



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**



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SUBJECT: STATE POLICE TACTICAL TEAM

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards and procedures for the application and selection process for membership in the New Mexico State Police Tactical Team, and guidelines for its utilization.

2.0 POLICY

It is the policy of the New Mexico Department of Public Safety to maintain a highly flexible and mobile tactical unit for the performance of specialized assignments for incident resolution that requires the use of special equipment, skills, and tactics.

3.0 APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all commissioned officers of the Department of Public Safety.

4.0 REFERENCES

- A. CALEA Chapter 1 – Law Enforcement Role and Authority**
- B. CALEA Chapter 33 – Training and Career Development**
- C. CALEA Chapter 46 – Special Occurrences**

5.0 DEFINITIONS

- A. Full Time Tactical Team Element** – The Full Time Tactical Team Element shall consist of Full Time Members which will have a primary duty of responding to critical incidents and other duties as assigned by the Special Operations Commander.
- B. Full Time Tactical Team Member** – A New Mexico State Police Tactical Team Member that has been selected as a member to the Full Time Element.
- C. Part Time Tactical Team Element** – The Part Time Tactical Team Element shall consist of Part Time Members which have a primary responsibility to his/her assigned duty station.
- D. Part Time Tactical Team Member** – A New Mexico State Police officer that been selected to serve as a Tactical Team Member, but still is responsible for his/her assigned district duties.
- E. Tactical Team** – A specialty team that provides support to the New Mexico Department of Public Safety and other law enforcement agencies. The team consists of a Special Operations Bureau commander, an operations commander, an assistant operations commander, team leaders, and team members. The tactical team functions primarily as a supportive unit of the New Mexico State Police, but other government entities will not be excluded from its assistance.
- F. Tactical Team Member** – A New Mexico State Police officer assigned to the tactical team, who is required to be on permanent status and have a minimum of two (2) years satisfactory service.

6.0 PROCEDURE

The New Mexico State Police Tactical Team will be utilized to protect and safeguard the lives and property of all persons within the State of New Mexico. The tactical team will be available to the State Police and other police agencies within the state, upon the approval of the Special Operations Bureau commander.

The Full Time element of the New Mexico State Police Tactical Team will have a primary duty to respond to any critical incident as well as actively seek felony absconders throughout the State of New Mexico. The Full Time element will also assist the Training and Recruiting Bureau with training in High Risk Patrol Operations, Defensive Tactics and any other Use of Force topics as directed by the Special Operations Commander.

This policy dictates protocol for activation of the tactical team. However, during the activation process, patrol officers should maintain a perimeter, give lawful orders to surrender, gather pertinent information and avoid escalation, as appropriate.

A. MANDATORY ACTIVATION

1. Armed/barricaded suspect: The tactical team is responsible for confronting armed/barricaded suspects after careful planning and attempting apprehension of the suspect(s) without injury to the victims, public, tactical team, officers or the suspect(s).
2. Armed, barricaded hostage situations: Plan and perform hostage rescues in buildings, vehicles, and open fields; establish and maintain hostage negotiations. Rescue tactics performed include, but are not limited to, covert entries, dynamic entries, explosive entries, flash explosive diversionary devices, and chemical agents.
3. Penitentiary disturbances: Respond to penitentiary disturbances/riots with both armed and unarmed inmates, where state inmates are housed or upon the request of the correctional facility.
4. High-risk warrant service: Plan and execute high-risk warrant service. These services include apprehending suspects who are believed to be armed, either in vehicles, structures or open fields, e.g., illicit plantations.
5. An armed suicidal subject.
6. Manhunt situations in which suspects are believed to be armed.

B. DISCRETIONARY ACTION

1. Manhunt situations when the suspect is not believed to be armed: The tactical team will respond to and conduct manhunt operations in all types of terrain, during daytime and nighttime hours.
2. Civil disturbances: Upon request, respond to civil disturbances, including riots, and violent and non-violent demonstrations.
3. Dignitary protection: Upon request, respond to, plan, and perform dignitary protection. This includes the execution of close personal protection; counter assault teams (CAT), and long range counter-sniper operations.
4. Any other violent situations assigned by the Chief of the State Police.

C. ADDITIONAL SERVICES

1. Assisting with person and victim recovery in all types of weather, which may require the exercise of skills in rappelling and/or the utilization of map and compass.
2. Training commissioned officers in various law enforcement tactical skills. These tactics include, but are not limited to, building approaches, entries and searches, less lethal options, firearms, shooting on the move, defensive maneuvers, rappelling, man tracking and vehicle stops.

D. ACTIVATION PROCEDURES

1. Any law enforcement officer of the Department of Public Safety can request the tactical team when the aforementioned situations are identified and that require the utilization of the tactical team. The responding officers/agents will immediately contact their district commander through the proper chain of command.
2. The district commander or designee will contact the tactical team operations commander or designee (headquarters duty officer or zone commander if applicable) for mission verification.
3. The tactical team operations commander will contact the Special Operations Bureau commander or designee (Headquarters Duty Officer, Zone Commander, if applicable) for mission approval.
4. Upon receiving mission approval, the tactical team operations commander will contact team members to respond to the incident location.
5. The Special Operations Bureau commander will contact the chief or designee to inform them of the team activation.
6. District supervisors may utilize tactical team members to assist in making a determination for requesting tactical team activation.
7. District supervisors will initiate notification procedures as soon as they are aware of these critical situations to avoid response delays.
8. Other law enforcement agencies requesting assistance from the tactical team should notify any State Police officer who will contact any State Police supervisor. That supervisor will contact the operations commander as well the supervisor's chain of command. (If another law enforcement agency requests the team by contacting any tactical team member, they will, in turn, notify the tactical team operations commander who will notify the Special Operations Bureau commander of such request.)
9. Activation of the tactical team for any type of warrant service must be requested by a supervisor from the Investigations Bureau or the Uniform Bureau.

E. RESPONSE

1. The New Mexico State Police Tactical Team has the capability of responding to a critical incident on very short notice.
2. Tactical team members will respond to the location designated by the Special Operations Bureau commander, when notified of team activation.
3. Tactical team members will respond in emergency or non-emergency modes, as directed by the operations commander, when notified of team activation.
4. Once on scene, the tactical team commander will have full authority to direct coordination and cooperation between the tactical team and other department operational components; e.g. may assign uniform officers to perform perimeter security, may assign plain clothes officers to conduct surveillance of the location, etc.

F. APPLICANT PRE-QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

1. Must have completed two (2) years of satisfactory service as a State Police officer, and must be on permanent status upon assignment.
2. Must qualify with a 93 percent or better with all authorized duty firearms.
3. Must have a satisfactory work record in current assignment. Appointment to the tactical team, with past or present disciplinary action, is at the discretion of the chief.

G. QUALIFICATION/SELECTION

1. The applicant will meet or exceed each of the following physical fitness requirements, which will carry a maximum of twenty (20) points toward overall score.
 - a. A minimum of ten (10) pull-ups (no time limit, motion must go from full extension of arms when down to chin above bar when up).
 - b. A minimum of fifty (50) push-ups (no time limit, but motion must be continuous).
 - c. Fifty (50) sit ups (no time limit, but motion must be continuous).
 - d. Run 1.5 miles in twelve (12) minutes or less.
2. A written examination developed and approved by the tactical team commander, pertaining to basic officer tactics. Applicants must receive a score of 70 percent or better.
3. The applicant is required to pass each of the following firearms qualifications, which carry a maximum of twenty (20) points toward overall score.
 - a. A minimum of 93 percent or higher with their authorized duty handgun, rifle, utilizing the current departmental daytime qualification courses.
 - b. Weapons manipulation test.
4. The applicant will be required to appear before an oral board comprised of the tactical team operations commander, assistant commander, and tactical team leaders. The oral board will offer a set of structured questions approved by the Special Operations Bureau commander.
5. Upon completion of the testing process, the tactical team operations commander will prepare a list of the ranking order of all candidates and submit it to the Special Operations Bureau commander for review and submittal to the chief. This list will be in effect for a period not to exceed one (1) year, unless the chief directs a new testing cycle in less than a year.
6. For selection to a Full Time Tactical Team Member position, all current Part Time Tactical Team Members shall first be considered. However, if a position on the Full-Time element becomes available and no other currently serving Part-Time members are able to become Full-Time, a testing process will be held to allow a newly selected member to become part of the Full-Time element. This selection Process will be held at the discretion of the Tactical Team Operations Commander.

H. MEMBERSHIP

1. New members will be placed on probationary status for a period of not less than two (2) years. Any member who fails to demonstrate acceptable performance during the probationary period may be removed from the tactical team at the recommendation of the tactical team operations commander and the concurrence of the Special Operations Bureau commander.

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2. All members of the tactical team must be willing to make a long term commitment to the team for a minimum of three (3) years, unless exigent circumstances exist. The tactical team operations commander, with the agreement of the Special Operations Bureau commander, must approve any exception to this rule.
3. Members of the tactical team will maintain a high level of physical fitness at all times. All active members must complete the following physical fitness requirements bi-annually:
 - a. Ten (10) pull-ups (no time limit, motion must go from full extension of arms when down to chin above bar when up).
 - b. Fifty (50) push-ups (no time limit, but motion must be continuous).
 - c. Fifty (50) sit ups (no time limit, but motion must be continuous).
 - d. Run 1.5 miles in twelve (12) minutes or less.
 - e. Obstacle Course in four (4) minutes or less wearing BDU uniform, ankle high boots, vest and Kevlar helmet.
4. In the event that any member fails to meet the minimum physical fitness maintenance standards, the tactical team leader or assistant operations commander administering the test must notify the operations commander through the tactical team chain of command within forty-eight (48) hours of testing/qualification. If, after thirty (30) days, the member has not satisfactorily met the fitness standard qualifications, the member will be temporarily placed on inactive status. The team member must meet the physical fitness maintenance standards within thirty (30) days on inactive status. Should the member fail to meet those standards, the member will be removed from the tactical team. The Special Operations Bureau commander will be informed of the member's status.
5. The operations commander will furnish all tactical team and department-issued weapons scores to the Special Operations Bureau commander at the end of each calendar year. Weapons qualifications will occur semi-annually in addition to regularly approved department firearms qualifications. Each qualification will consist of a day and night course of fire to include shooting on the move and gas mask courses approved by the tactical team operations commander.
6. It is the responsibility of district supervisors to contact the operations commander to ensure that Part-Time tactical team members are meeting performance standards based upon the latest employee performance evaluation within the member's assigned district. District supervisors will forward copies of all evaluations to the operations commander.
7. All Tactical Team members must maintain at least a 93 percent qualification score on all issued firearms. In the event that any member fails to qualify at 93 percent with the department firearms, the team member must notify the operations commander through the tactical team chain of command within forty-eight (48) hours of testing/qualification. A member who has not satisfactorily met the firearms qualifications will be temporarily placed on inactive status. The team member must meet the firearms qualifications standards within thirty (30) days on inactive status. Should the member fail to meet those standards, the member will be removed from the tactical team. The Special Operations Bureau commander will be informed of the member's status.
8. All active members must maintain a "meets performance" rating on their most recent evaluation in their assigned district.

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9. Personnel selected for the tactical team must demonstrate an above-average performance in the following areas:
 - a. Care of equipment.
 - b. Attendance.
 - c. Personal contacts with fellow officers and the public.
 - d. In addition, the candidates must possess a desire to pursue and accomplish the goals of the State Police and the tactical team.
 - e. District/Section work ethic.
10. Members completing two (2) years of satisfactory service with the tactical team may display the tactical team badge above their nameplate while wearing a class "A" uniform. Upon separation from the tactical team, members who have less than five (5) years of membership will not be allowed to display the tactical team badge on their class "A" uniform. Members, upon separation from the team, completing five (5) or more years of satisfactory service, may wear the tactical team badge on their class "A" uniform.
11. In order to be selected to the Full-Time element, members must be willing to relocate to the location(s) where the opening becomes available.

I. TACTICAL TEAM WEAPONS

1. The tactical team will carry special weapons at the discretion of the tactical team operations commander. These weapons will be issued and maintained by the tactical team or department armor. Personal weapons may be used in accordance with *ADM:13 Carryings of Firearms* and at the discretion of the tactical team operations commander.

J. TRAINING

1. All personnel will attend in-service training, as well as specialized training outside the department as allowed by budgetary constraints. Training will be oriented toward physical, tactical, and weapon skills.
2. All members will participate in proficiency/advanced training scheduled for sixteen (16) hours of each month, ten (10) months of each year. Members will also train forty (40) hours a month, two (2) months of each year. Training dates will be assigned by the tactical team operations commander as approved by the Special Operations Bureau commander.
3. Sniper team members will attend eight (8) hours of additional sniper specific training monthly.
4. Full-Time members will participate in additional weekly training scheduled by the Tactical Team Operations Commander.

K. TACTICAL TEAM ORGANIZATION

1. Special Operations Bureau commander - The assignment of the Special Operations Bureau commander to command the tactical team will be made by the Chief of the State Police. The Special Operations Bureau commander will oversee all activities of the tactical team.
2. Tactical team operations commander - Appointment of the tactical team operations commander will be made by the Special Operations Bureau commander, and approved by the Chief of the State Police. The operations commander will be a member selected from within the ranks of the tactical team.

3. Tactical team assistant operations commander - Appointment of the assistant operations commander will be made by the tactical team operations commander and approved by the Special Operations Bureau commander. The assistant operations commander will be a member selected from within the ranks of the tactical team.

L. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The tactical team operations commander will:
 - a. Report directly to the Special Operations Bureau commander, or his designee, on matters concerning the tactical team.
 - b. Appoint the assistant operations commander with the approval of the Special Operations Bureau commander.
 - c. Appoint the team leaders with the approval of the Special Operations Bureau commander.
 - d. Manage tactical team training, operations, and tactical deployment, with the concurrence of the Special Operations Bureau commander.
 - e. Manage the tactical team budget.
 - f. Make recommendations to the Special Operations Bureau commander and the chief on matters regarding selection, discipline, and removal of tactical team personnel.
 - g. Assign personnel to specialty areas of the team, with approval of the Special Operations Bureau commander.
 - h. Perform other duties as assigned by the Special Operations Bureau commander or the Chief of the State Police.
 - i. Coordinate team training.
 - j. Maintain the tactical team's central records depository.
 - k. Coordinate personnel selection process.
2. The tactical team assistant operations commander will:
 - a. Report directly to the operations commander on matters concerning the tactical team.
 - b. Serve as acting operations commander in the absence of the operations commander.
 - c. Perform other duties as assigned.
3. Team Leaders will:
 - a. Report directly to the assistant operations commander on matters related to the tactical team.
 - b. Be responsible for supervising their teams and directing its tactical deployment.
 - c. Periodically inspect the team members assigned to their command to ensure the highest level of readiness is maintained.
 - d. Periodically inspect and inventory all issued and personal gear in use by team members.

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- e. Obey all lawful orders issued by the team operations commander or assistant operations commander.
 - f. Perform other duties as assigned.
4. Counter-sniper observer team leader will:
- a. Report directly to the assistant operations commander on matters related to the tactical team.
 - b. Be responsible for supervising his/her team and directing its tactical deployment.
 - c. Periodically inspect the team members assigned to their command to ensure the highest level of readiness is maintained.
 - d. Periodically inspect and inventory all issued and personal gear in use by team members.
 - e. Ensure all department-issued and personal equipment in use by team members is clean, properly maintained, and functional.
 - f. Develop criteria and participate in the selection of counter-sniper/observer personnel assignments.
 - g. Recommend counter-sniper/observer personnel assignments to the team commanders.
 - h. Obey all lawful orders issued by the team operations commander or the assistant operations commander.
 - i. Perform other duties as assigned.
5. Tactical team members will:
- a. Obey all lawful orders issued by the operations commander, assistant team operations commander, and team leaders.
 - b. Maintain a high degree of physical and mental readiness.
 - c. Ensure all department-issued and personal equipment is clean, properly maintained, and functional.
 - d. Submit current firearms qualification scores to the team leaders.
 - e. Perform other duties as assigned.
6. Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT) commander will:
- a. Obey all lawful orders issued by the operations commander, assistant operations commander, and team leaders.
 - b. Assign members of the Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT) to respond to call-outs as directed by the tactical operations command.
 - c. Perform other duties as assigned.

M. CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM (CNT)

1. Operations:
 - a. The CNT works as a component of the tactical team.

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- b. The CNT will be utilized to support the operations of the tactical team, as well as any other entity within the organization.
 - c. The CNT may also support outside agencies with the authorization of the Special Operations Bureau commander or designee.
2. Activation:
- a. The CNT may be activated by making a request through the appropriate chain of command to the Special Operations Bureau commander or designee.
 - b. The CNT may also be requested by the tactical team operations commander, but must receive final authorization from the Special Operations Bureau commander or designee.
 - c. The CNT will be under the direct supervision of the CNT commander and under the overall command of the Special Operations Bureau commander.
3. Criteria for pre-qualification and selection to the CNT
- a. Must have completed two (2) years of satisfactory service as a State Police officer, and must be on permanent status.
 - b. Must have a satisfactory work record in current assignment. Appointment to the CNT, with past or present disciplinary action, is at the discretion of the selection board, Special Operations Bureau commander, and Chief.
 - c. Applicant must have a letter of recommendation from current commander, accompanied with one example in which the officer exhibited exceptional conduct in resolving a volatile situation.
 - d. Applicants to the CNT will be required to appear before an oral board comprised of the CNT Commander, Assistant Commander, and member(s) of the CNT. The oral board will offer a set of structured questions and / or scenarios.
 - e. Upon completion of the selection process, the CNT commander will prepare a list of the ranking order of the top five candidates and submit it to the Special Operations Bureau commander for review and submittal to the Chief. The list will be in effect for a period not to exceed one (1) year.

N. DISCIPLINARY STANDARDS/REMOVAL

Membership in the tactical team is considered a privilege and not a promotion. No property rights exist with membership. To maintain team integrity and the highest level of standards, all tactical/crisis negotiations personnel are subject to disciplinary action, and may be removed from the team, without cause, by the Chief of the State Police.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS

NONE

8.0 APPROVAL

APPROVED BY: s/ Gorden E. Eden Jr. DATE: March 16, 2012
DPS Cabinet Secretary