



GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Chapter: Correctional Services

Section: 503.11

Subject: Emergency Management

Topic: Corrections Division Special Operations Team

Enacted: 01/31/2018

Last Review: 11/06/2025

Review: 08/01/2027

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish a Corrections Division Special Operations Team and to outline procedures to be followed in the event an emergency occurs which necessitates its use.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Corrections Division to establish a Corrections Division Special Operations Team (SOT), the members of which shall be highly trained in tactical response for high risk or emergency situations within the Loudoun County Adult Detention Center. The team's function is to safely, quickly, and effectively maintain or restore order. The team will be used only after all other methods of resolving the emergency have been exhausted. The team is also a support unit whose function is to assist in the conduction of high-risk inmate transports, [high-risk security patrols](#), and other agency operations when requested.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Staffing

1. The Special Operations Team is comprised of up to twelve (12) Corrections Division deputies equipped as operators. All operators are trained to handle high risk and/or emergency situations occurring in the adult detention center such as, but not limited to, cell extractions, inmate combatants, riots and disorders, hostage situations, and high-risk inmate transports. In addition, operators receive continuous specialty training for enhanced capabilities such as precision marksmanship, chemical munitions, less lethal munitions, and breaching operations.
2. The Special Operations Team is led by the SOT Commander. The SOT Commander shall hold the rank of Sergeant or higher and is appointed by the Corrections Division Commander. They shall provide direct command and supervision of the Special Operations Team. They shall be trained and equipped as a full operator on the team.
3. The Corrections Division Commander of Operations shall be assigned as the Staff Advisor to the Special Operations Team and shall act as the liaison between the team and higher authorities.

4. The Special Operations Team is divided into two (2) Response Teams (Alpha and Bravo). Each Response Team is led by a Response Team Leader selected from existing SOT operators by the Corrections Division Commander, Staff Advisor, and SOT Commander.

B. Selection

1. Appointment to the Special Operations Team involves a rigorous selection process. SOT is a collateral assignment that consists of deputies who have volunteered to participate as operators. When SOT is activated, operators are released from their normal assignment to participate with the team.
2. When a vacancy on the team exists, a memorandum will be distributed to all Corrections Division deputies advertising the collateral position. The following criteria will be used when selecting personnel for SOT positions:
 - a. Certification with the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Criminal Justice Services as a jail deputy/officer.
 - b. Two (2) years' experience as a jail deputy/officer, the last year of which must be as a deputy with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office. The one-year requirement commences after the successful completion of the Correctional Training and Evaluation Program.
 - c. Personnel will be ineligible to apply if they have any of the following within one (1) year of the selection process (the eligibility date is calculated from the date of the announcement):
 - i. Letter of Reprimand.
 - ii. Two Letters of Warning.
 - iii. Are under a remediation plan.
 - iv. A disciplinary suspension within the preceding year calculated from the date of the announcement.
 - d. Ability to pass all firearm qualification courses with a 90% or better proficiency for all weapon platforms utilized.
 - e. Ability to respond well under pressure with flexibility in changing situations.
 - f. Ability to work with team members and conform to the close discipline of the team.

- g. Ability to complete all phases of the SOT selection process at the time of testing.
- h. Provide a memorandum of recommendation from their immediate supervisor.

C. Responsibilities

1. SOT Commander

- a. To distribute administrative and operational responsibilities, and ensure the team is adequately trained and equipped, the SOT Commander shall:
 - i. Ensure all weapons, equipment, and munitions are in good working order, kept in adequate supply and inspected monthly.
 - ii. Ensure a current list of all SOT Operators is provide to the Emergency Communications Center and Sheriff's Office Training Section.
 - iii. Ensure that all operators receive proper training in cell extractions, high-risk inmate transports, high-risk court hearings, hostage rescue operations, and inmate combatants. Training that includes current criminal and terrorist activities is also encouraged.
 - iv. Ensure all operators receive that amount of training necessary to accomplish the objectives of the team.
 - v. Maintain records of all instruction received by the team, including the name of the instructor, topic(s) covered, and the operators who participated.
 - vi. Maintain records of all activations and operations involving SOT operators.
 - vii. Observe and evaluate current and future operators.
- b. With the approval of the Division Commander and Staff Advisor, appoint Response Team Leaders who demonstrate the mental and physical capabilities and knowledge to run an operation; and who can assist in training and enhance the development of the team.

D. Training

- 1. Response Team Leaders should research training seminars and schools that may benefit the Special Operations Team. It is the SOT Commander's responsibility

to coordinate and schedule training through the Sheriff's Office Training Section so the team is continuously prepared to accomplish its objectives.

2. Response Team Leaders should schedule periodic team meetings to provide informal training and to take care of administrative team matters. In addition, SOT operators should conduct simulated tactical exercises so that the team can become proficient at the various tasks to be performed. During training exercises, operators should learn each other's assignments.
3. An operator who misses three (3) consecutive scheduled trainings shall be made inactive until they attend a scheduled eight (8) hour training day. Any operator who misses six (6) or more scheduled training sessions per calendar year, shall meet with the SOT Commander to review their commitment to the team and possible removal. The SOT Commander decides the active status of each individual team member.
4. Excused absences for scheduled training may include out of county training, mandatory in-service training, court, and sick leave supported by a doctor's note. All operators should attempt to schedule any personal appointments, annual leave, or other tasks around scheduled training days.
5. Operators must qualify with all utilized weapon platforms semiannually to verify proficiency.

E. Equipment

1. It is the responsibility of the Response Team Leaders to maintain an up-to-date list of all equipment issued to each operator of his/her team and to furnish to the SOT Commander a list of any needed equipment.
 - a. Regular inspections will be conducted by Response Team Leaders to ensure the proper working condition of all equipment assigned to his/her response team operators.
 - b. Formal documented inspections will be held monthly by the SOT Commander to ensure operational readiness.
2. Only weapons, equipment, and uniform items approved by the Sheriff and authorized by the Division Commander will be used or carried by team operators.
3. The Response Team Leader will collect all equipment issued to an operator when the operator leaves the team. This equipment will then be reissued to any replacement operator. No equipment of any kind will be issued to any operator without the permission of the SOT Commander.

F. Response Procedures

1. At the time SOT is requested, and a Response Team Leader is working, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. The Response Team Leader will obtain as much information as possible from the requesting supervisor concerning the situation.
 - b. The Response Team Leader will notify the SOT Commander of the situation and the request for SOT activation.
 - c. If SOT activation is authorized, the Response Team Leader will coordinate the efforts of SOT operators on duty until the arrival of the SOT Commander.
 - d. If necessary, other team operators will be notified by the SOT Commander.
2. At the time SOT is requested, and a Response Team Leader is not working, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. The on-duty supervisor will notify the SOT Commander with as much information as possible concerning the situation.
 - b. Once it has been determined to activate SOT, the SOT Commander will coordinate the activities of any SOT operators on duty until a Response Team Leader, or the SOT Commander, is on scene. The SOT Commander will determine the number of any additional off-duty SOT operators to be activated.
 - c. The SOT Commander will advise the Emergency Communication Center to implement the notification procedure for any off-duty SOT operators if necessary.
3. Self-Initiated Response
 - a. To protect life and property, SOT operators may respond to an incident and engage subjects who are actively involved in acts of violence.
4. Supervisors requesting SOT response cannot solely authorize SOT activation and cannot direct an SOT operator to utilize specific force options.
5. Logistics
 - a. All SOT operators who are contacted by the Emergency Communication Center by page or telephone are responsible for returning such calls.

- b. Upon SOT activation, the SOT Commander or Response Team Leader should ensure the staging area was identified in the initial page sent by the Emergency Communications Center.
- c. SOT operators will report to the location specified in the notification.

G. Specific Team Member Responsibilities

1. Activation/Deployment

- a. All SOT operators are responsible for always having all issued equipment available and operational.
- b. When SOT is activated for an emergency, off-duty operators shall be credited with a minimum of two hours of pay on their timesheet, starting when the operator has arrived on scene. If the emergency call-out has been terminated and an operator was enroute to the scene, the same minimum pay will be authorized.

IV. ACCREDITATION STANDARD

6VAC15-40-870: Security and storage of security devices.

Written policy, procedure, and practice shall govern the security, storage, and use of firearms, ammunition, chemical agents, and related security devices that are stored in and assigned to the facility to ensure that:

- 1. The facility shall provide secure storage for firearms, ammunition, chemical agents, and related security devices accessible to authorized personnel only and located outside the security perimeter or the inmate housing and activity areas.
- 2. Personnel who carry firearms and ammunition are assigned positions that are inaccessible to inmates (with the exception of emergencies); and
- 3. Personnel who discharge firearms or use chemical agents other than for training purposes, submit written reports to the facility administrator or designee no later than the conclusion of the shift during which same are discharged or used.