



<b>APD Policy CHAPTER 20</b> <b>Special Response Team (SRT)</b>	<b>ABERDEEN POLICE DEPARTMENT</b> <b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL</b>
<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>	
<b>Applicable State Statutes:</b>	<b>RELATED POLICIES:</b>
<b>DATE IMPLEMENTED: June 15, 2020</b>	
<b>SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PAGES: 10</b>

- I. **Purpose:** Law enforcement experience has demonstrated that there are police service demands which require specialized units that are equipped and trained to successfully handle these demands. SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics Team) and similar units such as ERT (Emergency Response Teams) and SRT (Specialized Response Teams) are such units. The mission of these highly trained and specially equipped units is to bring under control police incidents involving highly volatile situations including persons with weapons, barricaded and/or hostage incidents, suicidal calls, and high risk warrant service operations. These types of units are the most heavily armed within any police agency and demand deliberative decision-making and oversight. There is no requirement that any police agency have such a unit. When the agency does choose to develop and deploy such a unit, it must accept the responsibilities and demands required.
- II. **Policy:** It is the policy of this police agency that the demands of this community warrant the development and deployment of a specialized tactical unit (SRT). The mission of this unit is to provide the agency with the increased police capability to effectively control and resolve highly volatile incidents. The specialized equipment and training of these units provide for greater safety of the subjects being confronted, police employees directly involved, and the community. The police agency will use these specialized units only in situations warranting the need for the enhanced weaponry and training.
- III. **Procedure:** The following shall be implemented for the assignment to and use of the specialized tactical team:
  - A. **Selection process:**
    1. Be employed as a full time member with a minimum of two years with the Aberdeen Police Department and in good standing.
    2. Submit a letter of interest for consideration.

3. Personnel selected to become members of the unit shall successfully complete a psychological screening process and medical examination. The agency will consider the candidate's performance evaluations and complaint history during this selection process.
4. Complete an interview with a panel of members from the team with a majority recommending acceptance to a team.
5. If accepted, each team member will be on probation with the team for one year during which he or she may be dismissed from the team without cause by the Operations Commander with the approval of the Chief of Police.
6. Readiness: Each SRT member will maintain a state of readiness to respond on short notice to activation. A pattern of failure to maintain a state of readiness or disregard for activations may result in dismissal from the team.
7. Performance: SRT members shall maintain satisfactory performance both in their duties as a team member and in their normal duties. Failure to maintain a satisfactory performance, as documented on the annual employee performance evaluation, will result in dismissal from the team.
8. Fitness: All members of SRT teams must pass an annual physical.

## **B. SRT Composition and Structure**

1. The Special Response Team is composed of an authorized number of sworn officers as designated by the Chief of Police. The team consists of a team commander, team leader, assistant team leader, an entry element (includes assistant team leader), a sniper element, and Crisis Negotiations Team. Each member of the SRT has specific duties and responsibilities, however members of the Entry and Sniper Teams may be cross trained to fulfill other duties as needed.
2. The team structure consists of scouts, cover officers, gas officer, breacher, entry team leader, sniper/observer team, CNT team leader, CNT Equipment Officer and any other positions assigned by the command staff.
3. **The SRT shall regularly train and rehearse their tactical** response for hostage/barricaded subject scenarios. Training objectives shall be periodically reviewed and modified as necessary.
4. **Negotiators:** SRT teams shall have trained crisis negotiators available for tactical situation requiring negotiations for example barricaded subjects and hostage situations.

**C. Negotiators:** SRT teams shall have trained hostage negotiators available for tactical situation requiring negotiations for example barricaded subjects and hostage situations. Teams should have their own departmental negotiators or written policies on which negotiators will be used for example FBI, State Agencies or other police department negotiators in their area.

## **D. Training requirement:**

### **a. Hourly Training Requirements**

- i. Initial Certification - (40-hour initial SRT training Course) Final appointment to a SRT team will require successfully completing a 40-hour basic SRT course that includes firearms, exterior and interior training.
- ii. Monthly Team Training- (16 hours of training per month) all SRT teams must train 16 hours per month and maintain a yearly schedule documenting the firearms and tactical issues to be covered. Trainings can include table top exercises, videos, simulator exercises, written documents, etc.
- iii. Sniper Training- (40 hour- initial certification) All snipers are required to successfully pass 40 hours of certified sniper training before deploying as a sniper. Snipers are at a minimum required to qualify quarterly separate from the mandated team training schedule.
- iv. For the purposes of attendance requirements, training sessions will be considered compulsory training for all team members. Excused absences are for reasons of illness, call to duty, or extenuating circumstances, and must be approved by the appropriate team leader. One unexcused absence may result in removal from the team.

### **b. Firearms Training Requirements**

- i. All SRT team members must qualify before they are considered operational with their weapons.
- ii. All SRT Team members must qualify at a minimum bi-annually.
- iii. All SRT firearm courses must be completed and passed at a standard to meet the job task requirement.
- iv. Any team member who fails to complete any bi-annual qualification may not deploy during SRT activations.
- v. SRT weapons training is divided into two approaches: skill courses and combat/tactical courses. Skill courses provide each officer the opportunity to practice skills and show proficiency by numerical score. Combat courses allow for practicing tactics and skills.
- vi. All qualifications shall be conducted in full tactical call out gear.
- vii. SRT qualification courses should be specific to each weapons system utilized by each team and follow nationally accepted standards.

- c. Specialty Munitions Training Requirements** SRT members shall not deploy any special munitions to include Diversionary Devices, Less Lethal and Chemical Munitions without receiving proper instruction and certification on those munitions. Qualified training shall be conducted annually on any specialized munitions.

## E. Equipment

- a. Individual Minimum Equipment:** To ensure the operational readiness of specialized equipment used by the team in support of emergency operations, the Team leader shall see that an annual inventory and inspection of such equipment is conducted. Specialized equipment such as special weapons, chemical munitions, entry tools, ballistic shields, and communications equipment shall be cleaned and examined as to condition and function, etc. The inspection sheets shall be maintained in the appropriate file for reference and periodic review. Each member of a SRT team should be provided with the following minimum equipment:
- i. Ballistic helmet
  - ii. Safety glasses and goggles
  - iii. Hearing protection
  - iv. Threat level IIIA ballistic entry vest with (1) threat level III or IV inserts, and attachable modules, or load bearing vest with attachable modules
  - v. Nylon duty belt and accessories for tactical equipment
  - vi. Special weapons as authorized (weapons should be equipped with lights and slings)
  - vii. Duty ammunition
  - viii. Radio and tactical headset
  - ix. BDU uniforms
  - x. Tactical boots
  - xi. Rain Gear
  - xii. Cold Weather Gear
  - xiii. Gas Mask
  - xiv. Gloves(protective)
- d. Specialized Team Equipment:** Each SRT team should have the following minimum equipment:
- i. Less lethal option(s)/ammunition
  - ii. Counter sniper rifles
  - iii. Flash/Noise diversionary devices
  - iv. Breaching tools/ammunition
  - v. Ballistic shields
  - vi. Tactical mirrors
  - vii. Transportation vehicle

**F. Deployment-Utilization of SRT/Tactical:** When officers are confronted with situations requiring the assistance of a SRT team they shall notify the watch commander who shall, where possible, respond to the scene. When the commanding officer responds to the scene and determines the necessity of use of a SRT team for a barricaded subject or other tactical situation he shall notify

the Operational Commander to request SRT respond to the scene. If the Operational Commander is not available, the request should be made to the Chief or Support Services Commander. If contact cannot be made with a Division commander or Chief the on duty watch commander can activate the team. Commanding officers should gather all available information regarding the suspect and the location in order to brief the SRT on arrival. Team activation may occur for any of the following defined critical incidents:

- a. **Hostage Situations:** The holding of any person(s) against their will by an armed or potentially armed suspect(s).
  - b. **Barricade Situations:** The stand-off created by an armed or potentially armed suspect(s) in any location, whether fortified or not, who is/are refusing to comply with police demands for surrender.
  - c. **Sniper Situations:** The firing upon citizens and/or police by an armed suspect(s), whether stationary or mobile.
  - d. **High Risk Apprehension:** The arrest or apprehension of armed or potentially armed suspect(s) where the likelihood of armed resistance is high.
  - e. **High Risk Warrant Service:** The service of search or arrest warrants where warrant service may be unsafe or dangerous.
  - f. **Security Details:** The security of special persons, such as VIP's, witnesses, or suspects based on threat or potential threats to the well-being of those persons, or to prevent or thwart an escape of suspects.
  - g. **Special Assignments:** Any assignment approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee based upon a level of threat.
  - h. **Riots:** The gathering of persons, whether armed or not, who have unlawfully or riotously assembled, who have either committed violence or are threatening violence.
  - i. **Clandestine Surveillance:** Upon the direction of the Chief of Police or a Division Commander where special techniques or equipment may be needed, or where there is a high possibility of the use of force.
- G. Deployment-Utilization of SRT for Warrant Service:** After completing a risk assessment form (required before all warrant service) and finding that

the score requires use of a SRT team, a commanding officer shall be advised. The commanding officer shall review the assessment and upon satisfaction that a SRT team is necessary, shall notify the Operational Commander of the SRT team for assistance and activation of the SRT team.

**H. Control of Incident: Responsibilities During a Tactical Situation:  
The responding officer(s), or ranking officer should:**

1. Insure an inner and outer perimeter is established.
2. Attempt to avoid confrontation in favor of controlling and containing the situation until the arrival of trained SRT members
3. Notify appropriate personnel inside and outside the Department.
4. Notifications of ambulance fire and rescue.
5. Notify dispatch of possible need of call-out of SRT members.
6. Evacuation, treatment and debriefing of victims, witnesses and bystanders.
7. Establish command post and chain of command.
8. When the SRT arrive and take over the situation, all tactical and response decisions will become the responsibility of SRT. The police department will assist SRT with any needed/requested support
9. Establish proper communication between the SRT, Command Post, and the Perimeter or other Support units.
10. Communicate with assisting/supporting agencies.
11. Establish rules of engagement, use of deadly force/chemical weapons.
12. Designate pursuit/surveillance team and vehicles.
13. Coordinate news media interaction and information release
14. Complete after-action critique and reports.

**I. Deployment limitations:** This type of specialized unit is designed to operate as a team. When deployed, the team shall be at full complement. Individual members, however, may be used in other police field incidents to enhance the police operation by virtue of his/her specialized equipment. In any case where the use of an individual member is considered, the SRT commander shall be notified for assessment and approval.

**J. Risk Assessment Matrix:** Before the actual deployment of the specialized tactical unit, the agency shall evaluate the necessity for this deployment by using a risk assessment tool. This tool is a guide to evaluate the need to

deploy the most heavily armed unit with the agency to ensure that it meets the risk potential of the incident.

- K. High Risk Warrants:** A risk assessment matrix shall be completed prior to determination that a “high risk” exists.
- L. Operational planning:** Unless exigent circumstance exist, before deployment of the specialized tactical unit a warrant will be secured and an operational planning session shall be conducted and must include:
  - a. A written operational plan identifying the mission given to the unit and the tasks assigned to each member.
  - b. A reading of the warrant or description of the events leading to the decision to deploy the specialized unit
  - c. Acknowledgment that current surveillance of the targeted location has been done.
  - d. Identification of the subjects believed to be present at the targeted location.
  - e. A description of the violence potential and any weaponry that may be present.
  - f. A schematic of the targeted location, if available, and any known tactical hazards.
  - g. The stationing of medical support, when necessary.
- M. Operational debriefing:** The unit shall conduct and prepare a written critique of each operational deployment.
- N. Inter-jurisdictional support:**
  - a. When the agency is requested to assist another jurisdiction by the deployment of the specialized tactical unit in a jurisdiction other than that policed by this agency, the operational aspects and decisions will be made by this agency’s unit commander in consultation with the on-duty supervisor. The manner of operational deployment will conform to this agency’s policy on the use of this specialized tactical unit.
  - b. When this agency requires the assistance of another jurisdiction’s specialized tactical team for either assumption of the mission or deployment with this agency’s tactical team, the policy of this agency shall be considered. It is still the decision of this agency’s on duty commander to deploy any tactical unit within this agency’s jurisdiction.
- O. Request for Mutual Aid** will be governed by compliance with the 34-48 Statewide Mutual Aid Request among Public Agencies. The SRT is available, to other requesting law enforcement agencies only with the approval of the Chief of Police, or the acting Chief of Police. When a request for the team is received from another agency it shall be immediately forwarded to a Division Commander who will determine if in fact the situation warrants the activation

of the team. If the situation warrants the activation of the team, the Commander will contact the Aberdeen Chief of Police and will request activation of the team. Once permission is granted the activation will follow standard procedures. Deployment of mutual aid in the form of personnel will be at the direction of the Chief of Police or in his/her absence the acting Chief. Deployment of aid in the form of equipment may be at the direction of the on-duty watch commander or team leader. The on-duty watch commander or team leader providing aid in the form of equipment will notify their respective division commander and/or chief of police.

- a. Compensation for all Aberdeen SRT members or any department member called to directly assist the SRT will be in accordance with the Policies, Procedures and Union contract currently in use by the City of Aberdeen for regular duty time and overtime.
- b. Any SRT members deployed to assist an outside agency will follow all Aberdeen Police Department Policies and Procedures and Rules and Regulations.
- c. All Aberdeen SRT members shall refuse to participate in any action ordered by an outside agency that is in violation of Aberdeen Police Department Policies and Procedures or Rules and Regulations, state and/or Federal law or in violation of the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics.
- d. All Aberdeen SRT members working with another agency under a mutual aid agreement shall be under the direct command of a Division Commander of the Aberdeen Police Department

#### **P. RESPONSE TIME**

- a. Members of the SRT who receive notification they are being activated will immediately respond to the Aberdeen Police Department or another designated location.
- b. Relief for on-duty members of the SRT will take place as soon as possible. The on-duty Watch Commander will ensure that the member is either relieved from his or her regular duty or replaced. The on-duty Watch Commander has the authority in the event of an activation to use persons on overtime in order to relieve an SRT member from regular duties.
- c. It is the responsibility of the SRT member to report any factors that may impact or impair their ability to perform or respond to the critical incident.

#### **Q. CANCELLATION**

- a. The on-duty Watch Commander shall have the authority to cancel a request for activation if the situation resolves itself before team members arrive. The Incident Commander, Division Commander, or Chief of Police also has the authority to cancel any team



activation at their discretion.

## **R. COMMAND AND CONTROL**

The Special Response Team (SRT) of the Aberdeen Police Department is comprised of three elements: **entry team, rifle team, and negotiations**. Each element compliments the other and is supervised by a Division Commander. Command of a situation will be under the direction of a Division Commander designated as the Incident Commander at the direction of the Chief of Police or acting Chief of Police.

### **a. Entry Team:**

This unit is composed of a Team Leader, Assistant Team Leader, and Entry Team members. The primary task is inner perimeter containment to conduct entries, arrests, and or rescues. The Team Leader will assist the Incident Commander with planning options to bring about a successful resolution.

### **b. Rifle Team:**

This unit is composed of one or two teams who operate in direct support of the entry team element. Each team is comprised of a marksman and observer when possible. The primary task is the protection of persons involved in the incident and to provide intelligence to the command center. Rifle team members will assist the entry team element as required at the discretion of the Incident Commander.

### **c. Negotiation Team:**

This unit is responsible for trying to bring a resolution through negotiations. This unit operates in direct support of the Incident Commander at the command post.

## **S. ORGANIZATION**

Critical incidents will be handled in accordance with the incident command system.

a. The Incident Commander, after SRT has been activated, shall designate a command post location. Only persons necessary to the efficient operation of the command post will be allowed inside.

b. The SRT Leader, as designated by the Incident Commander, will ensure the entry team and rifle team members assemble in a designated location pending orders to deploy. The negotiator team leader will establish a site in direct support of the command center for negotiations without distraction. All assistant team leaders will ensure all necessary equipment is staged with the respective teams. The on-duty Watch Commander shall ensure and maintain a secure

perimeter. He or she shall also ensure there are officers available for other emergency police matters. The SRT Leader will command SRT personnel in support of the Incident Commander.

- c. When available, the Incident Commander will designate persons for:
  - i. Investigation/Intelligence – responsible for researching suspect information, building layouts, obtaining arrest or search warrants, and any other task as required by the Incident Commander.
  - ii. Press Relations – responsible for the release of information to the media. The P.I.O. will choose a secure site away from the command post for press briefings.
  - iii. Recorder – responsible for recording all that goes on in the command post to include decisions, officer locations, and intelligence.
  - iv. Logistics – responsible for obtaining and maintaining equipment and supplies as necessary in response to the incident.

#### **T. AFTER ACTION REPORT**

- a. The Team Leader shall make sure an after actions report is completed after each incident and forwarded to the Operations Commander for review.