Hostage and Barricade Incidents

407.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for situations where police officers have legal cause to contact, detain or arrest a person, and the person refuses to submit to the lawful requests of the police officers by remaining in a structure or vehicle and/or by taking a hostage.

The scope of this policy is not intended to address all variables that police officers encounter during their initial response or when a hostage or barricade situation has developed. This policy does not require or purport to recommend specific strategies or tactics for resolution as each incident is a dynamic and rapidly evolving event.

407.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Barricade situation - An incident where a person maintains a position of cover or concealment and ignores or resists law enforcement personnel, and it is reasonable to believe the subject is armed with a dangerous or deadly weapon.

Hostage situation - An incident where it is reasonable to believe a person is unlawfully held by a hostage-taker as security so that specified terms or conditions will be met.

407.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Oregon State University Department of Public Safety to address hostage and barricade situations with due regard for the preservation of life and balancing the risk of injury, while obtaining the safe release of hostages, apprehending offenders and securing available evidence.

407.3 COMMUNICATION

When circumstances permit, initial responding police officers should try to establish and maintain lines of communication with a barricaded person or hostage-taker. Police Officers should attempt to identify any additional subjects, inquire about victims and injuries, seek the release of hostages, gather intelligence information, identify time-sensitive demands or conditions and obtain the suspect’s surrender.

When available, department-authorized negotiators should respond to the scene as soon as practicable and assume communication responsibilities. Negotiators are permitted to exercise flexibility in each situation based upon their training, the circumstances presented, suspect actions or demands and the available resources.

407.3.1 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

A supervisor who has probable cause to believe that a hostage is being held may order a telephone company to cut, reroute or divert telephone lines to prevent a suspect from communicating with anyone other than police officers or other designated individuals (ORS 165.549).

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407.3.2 FIRST RESPONDER RESPONSBILITY

Until the Incident Commander has been designated, the first officer on the scene of an actual or potential hostage/barricade situation should consider addressing the following as time and resources permit:

(a) Attempt to avoid confrontation in favor of controlling and containing the situation until the arrival of trained personnel and/or trained hostage negotiation personnel

(b) Notification of tactical and hostage negotiation personnel

(c) Notification of appropriate persons within and outside the agency, such as command officers

(d) Establishment of inner and outer perimeters

(e) Evacuation of bystanders and injured persons

(f) Establishment of central command post and appropriate chain of command

(g) Request for ambulance, rescue, and fire

407.3.3 INCIDENT COMMANDER

As the Incident Commander role is filled, unfinished responsibilities of the First Responder will transfer to the Incident Commander. In addition, the following responsibilities are added, and should not be assumed by the first responding officer(s).

(a) Ensure that Departmental notifications are made (see Major Incident Notifications Policy)

(b) Notification of tactical and hostage negotiation personnel

(c) Notification of appropriate additional resources such as K-9 units, Air units, mutual aid, or investigative agency representatives

(d) Request additional technical resources such as surveillance equipment necessary to view the scene adequately to support operations

(e) Establish surveillance and pursuit units and control travel routes

(f) Establish a media collection point, often in conjunction with the PIO, in order to avoid media tendencies to encroach on the scene

407.4 FIRST RESPONDER CONSIDERATIONS

First responding police officers should promptly and carefully evaluate all available information to determine whether an incident involves, or may later develop into, a hostage or barricade situation.

The first responding police officer should immediately request a supervisor’s response as soon as it is determined that a hostage or barricade situation exists. The first responding police officer shall assume the duties of the supervisor until relieved by a supervisor or a more qualified responder. The police officer shall continually evaluate the situation, including the level of risk to police officers, to the persons involved and to bystanders, and the resources currently available.

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The handling police officer should brief the arriving supervisor of the incident, including information about suspects and victims, the extent of any injuries, additional resources or equipment that may be needed, and current perimeters and evacuation areas.

407.4.1 BARRICADE SITUATION

Unless circumstances require otherwise, police officers handling a barricade situation should attempt to avoid a forceful confrontation in favor of stabilizing the incident by establishing and maintaining lines of communication while awaiting the arrival of specialized personnel and trained negotiators. During the interim the following options, while not all-inclusive or in any particular order, should be considered:

(a) Ensure injured persons are evacuated from the immediate threat area if it is reasonably safe to do so. Request medical assistance.

(b) Assign personnel to a contact team to control the subject should he/she attempt to exit the building, structure or vehicle, and attack, use deadly force, attempt to escape or surrender prior to additional resources arriving.

(c) Request additional personnel, resources and equipment as needed (e.g., canine team, air support).

(d) Provide responding emergency personnel with a safe arrival route to the location.

(e) Evacuate non-injured persons in the immediate threat area if it is reasonably safe to do so.

(f) Attempt or obtain a line of communication and gather as much information on the subject as possible, including weapons, other involved parties, additional hazards or injuries.

(g) Establish an inner and outer perimeter as circumstances require and resources permit to prevent unauthorized access.

(h) Evacuate bystanders, residents and businesses within the inner and then outer perimeter as appropriate. Check for injuries, the presence of other involved subjects, witnesses, evidence or additional information.

(i) Determine the need for and notify the appropriate persons within and outside the Department, such as command officers and the Public Information Officer.

(j) If necessary and available, establish a tactical or exclusive radio frequency for the incident.

(k) Establish a command post.

407.4.2 HOSTAGE SITUATION

Police Officerspresented with a hostage situation should attempt to avoid a forceful confrontation in favor of controlling the incident in anticipation of the arrival of specialized personnel and trained hostage negotiators. However, it is understood that hostage situations are dynamic and can require that police officers react quickly to developing or changing threats. The following options while not all-inclusive or in any particular order, should be considered:

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(a) Ensure injured persons are evacuated from the immediate threat area if it is reasonably safe to do so. Request medical assistance.

(b) Assign personnel to a contact team to control the subject should he/she attempt to exit the building, structure or vehicle, and attack, use deadly force, attempt to escape or surrender prior to additional resources arriving.

(c) Establish a rapid response team in the event it becomes necessary to rapidly enter a building, structure or vehicle, such as when the suspect is using deadly force against any hostages (see the Rapid Response and Deployment Policy).

(d) Assist hostages or potential hostages to escape if it is reasonably safe to do so. Hostages should be kept separated if practicable pending further interview.

(e) Request additional personnel, resources and equipment as needed (e.g., canine team, air support).

(f) Provide responding emergency personnel with a safe arrival route to the location.

(g) Evacuate non-injured persons in the immediate threat area if it is reasonably safe to do so.

(h) Coordinate pursuit or surveillance vehicles and control of travel routes.

(i) Attempt or obtain a line of communication and gather as much information about the suspect as possible, including any weapons, victims and their injuries, additional hazards, other involved parties and any other relevant intelligence information.

(j) Establish an inner and outer perimeter as resources and circumstances permit to prevent unauthorized access.

(k) Evacuate bystanders, residents and businesses within the inner and then outer perimeter as appropriate. Check for injuries, the presence of other involved subjects, witnesses, evidence or additional information.

(l) Determine the need for and notify the appropriate persons within and outside the Department, such as command officers and the Public Information Officer.

(m) If necessary and available, establish a tactical or exclusive radio frequency for the incident.

407.5 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon being notified that a hostage or barricade situation exists, the supervisor should immediately respond to the scene, assess the risk level of the situation, establish a proper chain of command and assume the role of Incident Commander until properly relieved. This includes requesting a Crisis Response Unit (CRU) response if appropriate and apprising the CRU Commander of the circumstances. In addition, the following options, listed here in no particular order, should be considered:

(a) Ensure injured persons are evacuated and treated by medical personnel.

(b) Ensure the completion of necessary first responder responsibilities or assignments.

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(c) Request crisis negotiators, specialized units, additional personnel, resources or equipment as appropriate.

(d) Establish a command post location as resources and circumstances permit.

(e) Designate assistants who can help with intelligence information and documentation of the incident.

(f) If it is practicable to do so, arrange for video documentation of the operation.

(g) Consider contacting utility and communication providers when restricting such services (e.g., restricting electric power, gas, telephone service).

(h) Ensure adequate law enforcement coverage for the remainder of the University during the incident. The supervisor should direct non-essential personnel away from the scene unless they have been summoned by the supervisor or Communications Center.

(i) Identify a media staging area outside the outer perimeter and have the department Public Information Officer or a designated temporary media representative provide media access in accordance with the Media Relations Policy.

(j) Identify the need for mutual aid and the transition or relief of personnel for incidents of extended duration.

(k) Debrief personnel and review documentation as appropriate.

407.6 CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

It will be the Incident Commander's decision, with input from the CRU Commander, whether to deploy the CRU during a hostage or barricade situation. Once the Incident Commander authorizes deployment, the CRU Commander or the authorized designee will be responsible for the tactical portion of the operation. The Incident Commander shall continue supervision of the command post operation, outer perimeter security and evacuation, media access and support for the CRU. The Incident Commander and the CRU Commander or the authorized designee shall maintain communications at all times.

407.7 REPORTING

Unless otherwise relieved by a supervisor or Incident Commander, the handling police officer at the scene is responsible for completion and/or coordination of incident reports.

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