.1 Conduct a preliminary investigation into the use of force incident.
- 3.6.2 Ensure medical treatment has been provided to the injured party.
- 3.6.3 Photograph any injuries sustained by officers and/or any damage to equipment, uniforms, or property.
- 3.6.4 Photograph the arrested subject to document any injury, or lack of injury.
- 3.6.5 Obtain witness information for investigation.
- 3.6.6 Complete an Administrative Report prior to the end of duty and forward through the appropriate chain of command.

4.0 **BALLISTIC SHIELDS**

4.1 **AUTHORIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT**

- 4.1.1 Ballistic shields will be made available to officers as determined by the Operations Division Commander.
- 4.1.2 Shields will be available for check out at the beginning of each shift and must be returned at the end of shift to its original location.
- 4.1.3 Ballistic shields should be stored in the patrol vehicle's trunk or rear storage area if there is room, and if not, in the rear seat of a vehicle equipped with a cage. In the event an officer storing a shield in their



rear seat needs to transport a prisoner, the shield will be removed from their rear seat during the transport.

- 4.1.4 Officers authorized to deploy a ballistic shield must complete initial certification training and annual recertification through the GPD's Training Unit.
- 4.1.5 Training will include the following:
 - 4.1.5.1 Shield characteristics, capabilities, and limitations.
 - 4.1.5.2 Single and two-officer movement drills.
 - 4.1.5.3 Weapon manipulation behind cover.
- 4.1.6 Absent exigent circumstances, only those officers who have successfully completed an agency-approved ballistic shield training course will be authorized to utilize the shield(s).
- 4.1.7 Only GPD-approved shields meeting NIJ Level IIIA or higher ballistic rating may be used in field operations.
- 4.1.8 Shields in use must be approved by an instructor that is certified in teaching Ballistic Shield Operations.

4.2 **APPROVED USES**

- 4.2.1 Ballistic shields may be deployed in the following situations:
 - 4.2.1.1 Active threat incidents.
 - 4.2.1.2 High-risk entries or building searches when an armed subject is present or is reasonably believed to be present.
 - 4.2.1.3 Barricaded suspect or high-risk vehicle approach.
 - 4.2.1.4 Immediate action to rescue an officer or civilian.
 - 4.2.1.5 Moving across an open area to obtain proper cover or to approach a location with potentially armed subjects.
 - 4.2.1.6 Approaching and securing subjects who may be armed, including suicidal subjects
 - 4.2.1.7 Any other circumstance where a supervisor or on-scene officer reasonably believes enhanced ballistic protection is warranted.



- 4.3 Ballistic shields shall not be used for crowd-control pushing, demonstration lines, absent exigent circumstances.
- 4.4 Ballistic shields should not be used as an impact weapon unless used in a manner to defend against an assault by a subject until other force options can be employed, or as an improvised weapon in accordance with GPD General Order 200 – Use of Force by Police Officers.

4.5 **DEPLOYMENT GUIDELINES**

- 4.5.1 Under no circumstances is a ballistic shield a replacement for SWAT Team notification or activation. Situations that normally dictate SWAT Team notification or activation are not affected by the presence of a ballistic shield.
- 4.5.2 The officer deploying the shield shall announce over the radio, when tactically feasible, that they are deploying their shield.

4.6 **DOCUMENTATION AND INSPECTION**

- 4.6.1 Shields shall be inspected quarterly for cracks, delamination, or handle damage.
- 4.6.2 Damaged shields shall be immediately removed from service and given to a shield instructor for evaluation. A shield deemed to be unfit for issue to an officer should be given to the Administration Division for disposal and replacement.
- 4.6.3 The Operations Division Administrative Sergeant will maintain an inventory log and quarterly inspection record for all patrol ballistic shields.

DocuSigned by:

J. H. Thompson

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J.H. Thompson, Chief of Police

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