



Tulsa Police Department

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Policy # 109

Effective Date 02/29/2024

Policy Name SOT Deployment/Armed and Barricaded Suspects

Approved Date 02/29/2024

Approved by *Wendell Franklin, Chief of Police*

Previous Date 03/01/2022

PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

To update procedures.

POLICY:

During incidents involving armed and barricaded suspects, hostage situations, and other occurrences of a critical nature, the primary goal of the Tulsa Police Department is to apprehend the suspect without injury or loss of life. Organization, teamwork, and discipline are required of each officer to protect the lives of victims, police officers, and suspects.

The first officer to arrive on scene will become the Incident Commander (IC). This officer will maintain command until command is transferred to a supervisor or another officer based on expertise, knowledge, or certification. The first officers to arrive on the scene have the most crucial responsibility. They must assess the situation quickly and accurately and report their findings to other involved personnel. They must communicate critical information that will enable other officers to contain the suspect, control the situation, establish travel routes, and conclude the incident as safely as possible. Officers will not jeopardize this responsibility by taking independent action and will attempt to avoid confrontation in favor of controlling and containing the situation until the arrival of Special Operations Team (SOT) personnel.

However, when officers reasonably believe they are faced with a situation involving the imminent loss of life, such as an active shooter, officers are authorized to take appropriate and reasonable actions utilizing approved techniques (e.g., Contact Team). The first arriving officer or officers can “pass command” to take appropriate and reasonable action to resolve the situation.

SUMMARY:

Procedures for the deployment and the response of SOT personnel.

APPLIES TO: All police personnel

DEFINITIONS:

ARMED AND BARRICADED SUSPECT – an armed person who has committed a felony or is an imminent threat to himself or others and who refuses to submit to arrest by using a structure (e.g., house, vehicle, building) to prevent apprehension.

CRISIS NEGOTIATORS – SOT personnel who are specially trained in tactical negotiations.

CRITICAL SITUATIONS – crucial or unusual circumstances in which concentrated, and specially trained forces are necessary to resolve a crisis situation (e.g., SOT).

FIREARMS DISCIPLINE – officers shall not discharge weapons at the scene unless ordered to do so or when defending themselves or others.

INNER PERIMETER – the immediate area of containment. This area is initially manned by uniformed officers until they are relieved by SOT personnel.

KILL ZONE – the area in which the suspect(s) could cause serious injury or death, based upon the suspect's location and the weapons at their disposal.

OUTER PERIMETER – a secondary control area. This area is manned by uniformed officers and should be evacuated of civilian traffic.

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CU) – responsible for communicating with the media or other appropriate agencies requiring information directly from the incident scene.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TEAM (SOT) – a team of specially trained officers (including both tactical officers and crisis negotiators) responsible for containing the suspect and resolving the situation.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TEAM COMMANDER – the captain who has overall responsibility for the SOT and who approves the tactical plan.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACTICAL TEAM LEADERS – designated supervisors on the SOT who are responsible for supervising teams and directing their tactical deployment.

PROCEDURES:

1. When responding to an armed and barricaded suspect, officers will:
 - a. Maintain firearms discipline and take a position of cover.
 - b. Isolate and secure the area. Confine the suspect to the immediate location and determine the kill zone.
 - c. Aid any wounded and evacuate anyone within the kill zone. (Note: when possible, officers shall wait for special resources to arrive before attempting to evacuate seriously wounded individuals.)
 - d. Direct witnesses to a place of safety and detain them for debriefing.
 - e. Make the following notifications:
 - 1) A supervisor.
 - 2) An ambulance or fire department personnel, if necessary.
2. Advise Public Safety Communications (PSC) of the following information:
 - a. Scene assessment.
 - b. Location, description, and number of suspects.
 - c. Type of weapon(s) the suspect possesses.
 - d. Specify the area of the kill zone and identify the avenues of approach.
 - e. Hostage information.
 - f. Injured person(s) present.
 - g. Locations where additional officers should be assigned.
3. Upon arrival, a field supervisor will assume command and:
 - a. Initiate on-scene communications on a tactical frequency.
 - b. Establish a Command Post under the Incident Command System (ICS) and convey the location and the telephone number to PSC.
 - c. Obtain any available information that describes the location where the suspect is barricaded, including the floor plan.
 - d. Establish initial contact with the suspect. Request assistance from the telephone company, if necessary.
 - e. Follow the notification procedures lined out in policy 308 – Staff Notifications.

4. Upon arrival, the shift commander, staff duty captain or staff duty major will be the IC. The IC will:
 - a. Request that PSC notify the SOT Commander/Team Leader.
 - b. Establish tactical parameters and constantly evaluate if they need to change.
 - c. Maintain overall responsibility for the incident.
 - d. Verify that all initial procedures and notifications have been completed.
 - e. Upon completion of the operation verify that the area of the Command Post is secure.
5. Upon arrival, the SOT Commander will assume sole tactical responsibility and control for the incident and for the deployment of team members, under the Operations Section/Tactical Branch of the ICS. SOT members will relieve uniformed officers and assume control of the inner perimeter. Upon being relieved by an SOT member, officers will report to the Command Post for debriefing. In the absence of the SOT Commander, an SOT Team Leader will assume these responsibilities.
6. SOT Team Leaders are responsible for developing a tactical plan to resolve the incident as well as executing the tactical resolution.
7. The IC will maintain command and control of the overall scene. Officers at the scene will provide support and maintain the perimeter at the direction of the IC. The SOT Commander shall advise the IC of all tactical plans. The IC may offer advice to the SOT Commander however, the SOT Commander shall have final control of conducting all tactical operations.
8. The Communications Unit (CU) will be responsible for:
 - a. The safety of media personnel.
 - b. Setting up a media information area.
 - c. Disseminating information to the media as it is made available by the SOT Commander or the IC in charge of the scene.

REGULATIONS:

1. Officers responding to an armed and barricaded suspect or other critical situations shall maintain firearms discipline.
2. SOT personnel are not to be used in their capacity as tactical officers except under the direct supervision of the SOT Commander or a Team Leader.
3. SOT negotiators are not to be used in their capacity as crisis negotiators except under the direct supervision and authorization of the SOT Commander or a Team Leader.
4. Chemical agents require proper training for effective use and shall be used only upon the authorization of the SOT Team Commander, Team Leader, Special Response Team Commander or Platoon Leaders. (Exception: Personal Defense Units/Pepperball/OC Spray.) Fugitive Warrant Supervisors have authorization to deploy OC based chemical agents.

REFERENCES:

111A, *Hazardous Materials Incidents*
127, *Tulsa Police Reserve Emergency Call-Out*
132, *Aircraft Crashes*
134, *Bomb Threats/Detonations*
140, *Incident Command System*
Critical Incident Response Manual