

New Mexico State Police

Special Operations



Explosive Breaching

Standard Operating Procedure

10-2-2019

Table of Contents

- 1.0 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**
 - 2.0 DEFINITIONS**
 - 3.0 GENERAL RULES AND GUIDELINES**
 - 4.0 CRITERA FOR EXPLOSIVE BREACHING**
 - 5.0 PROCEDURES**
 - 6.0 EXPLOSIVE BREACHING CONSIDERATIONS**
 - 7.0 SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**
 - 8.0 TRAINING AND DOCUMENTATION**
 - 9.0 STORAGE AND INVENTORY**
 - 10.0 REVIEW AND UPDATES**
-

1.0 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish guidelines for the utilization of explosive breaching by the New Mexico State Police Special Operations Bureau.

One of the Special Operations Bureau's duties is to provide specialized tactical support in situations where a crisis escalates beyond the capabilities of the Uniform or Investigative personnel. This support may also be provided to other law enforcement agencies upon request.

During these crisis situations, it may become necessary for the Tactical Team to execute an entry into a hostile environment. Crisis situations include, but are not limited to, barricaded subjects, suicidal subjects, hostage rescue, snipers, terrorist activity, hazardous warrant services, or any situation with a potential for violent confrontation which cannot be readily or effectively handled by Uniform or Investigative personnel. It is critical that the point of entry be breached as quickly and safely as possible. A quick and effective breach is essential to a successful tactical mission.

Explosive Breaching- Using precise explosive device/charges to gain entry into a fortified stronghold. Explosive breaching can best be described as "the most efficient use of the minimum amount of explosives in order to achieve maximum effective penetration of the desired target". An explosive breaching device/charge should not be viewed as a "bomb", but rather, as an entry "tool". Effective breaching techniques allow immediate entry with minimal risk to victims, tactical officers, and the suspect(s). This technique enhances the speed and shock effect required of a dynamic rescue/entry operation.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- *Master Explosive Breacher* – A current full-time member of the Bomb Squad who stays up to date on current explosive breaching devices and techniques. Has over 8 years' experience with explosive breaching and has completed an advanced explosive breaching course.
 - *Explosive Breacher* – A current full-time member of the Bomb Squad who has been trained in the construction, placement, and ignition of explosive breaching devices.
 - *Assistant Explosive Breacher* – A certified Explosive Breacher or designated operator who works with and trains under the direction of the Explosive Breacher in the placement of Explosive Breaching Devices/Charges.
 - *Explosive Breach* – A technique of employing explosive materials to create an opening through a door, window, wall, or other barriers to allow access or sight by a tactical team.
 - *Explosive Breaching Device/Charges* – A target-specific device constructed with explosive and non-explosive materials for the purpose of gaining entry into a structure.
 - *Breacher's Report* – A detailed form used to document the use of explosive breaching devices/charges during training and actual operations.
 - *Breacher's Brief* – A detailed information exchange from the explosive breacher to the Tactical Operators with regard to the actions necessary before, during, and after an operational or training explosive breach.
 - *Crisis Situations* – Any situation, including but not limited to, barricaded subjects, suicidal subjects, hostage rescue, snipers, terrorist activity, hazardous warrant services, or any situation with a potential for violent confrontation which cannot be readily or effectively handled by Uniform of Investigative personnel.
-

3.0 GENERAL RULES AND GUIDELINES

The Tactical Team is faced with a variety of situations that may warrant the use of an explosive breach. Explosive breaching techniques are useful tools; however, it may not be appropriate in all tactical situations. An explosive breach should not be employed when unstable chemicals or other incendiary materials are known to be present. Other techniques are effective, safe, and tactically feasible to use.

The Bomb Squad Commander will have control over the Explosive Breaching Program, it's Explosive Breachers, the selection of future Explosive Breachers, explosive storage and explosive inventory.

All Explosive Breachers will be certified through Tactical Energetic Entry Systems (T.E.E.S) or a recognized Explosive Breachers course approved by the Bomb Squad Commander. Explosive Breachers must re-certify every three (3) years to maintain certification.

4.0 CRITERIA FOR EXPLOSIVE BREACHING

This section outlines the criteria for explosive breaching. This does not limit explosive breaching for situations not listed where explosive breaching will be the fastest or most effective means of breaching.

- Situations where explosive breaching devices/charges are the only means capable of physically breaching the locations barriers/fortifications.
 - Situations where the breach point has an unusual configuration were other breach techniques may not be used.
 - Situations where other breaching methods are deemed unsafe or impractical.
 - Situations where a penetration/compromise of the structure is desired (regardless of whether entry is being made at that time or not (Breach and Hold).
 - Situations were rapid/dynamic entry is needed.
 - Situations were a communication port is needed between tactical operators and the subject(s).
-

5.0 PROCEDURES

- Explosive breaching is a tactical option and can be employed when rapid entry is critical to the success and safety of the mission. The option to utilize an explosive breach will be at the discretion of the Tactical Team Commander or his designee.
 - Scouting and target analysis is a pre-breach responsibility of the Explosive Breacher(s) or their designee.
 - The construction of explosive breaching devices/charges shall be conducted by the designated explosive breach team. Construction of the explosive device varies upon completing a target analysis. Each device/charge is designed, in composition and construction, based on the breaching needs and past training and experiences of the Explosive Breacher. A selection of pre-made explosive devices/charges, rapid deployable devices/charges (RDC) will always be on hand, and available for immediate deployment.
 - Except in emergency situations a Breacher's Brief will be conducted. Prior to setting the explosive device/charge, the Breacher will present a Breacher's Brief to the Tactical Team Commander or their designee, Tactical Team Leader, entry team members, and others involved in the operation.
 - Movement tactics and number of personnel to the breach point may vary based off of the mission.
 - The safe location of the entry team's "stack" will be determined by the Tactical Team Leader in consultation with the Breacher.
 - The Breacher will prep the explosive breaching device/charge at the Last Cover and Concealed (LCC) position.
 - Placement of the explosive breaching device/charge will be performed by the Breacher or the Assistant Breacher.
 - Once the explosive breaching device(s)/charge(s) and the entry team is positioned, the entry team leader will direct the Breacher when to initiate the countdown.
-

PROCEDURES (continued)

- Upon being given control to breach, the Explosive Breacher or Assistant Explosive Breacher will state “I have control, stand by”, at stand by the Explosive Breacher will place the firing device into a ready state. The Explosive Breacher or Assistant Explosive Breacher will then count down from eight (8). 8, 7, 6, 5 will be called over the radio. 4, 3, 2, 1 will be off the radio in order to hear a Freeze/Abort call. On the count of one the Explosive Breacher will initiate the breach.
 - If a Freeze/Abort is called the Explosive Breacher will not fire the breaching device/charge. The firing device will be rendered safe and disconnected from the shock tube.
- If shots are fired during movement to the breach point the breach team will make every effort to place the explosive breaching device/charge and initiate the explosive breach from the minimal safe distance. If shots are fired after the explosive breaching device is placed and the breach team is at the minimal safe distance the Explosive Breacher will initiate the explosive breaching device/charge immediately.
- At the completion of the mission, the Explosive Breacher is responsible for documenting the effects of the explosive breaching device/charge. The Explosive Breacher will submit the Breacher’s Report, which will detail the specific composition of the explosive breaching device/charge used and its performance to the Master Breacher. A copy will be attached to the Explosive Breacher’s incident report.

6.0 EXPLOSIVE BREACHING CONSIDERATIONS

- Explosive breach devices/charges are useful tools; however, they may not be appropriate in all situations. An explosive breach should not be employed when:
 - There is a known presence of unstable chemicals or other incendiary materials in close proximity to the crisis site.
 - Other means of mechanical breaching would be more effective to provide positive entry, officer safety and mission success.
-

7.0 SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- All explosives will remain in control of the Explosive Breacher and be stored per ATF guidelines to ensure their security. (Please refer to Section 9.0 Storage and Inventory)
 - Medics should be staged or present during missions where explosive breaching techniques are performed.
 - The Explosive Breacher or Assistant Explosive Breacher will always maintain control of the firing device to prevent an unintentional detonation.
 - **Shock tube initiation systems shall be the only system used for explosive breaching.** A zero millisecond “instant” blasting cap will only be used for missions. This is the industry standards for Explosive Breaching throughout the United States. Shock tube initiation systems have the lowest rate of miss-fires. It also allows the Explosive Breacher to have positive control of the explosive breaching device/charge at all times.
 - Any misfires and non-functioning explosive breaching devices/charges are the responsibility of the Explosive Breacher. The Explosive Breacher will follow established procedures that may include the following.
 - In the event of a misfire, the Explosive Breacher will check the initiator and try to fire the explosive device/charge again.
 - In the event of a second misfire, the Explosive Breacher will call for secondary breach. If no secondary breach, the breach team will move to the breach point and place a secondary firing system on the explosive breaching device/charge and fire the breach.
 - Upon a misfire of the secondary firing system the Explosive Breacher will remove the initiator from the shock tube. If no secondary breach location is available the Explosive Breacher will remove the lead line from the explosive breaching device/charge, the explosive breaching device/charge will be removed, and an alternate breaching technique will be performed on the breach point.
 - If the explosive breaching device/charge cannot be rendered safe by the Explosive Breacher, a certified Bomb Technician will be used to dispose the explosive breaching device/charge.
-
- Safety clothing and equipment will be worn by all members of the breach/entry team during explosive breaching training and operations. Required clothing and

equipment is as follows, eye protection, hearing protection, helmet, ballistic/load bearing vest, long sleeve shirt, full length pants or flight suit and boots.

8.0 TRAINING AND DOCUMENTATION

- All Explosive Breachers will attend the Tactical Energetic Entry Systems Explosive Handlers and Breaching course or a recognized Explosive Breaching Course that is approved by the Bomb Squad Commander. Bomb Technicians may attend the Tactical Energetic Entry Systems Explosive Breaching Course for EOD Techs.
 - All efforts will be made for qualified Explosive Breachers to supplement their training by attending advanced explosive breaching courses, seminars or symposiums.
 - A minimum of four (4) hours explosive breaching training will be conducted once a month, to keep up proficiency in building, placement and movement techniques. Explosive breaching will be conducted quarterly with the members of the Tactical Team. Additional ongoing training to test and evaluate the types of devices/charges best suitable for various targets will be conducted as suitable training sites are available.
 - An Explosive Breaching Log will be maintained to document explosive breaching training and operations. This log may be used as a database for future use when determining the most appropriate device/charge to be selected. A Breacher's Report will be completed and filed in the Explosive Breaching Log for each explosive breaching device/charge constructed and initiated for training or operational use.
-

9.0 STORAGE AND INVENTORY

- Basic Storage Procedures
 - An Explosive Inventory Log will be maintained for all explosives received and used by the Explosive Breacher. This inventory will be maintained and updated every mission, or quarter if no explosive charge/device was used during the quarter.
 - Blasting Caps will be stored in a separate cap box from explosives. An exception will be made for the certified Explosive Breacher to maintain at least one fully operational firing system with a red devil attached to the blasting cap.
 - Explosive Breachers must maintain an “Access Log” for each explosive storage magazine.
 - Access to the explosive storage magazine will be limited to Explosive Breachers and Bomb Squad personnel.
 - The explosive storage magazine will be inspected for inventory and maintenance by the Bomb Squad Commander or his designee on a quarterly basis.
 - All explosives will be stored in accordance with ATF and OSHA regulations.
 - All explosive breaching charges/devices will be operational for a period of six months. After the six-month operational explosive breaching charges/devices period, the explosive breaching charges/devices will either be used for training or destroyed by Bomb Squad personnel.

10.0 REVIEW AND UPDATES

- This Explosive Breaching Standard Operating Procedure dated 10/02/2019 precedes all other Explosive Breaching Standard Operating Procedures.
 - This Explosive Breaching Standard Operating Procedure must be reviewed every year and updated as needed to keep current.
-