



SPECIALTY OPERATIONS AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS			913.00	
<div><div></div><div>SPECIAL WEAPONS TACTICS TEAM (S.W.A.T.)</div><div></div></div>				
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish guidelines for the participation of members of the Punta Gorda Police Department in the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons and Tactics Team.

SCOPE

This procedure shall apply to all Punta Gorda Police Department personnel.

DISCUSSION

The Punta Gorda Police Department does not maintain a departmental Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team. However, in a cooperative effort, the department provides sworn members to the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office for utilization on a combined SWAT Team. This cooperative effort is designed to provide the citizens of our jurisdictions with the most effective services possible. The primary responsibility of the Special Weapons and Tactics Team is to provide specialized services in support of law enforcement operations which require the use of special weapons or tactics.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Sniper:** An officer trained in the use of special weapons and tactics whose primary function is to provide security for the team during movement, and who acts as a specialized sharpshooter when needed. The sniper also acts as an observer and gathers intelligence for team objectives.
2. **Sniper Observer:** An officer trained in the use of special weapons and tactics whose primary function is to act as an observer for the sniper and gather intelligence for team objectives. The observer is also trained as a sharpshooter in order to relieve the sniper and provide auxiliary snipers when needed.
3. **Team Leader:** A supervisor specially trained in the use of weapons and tactics who is responsible for the coordination of, selection, training, deployment, and tactical operations involving members of the SWAT team.
4. **Team Member:** An officer trained in the use of special weapons and tactics is utilized in various capacities which include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Perimeter security;
 - Building entry and suspect apprehension;
 - Hostage rescue;
 - Unit security;
 - Chemical agent delivery;
 - Anti-sniper techniques;
 - Anti-terrorist techniques;
 - Directed patrol assignments in high crime areas;
 - Stakeouts for felony crime;
 - Covert criminal investigations;
 - Dignitary protection details;
 - Security at special events;
 - Anti-sniper tactics;
 - Anti-terrorist tactics;

- Barricaded subjects;
- Apprehension of armed and dangerous persons;
- Execution of search warrants in hazardous situations; and
- Crisis situations and hostage rescue operations.

PROCEDURE

I. SWAT CALL-OUT AND PROTOCOL

- A. Call Out: The decision to request the SWAT Team's response shall be made by the Watch Commander or ranking officer at the scene. The request for a SWAT response requires the immediate notification of the Operations Commander and the Chief of Police.
 - 1. Upon notification of a SWAT call out, the on duty Public Safety Dispatcher shall pull a CAD event and send the Admin Page for notification.
- B. Scene Command: The Watch Commander or ranking officer at the scene shall respond and take charge of an incident scene unless a member of the Command Staff arrives and assumes command. Upon the arrival of the SWAT Team, direction of tactical operations and related activities on scene will be coordinated by the SWAT Team Commander. For incidents occurring within the City of Punta Gorda Police Department's jurisdiction, the final decision for a tactical resolution to an incident shall be developed through continuous communication between the SWAT Team Commander and the Punta Gorda Police Department commanding officer at the scene, but the final decision to implement the tactical response for an incident within the City shall be made by the Punta Gorda Police Department incident commander.
- C. Chain of Command: Punta Gorda Police personnel assigned to the SWAT Team shall have the same rights, privileges and responsibilities of any other member of the SWAT Team. They shall also follow the same chain of command as other members of the team while engaged in the performance of SWAT duties.
- D. SWAT Support: Punta Gorda Police Department personnel shall provide any necessary support at the incident scene in cooperation with the SWAT Team.

II. TEAM MEMBER AVAILABILITY

- A. Based on 24-hour need for rapid response, team members may be required to respond to emergency situations during non-duty hours. Team members will remain readily available for contact via telephone, or radio on a twenty-four (24) hour basis. The team

leader will be notified by the team member when the member will be unavailable due to vacation, extended absence, etc.

- B. **Emergency Response (On-Duty):** Upon notification of a crisis situation, the Communications Section shall dispatch on-duty SWAT Team Members to an area pre-determined by the Team Commander/Leader. On-duty Punta Gorda Police personnel shall seek approval from the Watch Commander prior to leaving their assigned duties and shall be approved only if minimum staffing requirements will be met with absence of the SWAT Team member.
- C. **Emergency Response (Off-Duty):** Upon notification of a crisis situation, off-duty team members shall respond to the pre-determined area as rapidly as safe transport permits. Off-duty Punta Gorda Police personnel shall also immediately notify the Communications Section of such call-outs. The Communications Section shall notify the Operations Commander.
- D. **Use of Emergency Equipment:** SWAT members shall use emergency lights and sirens when responding to a crisis situation, unless otherwise directed. Driving safely, however, shall not be precluded and emergency lights and siren shall be used in consideration of existing traffic conditions. The use of emergency equipment shall be discontinued at a reasonable distance from the crisis scene to avoid antagonism of crisis perpetrators.
- E. **Other Requests - Non-emergency requests for use of the SWAT Team** shall be directed and coordinated by the Team Commander in cooperation with the Punta Gorda Police Department Operations Commander. Such activities include, but are not limited to, assisting other operational components in the service of search warrants or apprehension of dangerous criminals or wanted persons.

III. TEAM SAFETY

- A. Team members are responsible for their own individual safety as well as the safety of other team members, members of the Punta Gorda Police Department, the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, and the public.
- B. Each member shall utilize standard techniques in handling crisis situations and shall immediately respond to the Team Leader's directions.
- C. Deadly force shall not be used unless directed by the Team Leader, or in defense of life, of self, or others as outlined in the Punta Gorda Police Department and Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Standard Operating Procedures.
- D. When an order is given to resolve the situation with the use of deadly force:
 - 1. All available non-lethal methods of apprehension shall have been attempted or considered.

2. The initial volley must be decisive and simultaneous if there are multiple offenders(s) in order to insure maximum protection for the hostage(s).
3. The Punta Gorda Police Department members shall follow the deadly force policy as set forth in the SOPs.

IV. TRAINING OF TEAM MEMBERS

A. Formal Training: Members of the SWAT Team shall receive technical training in the areas of:

1. Special weapons and tactics;
2. Decoy operations;
3. Undercover surveillance/stakeouts;
4. Coverage of special events;
5. VIP protection;
6. Bomb discoveries;
7. Coverage of disasters;
8. Coverage of civil disorders; and
9. Coverage of civil defense emergencies.

B. In-Service Training

1. In-service tactical team training shall be conducted at least quarterly. The location and curriculum shall vary for each training session. Instructors specialized in areas of team-related functions shall be selected in accordance with training needs.
2. In-service readiness exercises shall be conducted at least annually. The location and curriculum shall vary for each training session. Instructors specialized in areas of team-related functions shall be selected in accordance with training needs.
3. In-service training shall include, but not be limited to, weapons and tactics, anti-sniper and physical training and conditioning.
4. Each team member shall be responsible for an overall self-administered physical fitness program. The program should include fitness in the areas of endurance, strength and agility, as set by the Team Commander. Periodic physical fitness tests shall be performed by team members and certain standards met to ensure team

readiness. Members of the team shall be barred from team functions if they are unable to meet the physical standards.

5. Each team member shall be required to meet semi-annual qualification standards with their assigned weapons. Team members who fail to meet the qualification standards established by the firearms instructor shall not be permitted to engage in official team actions until qualification standards are met.
- C. Training Records: A record of all training sessions shall be maintained by the team leader or designated member, and a copy of such records shall be provided to the Punta Gorda Police Department. It shall be the responsibility of the Employee Development Coordinator to ensure all appropriate SWAT training records are maintained in the agency training files. This shall include copies of training schedules, training outlines, firearms qualifications records, and proficiency records of each team member in all phases of team activities and training.

V. EQUIPMENT

- A. Maintenance: Punta Gorda Police Department personnel assigned to the SWAT team will be issued all required equipment by the Punta Gorda Police Department. Each team member shall be responsible for the routine maintenance of issued equipment including, but not limited to, weapons, web gear, protective vests, clothing, and other designated equipment. Equipment shall be subject to periodic inspection by the Team Commander/Leader. Team members shall carry body armor, helmets, portable radios and additional equipment in their assigned vehicles. Supplemental equipment shall be stored at the Punta Gorda Police Department.
- B. Weapons: Weapons utilized by the team shall be designated by the Team Commander/Leader in accordance with Punta Gorda Police Department and Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Standard Operating Procedures.
- C. Uniforms: Uniforms utilized shall be designated by the Team Leader.
1. Under normal duty assignments, SWAT members will wear the basic uniform of their agency.
 2. When ordered by the team leader, SWAT members will wear the Punta Gorda Police Department olive drab battle dress uniforms (BDU's) with subdued patches on both sleeves, and police patch above the left pocket.
 3. Rank insignia shall be subdued (black) collar brass type for the uniform.
 4. Appropriate footwear, as designated by the Team Commander/Leader, shall be worn with the uniform.

VI. TEAM MEMBER SELECTION

- A. All applications for SWAT team membership are voluntary;
- B. After application, the candidates applying for the SWAT team will be reviewed to determine if they meet the minimum criteria for selection to the SWAT team.
 - 1. Must pass an oral interview.
 - 2. At the time of application, member must not be under any current internal or supervisory investigations.
 - 3. Must not be on disciplinary probation.
 - 4. Minimum of one year law enforcement experience with the employing agency.
 - 5. Must receive clearance from a doctor to perform additional physical fitness requirements of the SWAT team as described in this policy.
 - 6. Must pass the mile and half walk/jog/run, SWAT job task agility test and firearms test.
 - 7. The Chief of Police and the Team Commander have the ultimate authority and discretion to approve or deny the assignment of any Punta Gorda Police personnel to the SWAT team.
- C. Physical Fitness test Semi-Annually: All members of SWAT are required to successfully pass the SWAT job task agility test.

APPROVED



PAMELA R. SMITH, CHIEF OF POLICE

STAFF REVIEW DATES: 03-25-1992, 07-14-1998, 07-14-2000, 12-27-2002, 08-23-2005, 02-13-2007, 12-22-2009, 03-20-2012, 03-24-2014, 09-09-2016, 03-01-2018, 05-05-2020, 07-27-2023

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