

<b>YORK-POQUOSON SHERIFF'S OFFICE</b>	<b>GENERAL ORDERS</b>
<b>SUBJECT: EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (ERT) OPERATIONS</b>	<b>NUMBER: GO 2-43</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> January 1, 2023	<b>LAST MODIFIED DATE:</b> March 1, 2021
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## **INDEX WORDS**

Activation  
 Assistant commander  
 Commander  
 Crisis Negotiation Team  
 Emergency response team (ERT)  
 Explosive Breaching  
 Flash/sound diversionary devices  
 High-risk entry and searches  
 Precision Marksman Team  
 Qualifications, team member  
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## **POLICY**

Some law enforcement situations present special problems that increase the potential danger to citizens, victims, and law enforcement officers attempting to resolve the incident. The York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office has established the Emergency Response Team (ERT) as an additional resource to assist in the management of these incidents. The team's mission is to ensure the safest possible resolution of high-risk law enforcement situations through continuous training in advanced tactical concepts and procedures. The Emergency response team reports to the Patrol Commander who has overall responsibility for the team. Positions on the team are considered a collateral duty and assignment is strictly voluntary. The team's organization and strength shall be consistent with the needs of the Sheriff's Office as determined by the Sheriff.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this general order is to establish guidelines and procedures for the following:

- Selection and training of team members,
- Activation and utilization of the ERT,
- Tactical paramedics, their role, selections and training requirements.
- The acquisition, handling, storage, transportation and use of explosives by the ERT.
- Selection and training requirements for explosive breachers.

- Selection and training requirements for Precision Marksman team members.
- Selection and training requirements for CNT members.

## **DEFINITIONS**

- Hostage Situation
  - A suspect who is believed to be armed and holding a person against his/her will.
- Barricaded Suspect
  - A suspect who is believed:
    - To be armed, and
    - Who is wanted on criminal charges, and
    - Has assumed a position which provides the suspect with significant tactical advantage over deputies attempting to effect the arrest, thereby, making conditions significantly unsafe for deputies on the scene, or
    - To not be armed but has fortified the location where they are barricaded.
- High Risk Arrest/Search Warrants
  - Situations where armed resistance is likely to be encountered during the execution of such warrants, or
  - Where the service of such warrants may require the use of specialized equipment assigned to the ERT.
- Suicidal Subject
  - A person who is believed to be armed and appears to be distraught or mentally unstable and is threatening to take his/her own life and/or has the capability of harming others, and
  - Has assumed a position of tactical advantage over deputies attempting to take the suspect into custody, making conditions unsafe for deputies.

## **Emergency Response Team (ERT) Use**

- Coordination and cooperation between the ERT and other operational components shall be maintained.
- The deployment of the ERT will be utilized to supplement other operational components.
  - The ERT may be used, but is not limited to, the following situations:
    - High risk arrest warrant service,
    - High risk search warrant executions,
      - ❖ The ERT shall not be utilized to execute or assist in the execution of any “no-knock” search warrant regardless of the agency who obtained the warrant.
    - Dignitary and/or witness protection or escort,
    - Narcotics operations,
    - Search and rescue operations,
    - Special events,
    - Post-disaster situations,

- Civil disturbances,
  - ❖ If a Field Tactical Force through a mutual aid request is utilized, the ERT may be used as a support function.
- Any situation where the skills or special equipment available to the ERT would be of value to achieve a positive resolution to that incident, task, or situation.

## **ACTIVATION**

- Authorization for Activation
  - The on-duty patrol supervisor may activate the ERT.
    - Upon activation, the 911 Emergency Communications Center shall send out a call back message to all ERT members to include the following:
      - ❖ An automated phone call,
      - ❖ A text message, and
      - ❖ An automated email.
    - Upon notification of the activation, the ERT Commander shall:
      - ❖ Contact the supervisor requesting activation, and
      - ❖ Evaluate the information provided, and
      - ❖ Determine the number of ERT members needed for the mission.
    - The Hostage Negotiation Team (HNT) shall be activated in conjunction with the ERT.
    - The Public Information Officer (PIO) shall be notified on all emergency situations where the ERT is activated.
  - High risk arrest/search warrants and/or other non-emergency use of the ERT.
    - Requests for use of the ERT for any non-emergency situation must be made through the Patrol Division Commander or in his absence another Division Commander or higher.
    - When possible, all requests should be made as far in advance as possible to allow complete preparation and planning for the specific assignment.
      - ❖ The ERT Commander shall assess the information provided and make a determination if the task requested is feasible and tactically sound.
      - ❖ If the potential risks outweigh the potential benefits, the ERT Commander in consultation with the appropriate Division Commander may decline use of the team for that specific operation.
    - Every effort shall be made to evaluate other options, which could accomplish the same goal(s).

## **COMMAND AND CONTROL**

- Responsibilities
  - When the ERT is utilized in emergency situations, the ERT Commander shall assume

- command and control of all tactical operations, to include development of strategies for the situation resolution.
- Responsibility and tactical control of the scene shall remain with the requesting patrol supervisor until relieved by the ERT Commander.
  - Responsibility for the outer perimeter control shall remain with the patrol supervisor.
  - The ERT Commander shall only assume control of the inner perimeter but may direct relocation of outer perimeter personnel when necessary.
  - During ERT search warrant executions it shall be the responsibility of the ERT Commander to ensure all law enforcement officers participating in the search warrant execution are recognizable and identifiable as uniformed law enforcement officers prior the warrant execution.
- Once the Sheriff or designated incident commander arrives on the scene and assumes the role as incident commander, the ERT Commander shall discuss and obtain approval for all strategies directed toward finalization of the incident.
  - When the ERT is activated in non-emergency situations, the tactical control of all officers involved in the assignment will be the responsibility of the ERT Commander.
    - As soon as practical, the control of all non-ERT personnel will be relinquished to the appropriate on scene supervisor.
    - Tactical planning of all operations, including deployment of any specialized equipment, will be the responsibility of the ERT Commander.

## **SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT**

- Weapons and Munitions
  - ERT personnel are assigned special equipment, including but not limited to, the following Special weapons:
    - Automatic weapons,
    - Precision rifles,
    - Entry vests,
    - Helmets,
    - Entry shields,
    - Tactical uniforms,
    - Less-lethal weapons and munitions,
    - Flash/sound diversionary devices,
    - Special communications equipment,
    - Chemical and smoke agents,
    - Robots/throwbots,
    - Indoor sUAS,
    - Other specialized equipment.
  - Personal issued equipment is to be maintained and stored in the ERT member's assigned vehicle in mission ready condition and is subject to inspection by the ERT Commander or his designee.
  - All ERT members will be issued a chain and lock or other lockable container bolted

- to the vehicle to secure weapons in the trunk or within their assigned vehicle.
- If the assigned vehicle does not have these capabilities any weapons or specialized munitions shall be removed from the vehicle and secured in an approved location when off duty.
- Under no circumstances will any equipment be loaned to non-ERT personnel without the authorization of the ERT Commander or Assistant Commander.
  - All ERT equipment shall be inspected, at a minimum, semi-annually to ensure operational readiness.

## **TRAINING**

- Scheduling and Curriculum
  - Monthly training dates and curriculums shall be established by the ERT Commander and forwarded to:
    - The Division Commanders,
    - Training Section,
    - All team members,
    - Supervisors of team members.
  - All team members shall receive formal basic ERT training or the functional equivalent through OJT prior to conducting actual operations.
  - Training summaries shall be completed after all training and a copy submitted to the training section of the Administrative Services Division no later than ten (10) days following completion of training.
  - The summary shall include:
    - Names of members attending training,
    - Hours attended,
    - Training topics and hours per topic,
    - Instructors,
    - Reference material(s) used,
    - Location of training,
    - Weapons qualification scores.
      - ❖ ERT members must qualify with all issued weapons, scoring a minimum of 90% with each assigned weapon on all approved qualification courses as authorized by the Sheriff or his designee.
- Specialized equipment training
  - Team members operating robots shall be trained in their configurations, use and maintenance requirements.
  - Team members operating sUAS shall be trained in their configuration and use.
    - ❖ sUAS utilized by the ERT shall be less than .55 pounds total weight fully configured.
    - ❖ Operation of sUAS greater than .55 pounds but less than 50 pounds is permitted; however, all FAA requirements shall be adhered to if the sUAS is to be flown outdoors regardless of altitude or distance.

## **TEAM MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS AND SELECTION**

- Minimum qualifications for selection:
  - Prior to selection to the ERT prospective member shall meet the following:
    - Must have three (3) years full-time law enforcement experience.
    - Must have completed the initial probationary period with the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office.
    - Obtain their current lieutenant's recommendation,
    - Must not have had any formal disciplinary action within one year prior to the application date.
      - ❖ A formal disciplinary actions is considered a written reprimand or higher.
  - Must have a current annual evaluation rating of at least "meets" in all categories.
  - Must be able to achieve a score of 90 percent or better on the 50 round Tactical Firearms Course with the Sheriff's Office issued handgun.
  - Must not have any documented firearms safety violations within 1 year prior to selection for the team.
  - To be considered for a position on the ERT, applicants must submit their request in writing. The request shall include:
    - Their current lieutenant's recommendation, and
    - The endorsement of their division commander.
- Team Vacancies
  - ERT vacancies will be posted for a minimum of one week.
  - Interested deputies must submit a letter of interest to the ERT Commander, through their lieutenant, stating their desire to participate in the process and outlining their qualifications before the posted deadline.
- Team Assessment
  - Prospective team members shall undergo an evaluation involving the following:
    - Firearms to include:
      - ❖ TQC, Tactical qualifications Course,
      - ❖ MDA qualification Course,
      - ❖ Combat II Course,
      - ❖ Stress Course,
      - ❖ ERT Combat Course.
    - ERT Officer Rescue Course
    - Physical Fitness Course,
    - Written Exam,
    - Oral Interview.
  - Each course evaluated shall have a set number of points to a maximum of 350 points.
  - Firearms
    - The following courses of fire will be utilized:

- ❖ DCJS TQC Course
  - The candidate must fire a score of 90% or better to continue the process.
- ❖ Combat II Course
  - Points shall be awarded for scores as follows:
    - ✓ 84% or less - 0 Points
    - ✓ 85% to 89% - 50 Points
    - ✓ 90% to 94% - 75 Points
    - ✓ 95% to 100% - 100 Points
- ❖ MDA Course
  - Points shall be awarded for scores as follows:
    - ✓ 84% or Less - 0 Points
    - ✓ 85% to 89% - 50 Points
    - ✓ 90% to 94% - 75 Points
    - ✓ 95% to 100% - 100 Points
- ❖ Stress Course, which shall consist of the following:
  - Run a short distance with an empty weapon,
  - Conduct a field strip of their issued weapon,
  - Return their weapon to operational condition,
  - Load the weapon with two (2) rounds,
  - Fire two (2) rounds from the seven (7) yard line into the white area of a standard “Q” target.
  - Scoring shall be as follows:
    - ✓ 60 seconds or less both round in white area of target – 50 Points
    - ✓ More than 60 seconds or any round missed white area – 0 Points
- ❖ ERT Combat Course, which shall consist of:
  - Short distance run,
  - Shooting drill with movement from with:
    - ✓ Multiple sized targets, and
    - ✓ Various distances from target.
  - Scoring shall be as follows:
    - ✓ Only rounds on target count,
    - ✓ Each round on target – 2 Points
    - ✓ Maximum score – 50 Points
- ERT Officer Rescue Course, shall consist of the following:
  - ❖ Shooting victim laying on the ground,
  - ❖ Candidate must properly apply a tourniquet, and
  - ❖ Candidate must drag a 185 lb. mannequin without the tourniquet coming off the injury.
    - A tactical medic shall evaluate the drill.

❖ Scoring shall be as follows:

- Medical care performed correctly – 25 Points
- Mannequin drag performed correctly – 25 Points
- Medical care performed incorrectly – 0 Points
- Mannequin drag performed incorrectly – 0 Points

○ Physical Fitness Evaluation

- The physical fitness evaluation is designed to measure strength.
- Each event is awarded points up to a maximum of 300 Points for the entire evaluation.
- Candidates shall be weighed prior to performing this activity.
- Candidates shall be permitted time to perform warm ups prior performing the physical fitness and circuit drills evaluation.

❖ Deadlift

- ✓ Candidates must dead lift their full body weight three (3) repetitions.
- ✓ Points shall be awarded as follows:
  - Fail to lift body weight – 0 Points
  - Lift body weight – 1 Point
  - Lift above body weight – 1 Point for each pound lifted above body weight up to 50 pounds.

○ The following physical fitness circuit drills shall be evaluated using a point system.

- There will be a total of three (3) circuits.
- Each circuit shall be 5 minutes and 40 seconds.
- Each event in the circuit shall be 1 minute, with a 10 second break between events.
- There shall be a 1 minute break between each circuit.
- Scoring shall be 1 point awarded for each repetition in each event up to a maximum of 250 point for the entire evaluation.
- The Circuit events shall be:

❖ Box Jumps

- ✓ The candidate shall begin standing flat footed on the ground.
- ✓ The candidate shall jump a vertical height onto a 20” box and into a fully standing position.
- ✓ The candidate shall then jump backward off the box onto the ground into a fully standing position and repeat the sequence as many times as possible in the 1 minute time frame.

❖ Overhead Press

- ✓ The candidate shall lift a 75 pound bar to their chest, then press the 75 pound bar above their heads locking their elbows and repeat the sequence from chest to overhead as many times as possible in the 1 minute time frame.



- ❖ Weighted Ball Toss
  - ✓ The candidate shall start in a squat position arm's length plus 1 foot from the wall while holding a 14 pound weighted ball.
  - ✓ The candidate shall go to a standing position extending the arms and pushing the ball up and out tossing the ball against the wall to height of the candidate's height plus 3 feet, catch the ball and return to a squatting position.
  - ✓ The candidate shall perform as many repetitions as possible in the 1 minute time frame.
- ❖ Sumo High Pulls
  - ✓ The candidate shall, with their feet beyond shoulder width, start in a squatting (Sumo) position with a 55 pound kettle bell between their feet.
  - ✓ The candidate shall stand lifting the kettle bell up below their chin in front of their chest until their arms are parallel with the ground.
  - ✓ The candidate shall then lower their arms and return to a squatting (Sumo) position and repeat as many repetitions as possible in the 1 minute time frame.
- ❖ Rowing Machine
  - ✓ The rowing machine shall be set to a resistance level of 6.
  - ✓ The candidate shall complete as many rowing repetitions as possible in the 1 minute time frame.
  - ✓ The candidate shall receive 1 point per calorie burned based on the electronic display of the rowing machine.
- Candidates must have obtained a minimum combined score of 150 points in the physical fitness phase to continue in the process.
- Written Test
  - Prospective members shall be administered a 50 question written test covering the following topics:
    - ❖ Sheriff's Office policies and procedures,
    - ❖ Virginia State Code, and
    - ❖ Basic trauma care and triage.
      - Candidates shall be awarded 3 points for each correct answer.
- Oral Interview
  - Prospective members shall undergo an oral interview by team members present.
    - ❖ Questions presented during this segment shall be pre-determined, and
    - ❖ Each candidate shall be asked the same questions.
    - ❖ Team members participating in the oral interview may award each candidate up to 200 points.
- Candidates failing to achieve a minimum of 700 points, at the conclusion of all segments of the assessment, shall be eliminated from further consideration for this

selection process.

- Points shall be tallied and each candidate ranked from highest to the lowest based on point totals.
- The team commander may select from the top three Deputies with the highest number of points.
- The team commander's recommendation will be forwarded to the Sheriff, through the Patrol Division Commander, for final approval.

## **CONDUCTING HIGH-RISK ENTRIES/SEARCHES AND ARRESTS**

- Search Warrant Planning and Raid Operations
  - Before executing search warrants, supervisors will determine whether the search is of a low or high-risk nature.
    - A high-risk entry is when unusual circumstances exist beyond the capability of normal warrant service, such as:
      - ❖ A heavily fortified location,
      - ❖ Armed individuals,
      - ❖ Threats of harm to law enforcement officers,
      - ❖ Presence of weapons, or
      - ❖ The propensity for violence by the suspect or others.
  - The following procedures will be observed in each case:
    - High risks
      - ❖ If the supervisor recognizes that one or more high-risk criteria is present, the Patrol Commander or in his/her absence the Chief Deputy shall be notified.
      - ❖ Upon call-up authorization, the ERT will be used to affect the entry.
  - The ERT Commander or his designee shall plan the operation in coordination with the affected Division Commander.
  - The ERT Commander will have the final determination in approving the entry operational plan, unless it is changed by a higher authority in his/her chain of command.
  - When events require simultaneous multiple entries, the ERT Commander will organize separate teams with all available personnel.
    - If there is an insufficient number of personnel, the ERT Commander shall request mutual aid assistance through the Patrol Division Commander.
- Planning
  - As part of the planning for the execution of a high risk arrest or search warrant the following shall be accomplished:
    - Threat assessment
      - ❖ A [Threat Assessment](#) form, found in the Forms folder in Power DMS, shall be completed prior to the execution of any arrest or search warrant by either:
        - The deputy or investigator who obtained the warrant, or
        - The person preparing the operations plan for the execution of the arrest or search warrant, or

- 450                   ➤ The ERT commander or his designee prior to the briefing for the execution  
451                   of the arrest or search warrant.
- 452
- 453       ○ The following are recommended steps during the planning for any arrest or search  
454       warrant executions:
- 455           ▪ Obtain drawings and or maps of the neighborhood, aerial photos, if available.  
456           ▪ Obtain photos and or descriptions of the suspects.  
457           ▪ Obtain photos of and detailed clothing description of any undercover law  
458           enforcement officers who may be present at the location of warrant execution.  
459           ▪ Conduct a property information search through the York County GIS Property  
460           Information system.  
461           ▪ Obtain criminal histories of the suspect and known associates that may be present.  
462           ▪ Perform a check of the Sheriff's Office Information System for any information  
463           regarding suspects or associates.  
464           ▪ Perform a LInX search of the suspect and known associates.
- 465
- 466       ○ The incident commander shall review all information with the ERT Commander, and  
467       if time allows practices should be conducted.
- 468       ○ The ERT Commander shall assure that all personnel participating in the operation,  
469       will be recognizable to ERT members and or law enforcement officers.
- 470
- 471       ● Pre-Execution/Briefing Procedures
- 472           ○ Prior to any operation, a determination will be made as to who is responsible for each  
473           task of the operation.
- 474           ○ Surveillance will be implemented for a period reasonably necessary in order to  
475           determine the status of the people involved.
- 476           ○ The surveillance shall address the following:
- 477               ▪ Safety factors,  
478               ▪ Additional individuals at the place to be searched,  
479               ▪ Suspects and associate count,  
480               ▪ Suspects or other people outside the perimeter of the search who may pose a  
481               threat or destroy evidence,  
482               ▪ Animals on scene, etc.
- 483
- 484           ○ The person or team selected to make arrest and control the suspect and any associates.
- 485           ○ The team selected to conduct the initial building search.
- 486           ○ The personnel designated to conduct post entry evidence searches.
- 487               ▪ The Investigations Division Commander or his designee shall coordinate with the  
488               ERT Commander or his designee if investigators who are also ERT members will  
489               be needed for investigative functions following the warrant execution.
- 490
- 491           ○ Patterns of search to be used,
- 492           ○ Assign search areas.
- 493           ○ The team to conduct initial breeching and entry.
- 494               ▪ A team shall be selected to conduct:
- 495                   ❖ The entry,

- ❖ Backup and perimeter protection for entry teams and search teams.
  - Deputies shall be designated to provide relief to the advance deputies in the event of long-term operations.

- Warrant Execution

- A qualified advanced life support medical team shall be notified and be on stand-by in the immediate vicinity.
- Only deputies trained and approved by the ERT Commander will conduct initial entry.
- All other Personnel shall enter only after receiving authorization from the ERT Commander or his designee.
  - Entry by personnel other than ERT members making the entry, shall only occur after the location has been determined to be secure.
- The ERT Commander shall follow ERT protocol and act only if the need to execute the operation plan and resolve the situation outweighs the risks to Sheriff's Office personnel and the public.

- Once search location is secure

- The ERT Commander or his designee shall clear other law enforcement officers to enter the premises once the initial and secondary searches are complete and the location is deemed safe.
- Searches for evidence shall be conducted by those law enforcement officers designated in the operations plan.
- All evidence will be collected and stored in accordance with [GO 2-15, Evidence Procedures](#).

- Mutual aid

- During mutual aid operations, authority as well as team and individual responsibilities must be determined.
- ERT Operations within York County or the City of Poquoson
  - All ERT operations, where the York-Poquoson ERT is utilized, within York County or the City of Poquoson, shall fall under the operational control of the York Poquoson Sheriff's Office ERT Commander.
- ERT Operations outside of York County or the City of Poquoson
  - Operational control of the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office ERT, during mutual aid requests shall fall under the requesting agencies command authority.
  - York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office ERT members shall only preform roles which fall within their respective training and qualifications.
  - The ERT Commander shall ensure that each member of the operation will have proper radio communications at all times within the mutual aid jurisdiction, and ensure that each member has been given the proper frequencies.

## **FLASH/SOUND DIVERSIONARY DEVICES**

- The use of flash/sound diversionary devices, also referred to as "flashbangs", has saved the lives of many law enforcement officers and innocent civilians, as well as suspects.
  - In order to reduce any potential for injury, these lifesaving, less-lethal devices must be properly deployed and their use supervised.
- Utilization of flash/sound diversionary devices
  - Only personnel who have successfully completed an approved training course in the proper use and deployment of flash/sound diversionary devices shall be authorized to deploy them during actual operations.
    - In order to remain certified/authorized to use the devices, personnel shall successfully complete a refresher course on an annual basis.
    - Because of the specialized nature of these devices and the training required to properly deploy them, their use shall be restricted to trained personnel from the ERT.
- Authorization for use
  - Except in extreme emergencies, such as life-threatening situations, flash/sound diversionary devices shall not be deployed inside a structure without prior authorization of the Sheriff, Chief Deputy, Patrol Division Commander or in their absence another Division Commander.
  - The ERT Commander or his designee may authorize the deployment of flash/sound diversionary devices outside of a structure.
  - In extreme emergencies and in the absence of the ERT Commander, the assistant team commander may authorize their use.
- Justification for use
  - Generally, flash/sound diversionary devices may be considered whenever the use of a diversion would facilitate entry, enable arrest, and potentially reduce the risk of injury.
  - Circumstances justifying the use of flash/sound diversionary devices shall include, but not be limited to:
    - Barricaded suspect and/or hostage situations,
    - High-risk warrant services,
    - Circumstances wherein distraction of violent mentally deranged persons or those under the influence of alcohol/drugs is believed necessary in order to facilitate apprehension,
    - Situations wherein the ERT Commander deems their use necessary to safely resolve the incident.
- Deployment considerations
  - Prior to deploying flash/sound diversionary devices, personnel shall consider the following:
    - Available intelligence information and circumstances to include:
      - ❖ Presence of children or elderly adults,
      - ❖ Presence of explosive or flammable material.

- Circumstances may dictate the exterior deployment as preferable to deployment in the interior of a structure.
- Whenever possible, devices shall be deployed to an area visible to the deploying officer.
  - Because flash/sound diversionary devices have the potential to ignite flammable materials, a portable fire extinguisher shall be readily accessible whenever devices are to be deployed.
- Review process and documentation
  - The ERT Commander shall review the use of flash/sound diversionary devices as soon as practical following each incident or operation to ensure the devices were used according to policy and that the devices functioned properly.
  - Information thus obtained shall also be utilized for statistical and training purposes.
  - A report shall be generated by the ERT Commander and submitted to the Patrol Division Commander reporting and documenting the information above after every operational or training use of a flash/sound diversionary device.

#### **TACTICAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SUPPORT (TEMS)**

- The use of tactical medical personnel have been utilized on many emergency response teams. The use of these individuals greatly enhances the time sensitive response to an injured team member or a suspect should this unfortunate situation ever occur.
  - While the primary concentration of training for these individuals is medical in nature, this office has recognized the need for these individuals to have the ability to protect themselves in these potentially dangerous operations.
  - Tactical paramedics will be participating in ERT operations as a tactical medic on an as assigned basis. The actual deployment plan is at the discretion of the ERT Commander.
- Minimum Qualifications
  - Five years full-time Paramedic experience with the County of York, Department of Fire and Life Safety.
  - Must not have had any disciplinary action within one year prior to the application date.
  - Must have a current annual evaluation of a satisfactory rating.
  - Must be able to achieve a score of 90 percent or better on the 50 round Tactical Firearms Course with the Sheriff's Office issued handgun.
    - Prior to weapons qualifications and being permitted to carry a firearm, tactical medics selected to the team shall complete either:
      - ❖ The DCJS basic law enforcement officer academy firearms training, or
      - ❖ A basic firearms training course administered by the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office.
  - To be considered for a position on the ERT, applicants must submit their request in writing. The request must include:

- Their current supervisor's recommendation, and
  - The endorsement of the Fire Chief or his designee.
  - Individuals interested in participating as a member of the ERT should recognize that participation involves an intense amount of stress, both mental and physical.
    - ❖ It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that he or she is physically and mentally capable of completing all required training and performing all required skills.
- Selection Process
    - Vacancies will be posted for a minimum of two weeks.
    - Interested medics must submit a letter, through their chain of command, to the ERT Commander stating their desire to participate in the process and outlining their qualifications before the posted deadline.
      - Only those paramedics endorsed by the Fire Chief or his designee may apply.
    - The selection process is governed by the York County Fire and Life Safety Tactical Medic Team Leader.
    - Must be an employee of the County of York, Department of Fire and Life Safety.
    - Must complete and pass a NCIC criminal history background check.
    - Must complete a VCIN Security Awareness course.
    - Must pass a psychological screening test administered by the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office.
    - The team commander's recommendation will be forwarded to the Sheriff for approval.
  - Training
    - Tactical Medics will train with the ERT and are considered regular members of the team
    - They shall adhere to training standards set forth by DCJS for annual firearms qualifications to a score of 90% or above, within 1 (one) year of being placed on the ERT.
    - Must annually attend classroom training on firearms safety and use of deadly force training taught by Sheriff's Office firearms training staff prior to being authorized to carry a firearm.
      - Use of Force training shall consist of specific instruction on [GO 2-6, Use of Force](#). All tactical medics shall review this policy and sign a written receipt of acknowledgement prior to carrying a firearm.
    - Must maintain Nationally Registered Paramedic certification through the required seventy-two (72) hours of continuing education every two years.
    - Tactical paramedics must attend and participate in all ERT training events unless prior approval for absence is obtained from the ERT Commander or his designee.
  - Compensation
    - Tactical paramedics are not employees of the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office and therefore not eligible to receive compensation for their services from the Sheriff's

- Office.
- Tactical paramedics will be compensated through York County Department of Fire and Life Safety for their service.
  - In the case of injury, the tactical paramedic will be covered through their normal Workman's Compensation program through the Department of Fire and Life Safety.
- Standard of Care
    - Tactical paramedics are required to deliver emergency medical care that is consistent with the Peninsulas Regional Protocols, Policies, and Procedures. The normal priority of care during tactical operations will be:
      - ERT team personnel,
      - Other Public Safety Responders,
      - Civilians.
  - Firearm Security
    - While on duty with York County Fire and Life Safety, as well as off duty, the tactical paramedics are required to be able to deploy to the incident scene as quickly and as safely as possible.
    - This requires that they have their issued firearm with them. The following describes the procedures that will be adhered to while on duty and off duty in regards to firearm storage and security.
    - On duty Administrative Staff / Battalion Chief / EMS Supervisor
      - While on or off duty, a tactical paramedic assigned to the above listed positions will secure their unloaded weapon and magazines inside a locked vehicular mounted gun cabinet.
      - If the tactical paramedic must take their weapon home when their take home vehicle is not available, then the weapon will be secured, unloaded with a trigger lock in place, in a gun safe inside the residence.
      - If the County vehicle has to be taken into the garage for repairs, the weapon will not be left inside the vehicle.
      - The tactical paramedic is responsible for the care, cleaning, and security of issued county owned weapons.

## **EXPLOSIVE BREACHING**

- Description
  - Explosive Breaching is the use of a minimum explosive charge necessary to gain entry into a target location. Explosive breaching is not a replacement of manual breaching tools such as the ram, halligan tool or knock and announce.
  - Explosive breaching may be considered for use in high risk warrant service, hostage and or barricade situations, active shooter situations or any situation where manual entry methods may not work to gain positive entry or when the danger to deputies or civilians exists utilizing conventional entry methods.
  - Explosive breaching shall not be used in the following situations:
    - Misdemeanor warrant service unless information or history indicates otherwise,
    - Locations known to contain or store flammable chemicals (Such as Meth Labs),



- Locations known to contain or store high explosives,
  - During thunder or electrical storms.
- Only the Sheriff or his designee may authorize the operational use of explosive breaching.
- Training
  - Certification requirements for Explosive Breachers:
    - Within the 1 (one) year of being assigned as an Explosive Breacher, the team member shall attend Forced Entry Tactical Training Breaching school (FETT) or an equivalent approved Explosive Breacher course.
- Handling of Explosives and Priming Components or Systems:
  - The only handling of explosives, priming components and or priming systems will be done by explosive breachers or others training in the safe handling of explosives, unless under the direct supervision of an explosive breacher or other individual trained in the safe handling of explosives.
  - Detonation of explosive charges will only be done by explosive breachers or EOD personnel.
  - Explosive charges will only be assembled by explosive breachers or EOD Personnel.
- Acquisition of Explosives
  - Explosives will only be acquired from licensed explosives distributors.
  - Only employees trained in Explosive Breaching may request explosives to be ordered.
  - Only the amount of explosives needed for operational use and training shall be ordered and that amount at no time shall exceed 50 Lbs. net weight of explosives.
  - Only non-electric shock tube blasting caps with a 0 millisecond delay will be used for explosive breaching operations or training.
  - In the event explosives distributors, demolition companies or EOD units offer to donate explosive material or priming components to the Sheriff's Office, only explosives or priming components suitable for operational or training breaches will be accepted.
    - Donated explosives or priming components must be approved by and accepted only by a trained explosive breacher.
- Transportations of Explosives
  - Law Enforcement agencies are exempted from DOT Transportation and Placard Regulations as they pertain to the transportation of explosives. However the following guidelines will be adhered to:
    - Only a Sheriff's Office or County vehicle shall be used for the pick up or transportation of explosives.
    - Explosives shall be kept in an explosive magazine during transport, unless the explosives are being transported during an operational or training mission.
    - At least one explosive breacher or other individual trained in the safe handling of explosives shall be present in any vehicle transporting explosives.

- Storage and Inventory of Explosives and Priming Components or Systems
  - Explosives, priming components and/or priming systems shall be stored in accordance with BATF regulations in approved explosive magazines.
    - Explosive storage magazines shall be locked with two locks when unattended for security purposes.
    - Only those deputies trained in the safe handling of explosives and the Chief Deputy shall have a key to the storage magazine locks.
  - An inventory of explosive material and priming components shall be maintained away from the explosive magazines and the inventory updated quarterly or whenever the magazine is opened.
  - A breacher shall inspect, at a minimum, all magazines once every 7 (seven) days to determine whether there has been any attempted or unauthorized entry into the magazine.
  - Loss or theft of explosive material or priming components shall be reported to the BATF within 24 hours of the discovered theft or loss.
  - Pre-assembled rapid deployment charges shall have an affixed tag indicating the following:
    - Date Charge Assembled.
    - Name of breacher who assembled the charge.
    - Net weight of explosives.
    - Minimum safe distance for the specific charge.
    - Overpressure PSI calculation.
- Operational and Training Documentation
  - All operational and training breaches shall be documented using an Explosive Breacher Report.
  - A Shot Sheet shall be completed for all training breaches.
  - All training breaches shall be photographed with a shot sheet with charge in place and again with the shot sheet following the charge detonation.
  - All Breacher Reports, Shot Sheets and Photos shall be maintained in a Breachers File.
  - Breachers Reports shall contain at a Minimum the Following Information:
    - Date of breach,
    - Location of breach,
    - Type of charge,
    - Name of breacher who assembled charge,
    - List of explosive material used to include type, amount, grains of each explosive material and total grains for explosive charge,
    - Net weight Lbs TNT of explosives used,
    - Minimum Safe Distance for the specific charge,
    - Room Volume (For Interior Building Breaches),
    - Internal over pressure PSI calculation,
    - Written description of how the charge was assembled and mounted
    - List of non-explosive components used to assemble charge
    - Not to scale sketch of the explosive charge to include mounting system
    - Indication if explosive breach was or was not successful

- Written summary of the breach
- Photo of all points breached or attempted to be breached as well as any collateral damage resulting from the explosive breach
- Breaching Operations
  - All operational explosive breaches shall be briefed during the mission briefing to include contingencies for failed breaches, aborting breaches and alternate entry points.
  - All mathematical calculations shall be verified by a second explosive breacher.
  - Entry teams staging for explosive breach entries shall stage no closer than the calculated minimum safe distance, as determined by the explosive breacher, unless, at the discretion of the breacher, suitable shielding is provided by a ballistic shield or by the structure.
    - At no time shall any personnel be staged or remain in a location, as determined by the explosive breacher, that will cause exposure to blast overpressures in excess of 2 PSI.
  - Gas masks shall be worn by all entry personnel participating in operational and training interior explosive breaches.

## **PRECISION MARKSMAN TEAM**

- Purpose
  - Gather and report observations for intelligence purposes,
  - Provide precision fire on select targets to protect the lives of others.
- Definitions
  - Precision Marksman
    - An individual specially trained to take precision shots at a designated target with a special application rifle.
  - Spotter/Observer
    - A precision marksman assigned to assist the primary precision marksman.
  - Precision Marksman Team
    - Consists of a primary Marksman and Spotter/Observer.
      - ❖ Each member of the team may alternate between the weapon and spotting scope as necessary.
- Command and Control
  - Precision Marksman Team Leader and Assistant Team Leader.
    - The ERT Commander shall designate a Precision Marksman Team Leader and may, designate an Assistant Team Leader.
      - ❖ The Precision Marksman Team Leader and Assistant Team Leader report to the ERT Commander.

- 863       ▪ The Precision Marksman Team Leader and Assistant Team Leader shall be  
864       responsible for the following:
  - 865       ❖ Reports equipment needs to the ERT Commander.
  - 866       ❖ Conducts weapons inspections to ensure weapons are property maintained.
  - 867       ❖ Reports all weapons and equipment malfunctions and issues to the ERT  
868       Commander and Sheriff's Office Armorer as soon as possible.
  - 869       ❖ Schedules and oversees Precision Marksman Team training and required  
870       firearms qualifications.
  - 871       ❖ Reports training needs and recommendations to the ERT Commander.
  - 872       ❖ Reviews Precision Marksman Team data books.
  - 873       ❖ Ensures mission readiness of team members.
  - 874       ❖ Ensures team members are properly equipped for missions upon activation.
  - 875       ❖ Ensures team members receive an operational briefing prior to deployment  
876       which shall include:
    - 877       ➤ Type of intelligence to be gathered,
    - 878       ➤ Pertinent information about possible targets and target location, and
    - 879       ➤ Rules of engagement if applicable.
  - 880
  - 881       ❖ Attends debriefings following missions.
  - 882       ❖ Ensures after action reports are completed in a timely manner and submitted to  
883       the ERT Commander or his designee for review.
  - 884       ❖ Makes recommendations to the ERT Commander regarding potential Sheriff's  
885       Office members who possess the requisite skills and abilities for Precision  
886       Marksman Team vacancies.
  - 887
- 888       ○ Precision Marksman
  - 889       ▪ Precision Marksman shall be responsible for the following:
    - 890       ❖ Within one (1) year of selection Precision Marksmen shall:
      - 891       ➤ Successfully complete an agency approved Patrol Rifle course, and
      - 892       ➤ Qualify with an Agency Patrol Rifle, and
      - 893       ➤ Maintain the minimum patrol rifle qualifications.
    - 894
    - 895       ❖ Properly maintaining their assigned weapon and equipment.
    - 896       ❖ Reporting weapons and equipment malfunctions or issues to the Team Leader  
897       or Assistant Team Leader as soon as possible.
    - 898       ❖ Keeping the Team Leader of Assistant Team Leader informed about  
899       availability.
    - 900       ❖ Attending scheduled training and weapons qualifications.
    - 901       ❖ Target acquisition and identification.
    - 902       ❖ Relaying up to date and accurate intelligence information to the  
903       Spotter/Observer.
    - 904       ❖ Completing data book entries following missions and training.
    - 905       ❖ Attending post mission debriefs.
    - 906       ❖ Completing after action reports and submitting the reports to the Team Leader  
907       or Assistant Team Leader in a timely manner.

- Spotters/Observers
  - Spotter/Observers shall be responsible for the following:
    - ❖ Within one (1) year of selection, Precision Marksmen shall:
      - Successfully complete an agency approved Patrol Rifle course, and
      - Qualify with an Agency Patrol Rifle, and
      - Maintain the minimum patrol rifle qualifications.
    - ❖ Properly maintaining their assigned weapon and equipment.
    - ❖ Reporting weapons and equipment malfunctions or issues to the Team Leader of Assistant Team Leader as soon as possible.
    - ❖ Keeping the Team Leader of Assistant Team Leader informed about availability.
    - ❖ Attending scheduled training and weapons qualifications.
    - ❖ Target acquisition and identification.
    - ❖ Determining windage, range, elevation and weather factors.
    - ❖ Gathering, documentation and communication of up to date and accurate intelligence.
    - ❖ Completion of data books.
    - ❖ Attending post mission debriefs.
    - ❖ Completing after action reports and submitting the reports to the Team Leader or Assistant Team Leader in a timely manner.
- Team Qualifications
  - Prerequisites
    - Due to the highly sensitive and critical nature of assignment to the Precision Marksman/Spotter team the following are required prior to consideration for selection:
      - ❖ Must be a team player,
      - ❖ Must have a history of making sound judgements,
      - ❖ Must have excellent communications skills both orally and in writing,
      - ❖ Must be physically fit.
  - Selection Process
    - Minimum qualifications for selection:
      - ❖ Prior to selection to the ERT prospective member shall meet the following:
      - ❖ Must have one (1) year full-time law enforcement, and
      - ❖ Must have completed the initial probationary period with the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office.
      - ❖ Must live within a one hour response time.
      - ❖ Obtain their current lieutenant's recommendation,
      - ❖ Must not have had any formal disciplinary action within one year prior to the application date.
        - A formal disciplinary actions is considered a written reprimand or higher.

- ❖ Must have a current annual evaluation rating of at least “meets” in all categories.
- ❖ Most not have any documented firearms safety violations within 1 year prior to selection for the team.
- ❖ To be considered for a position on the Precision Marksman Team, applicants must submit their request in writing. The request must include:
  - Their current lieutenant’s recommendation, and
  - The endorsement of their division commander.
- Advertisements of Vacancies
  - All vacancies shall be advertised through a notification from the Precision Marksman Team leader for at least two weeks prior to assessment.
- Assessment Criteria
  - Oral Interview
    - ❖ With the Precision Marksman Team Leader and member of the ERT.
      - All prospective applicants shall be asked the same pre-determined questions.
- Video Scenario
  - Shall consist of a pre-recorded video viewed through a rifle scope.
    - ❖ Applicants shall be judged on the following:
      - Communications skills,
      - Observation/intelligence gathering skills,
      - Decision making skills,
      - After action report writing skills.
- Rifle Skills
  - Demonstrate the ability to comfortable handle the precision rifle.
  - Must shoot a minimum of a 3 round course of fire with a maximum 3 minute of angle (MOA) at 100 yards.
    - ❖ Candidates shall have 9 rounds (three tries) to complete the course of fire.
- Selection
  - Following the assessment, the Precision Marksman Team Leader shall make a recommendation to the Sheriff through the Patrol Division Commander for the final decision.
- Training Requirements Following Selection
  - Specialized Training
    - Prior to being considered deployable, team members shall as soon as practicable attend an agency approved Precision Marksman/Sniper training course.
  - Recurring Training
    - The Precision Marksman has scheduled training at a minimum once a month.

998                   ❖ Team members are required to attend all monthly trainings unless excused by  
999                   the Team Leader or Patrol Division Commander.

1000                 ➤ Team members missing two or more trainings in a 12 month period may  
1001                 be removed from the team.

1002  
1003                 ○ Weapons Qualifications

1004                   ▪ The Precision Marksman Team members shall at a minimum fire a qualification  
1005                   score using the FBI Sniper Qualification Course with a minimum score of 90%.

1006                 ❖ Team members shall be given three attempts at qualifying.

1007                 ➤ Team members failing to fire a qualifying score within three tries shall be  
1008                 subject to removal from the team.

1009  
1010                 **CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM (CNT)**

1011  
1012                 • Minimum qualification for selection

1013                   ○ Any sworn deputy with three (3) years' experience desiring a position as a hostage  
1014                   negotiator shall, upon notification of an existing vacancy;

1015                   ○ Forward a written request along with their current Lieutenants recommendation to the  
1016                   ERT Commander.

1017                   ▪ Current ERT members must obtain permission from the ERT Commander.

1018  
1019                 • Selection Criteria

1020                   ○ Selections will be made by a three-member panel consisting of:

1021                   ▪ The CNT Team Leader and/or Assistant Team Leader,

1022                   ▪ The ERT Commander and/or Assistant Commander,

1023                   ▪ A Senior CNT member.

1024  
1025                   ○ The panel will consider the following:

1026                   ▪ Applicant's communications skills,

1027                   ▪ Applicant's overall demeanor,

1028                   ▪ Formal education, training and problem solving abilities.

1029  
1030                 • Assessment Process:

1031                   ○ Written exam consisting of:

1032                   ▪ Basic law enforcement and current Sheriff's Office Policies and Procedures,

1033  
1034                   ○ Conduct an active training negotiation.

1035                   ▪ Intended to test the candidate's communications abilities;

1036  
1037                   ○ Oral Interview

1038                   ○ The panel will forward their recommendation to the Sheriff, through the Command  
1039                   Staff, for his approval.

1040  
1041                 • Requirements Once Selected

1042                   ○ Unless already completed, new members of the Crisis Negotiations Team shall be  
1043                   required to attend a Basic Negotiations course approved by the Sheriff or his

designee.

- Crisis Negotiation Team Organization

- The CNT will be under the administrative control of the Patrol Division Commander.
- The CNT will be under the operational control of the ERT Commander, and Assistant Commander;
- A team leader and an assistant team leader shall be appointed by the ERT Commander;
- The team leader or assistant team leader shall oversee negotiations on operational incidents.
  - The negotiation team may be expanded or reduced as needs change.
  - Members on the CNT shall, if possible, include racial/ethnic/ gender representation as determined to be appropriate.
- In the absence of the team leader or assistant team leader, the CNT shall come under the direction of the ERT Commander or their designee.

- Team Responsibilities

- Team members shall train on a monthly basis.
- Team members shall be responsible for the inspection and upkeep of specialized CNT equipment.
- Negotiation Team members shall provide the incident Commander with intelligence data as it is received.

- CNT Call-Out

- The CNT will be called out in conjunction with all ERT call outs.
- The on duty supervisor is authorized to call out the CNT.
- CNT members shall be notified of call-outs by radio, if on duty, or by phone if off-duty and will respond to the designated location for briefing.
- A minimum of four (4) CNT members should respond to every incident requiring formal negotiations.
- The CNT Team Leader shall complete an after action report for all call outs where negotiations were attempted or required.

- Team Duties

- Team Leader
  - Oversees the CNT members,
  - Supervise the overall operation of negotiations on an incident scene,
  - Responsible for the direct relay of negotiations to the incident Commander or their designee,
  - Responsible for all paperwork associated with the CNT.
- Assistant Team Leader
  - Helps supervise the general operations of the CNT members,
  - Assists set up of the negotiations equipment,
  - Assigns team members to their operational roles during incidents,



- 1090                   ▪ Assists the Team Leader with training and any other responsibilities as needed.
- 1091
- 1092       ○ Primary Negotiator
- 1093                   ▪ Main communicator with the individual involved in the crisis situation/incident,
- 1094                   ❖ In the event communications have been established between a non CNT
- 1095                   member and the involved individual, the primary negotiator shall monitor
- 1096                   negotiations, provide guidance to the person in communication and intercede if
- 1097                   the need arises.
- 1098
- 1099                   ▪ Obtains intelligence, as well as build a rapport with the individual involved in the
- 1100                   crisis situation/incident,
- 1101                   ▪ Assess and monitor the individual's emotional state and work to save the lives of
- 1102                   all involved with the incident.
- 1103
- 1104
- 1105       ○ Coach (Secondary Negotiator)
- 1106                   ▪ Assists with set up of negotiations equipment,
- 1107                   ▪ Responsible to relay outside information, such as intelligence, to the primary
- 1108                   negotiator,
- 1109                   ▪ Acts as the communication link between the primary negotiator and the rest of the
- 1110                   CNT members,
- 1111                   ▪ Back up to the primary negotiator, if another person needs to take over.
- 1112
- 1113       ○ Scribe
- 1114                   ▪ Assists with Set up of negotiations equipment,
- 1115                   ▪ Records all pertinent information concerning individuals involved in the crisis,
- 1116                   ▪ Record information on a white board, if available, that is in view of the primary
- 1117                   and coach/secondary negotiators in order to assist with their decision making and
- 1118                   allow them a clear view of all the variables involved,
- 1119                   ▪ Keep a record of call times and call attempts.
- 1120
- 1121       ○ Intelligence Officer
- 1122                   ▪ Responsible for gathering information about the following:
- 1123                   ❖ Individual involved in the crisis
- 1124                   ❖ Identities of the hostage takers,
- 1125                   ❖ Identities of any hostages,
- 1126                   ❖ Identities of witnesses,
- 1127                   ❖ Identities of victims, and
- 1128                   ❖ Identities of family members of those involved.
- 1129                   ➤ The intelligence officer does not need to be a member of the CNT and
- 1130                   shall be designated by the incident commander.
- 1131
- 1132       • CNT Special Equipment
- 1133                   ○ CNT personnel are assigned special equipment including, but not limited to:
- 1134                   ▪ Throw phones

- ❖ Used for direct communications with subjects.
- Hailers
  - ❖ A portable device used to project loud and clear messages.
- Wraps communication headsets
  - ❖ Used to communicate between CNT members;
- Ballistic vests,
- Ballistic helmets,
- Negotiations uniforms.
- All CNT equipment will be maintained and stored in CNT member's assigned vehicles in mission ready condition or designated CNT special use vehicles.
- All equipment is subject to inspection by the Sheriff or his designee
- CNT equipment shall not be loaned to non-CNT personnel without the authorization of the Patrol Division Commander or his designee.
- CNT equipment shall be inspected and inventoried semi-annually to ensure operational readiness.
  - CNT equipment inspections shall be documented and forwarded to the ERT Commander.
- CNT Training
  - Prior to each calendar year a monthly training schedule to include training dates shall be established by the CNT Team Leader and forwarded to the ERT Commander.
  - The ERT Commander shall forward the yearly training schedule to all team members supervisors, Command Staff and the training division.
  - All CNT members shall have attended and successfully completed a formal basic negotiations course prior to being assigned as a primary negotiator or coach/secondary negotiator.
  - Monthly training reports shall be completed after all training and submitted to the training section of the Administrative Services Division through the ERT Commander no later than ten (10) days after completion of training.
  - The training report shall contain:
    - Names of all personnel attending training including non CNT members,
    - Names of CNT members absent from training and reason, if known,
    - Hours attended by member,
    - Objectives of the scheduled training,
    - Instructor's names and agency if non York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office instructors are utilized,
    - Location of the training,
    - A narrative describing the training and identified personnel or equipment deficiencies.