


LEESBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS AND GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL		
General Order Number: 231	Section: OPERATIONS	Effective Date: SEPTEMBER 2022
Title: BREACHING		
Accreditation Standards: OPR.06.01, ADM.19.03		
Review Date: JANUARY 2024	Total Pages: 2	Chief of Police: 

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Breach: Opening or access into a secured or defended area established to facilitate the entry. The four breaching techniques are:
- B. Mechanical Breach: a technique of employing mechanical tools or means to breach an obstacle or barrier.
- C. Ballistic Breach: a technique of employing specialized shotgun rounds to breach structural or locking mechanisms of a barrier.
- D. Explosive Breach: technique utilizing the minimum amount of explosives to breach a barrier with the minimum amount of collateral damage.
- E. Thermal Breach: a technique utilizing a cutting torch to breach a barrier.
- F. Qualified Breacher: any member of the Leesburg Police Department who has successfully completed approved breacher training for one or more of the above techniques. The qualified breacher is only authorized to serve in the breacher capacity for the techniques they have mastered through training.
- G. Assistant Breacher: any member of the Leesburg Police Department who has been designated as an assistant breacher and is authorized to assist under the direct supervision of a qualified breacher.

II. PURPOSE

- A. The mission of a qualified breacher is to identify, plan, and execute the breach of an obstacle or barrier in an effective and efficient manner in order to facilitate the establishment of an access point(s) into a secured or obstructed area. The utilization of training, experimentation, task specific tools and technology make this possible. The operating environment and situational needs will determine the breaching technique to be used.

III. POLICY

- A. The Emergency Response Team has the responsibility to provide tactical response for the department. Based on this operational function, it is the policy of the Leesburg Police Department's Emergency Response Team Tactical Element to utilize mechanical, ballistic, and explosive breaching as approved techniques of forcible entry when appropriate (See ERT SOP).
- B. A shift supervisor is authorized to approve the use of mechanical breaching. The shift supervisor is required to coordinate the use of this technique with other officers on scene and ensure that a qualified mechanical breacher is assigned and that approved mechanical breaching tools are utilized.
- C. The Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police or the Operations Division Commander, or the Emergency Response Team Commander are the only persons authorized to approve the use of ballistic or explosive breaching. Any approval shall be coordinated by the approving authority with the incident commander to ensure overall safety of all personnel deployed to the incident. If neither approving authority is available

the Command Duty Officer may authorize the use of explosive breach for rapidly deteriorating incidents or high risk operations.

- D. The decision to use any form of breaching to facilitate entry is a serious one and the approving authority should consider the totality of circumstances for the incident. Factors which should be considered include, but are not limited to:
1. Type of incident
 2. Nature of warrant
 3. Threat level
 4. Criminal history of suspects
 5. Fortifications of the structure
 6. Officer Safety/Public Safety

IV. PERSONNEL

- A. Only qualified members of the Leesburg Police Department who have successfully completed an approved mechanical breaching course will be authorized to perform mechanical breachers.
- B. Only qualified members of the Emergency Response Team Tactical Element who have successfully completed an approved ballistic breaching course will be authorized to perform ballistic breaches.
- C. Only qualified members of the Emergency Response Team Tactical Element who have successfully completed an approved explosive breaching/handling course will be authorized to handle, construct, place, and detonate any explosive charge. Under no circumstance will an unauthorized person handle any type of explosive.

V. EQUIPMENT

Only approved mechanical breaching tools, ballistic breaching munitions, and explosive breaching ordinance and tools will be utilized by qualified breachers.

VI. INVENTORY

Inventory and inspection of mechanical breaching tools will be incorporated with the existing monthly line inspection inventory of patrol vehicles.

VII. STORAGE

Mechanical breaching tools will be stored in designated police vehicles and equipment lockers.

VIII. TRANSPORTATION

Mechanical breaching tools may be transported by officers qualified to use them and any supervisor or above.

IX. TRAINING

Only qualified members of the Leesburg Police Department who complete approved mechanical breaching training will be authorized to perform mechanical breaches and utilize mechanical breaching tools.

XI. DOCUMENTATION

Mechanical breaches conducted by trained non-ERT members will be documented in the mechanical breachers case report or supplement.