



Sheridan Police Department  
Policies and Procedures  
21.3 replaces 508  
Chapter 21 - Emergency Operations  
Section 3 - Tactical Unit

Date: January 1, 2013

Signature:

The Sheridan Police Department maintains a tactical team to provide a tactical response to high risk situations which require special equipment and/or training.

**21.3.1 Objectives and Uses**

- A. The tactical team's primary objective is the safety of all people involved in the incident. Unless exigent or unusual circumstances dictate otherwise, actions will be directed toward containment and negotiations rather than confrontation and the use of force.
- B. The tactical team's initial objective on any situation is to contain the situation to a given location. Only on extremely rare occasions should an event be allowed to change locations or become mobile.
- C. The safe release or rescue of any hostages and protection of innocent individuals will be the ultimate goal in any tactical situation, with the apprehension of suspects, protection of the crime scene, and recovery of property secondary to the protection of human life.
- D. Situations that require the immediate notification of the tactical commander or his or her designee include:
  - 1. Hostage situation;
  - 2. Barricaded gunman;
  - 3. Suicidal subject with a weapon;
  - 4. Serving high risk search or arrest warrants:
    - a. Factors which constitute a high risk warrant service which requires the notification of the tactical commander includes:
      - i. Prior or current history of weapon use against persons or threats of weapon use;
      - ii. Prior history of aggravated crimes; and
      - iii. No knock arrest or search warrants.
      - iv. Outside agency warrants will be reviewed by a bureau commander.
    - b. Other factors which may be considered in using the tactical team in warrant service may include:
      - i. Known or suspected weapons on the premises;
      - ii. Past or current history of violent behavior;
      - iii. Number of persons involved;
      - iv. Mental or emotional state of person involved due to mental illness or use of alcohol or other drugs; and

- v. Nature of the offense.
- 5. Dignitary protection; and
- 6. Request for assistance of the tactical unit by other agencies.

### **21.3.2 Tactical Unit Call-Out Procedure**

- A. In the event of a tactical call-out, the shift commander will notify the tactical commander advising of the situation. In the absence of the commander, a team leader will be notified. -The Chief of Police or his designee will be notified by the shift supervisor prior to mobilizing the tactical team. The tactical team will be notified via the SRT folder on the Code Red notification system maintained by dispatch.
- B. The following information relating to the situation needs to be relayed to the tactical commander:
  - 1. A synopsis of the situation;
  - 2. Location;
  - 3. Number of officers involved;
  - 4. Suspect and victim information;
  - 5. Any hostile action taken by suspect (i.e. - shots fired, etc.);
  - 6. Information about injuries;
  - 7. Weapons involved; and
  - 8. Location of inner perimeter and staging areas.
- C. In the absence of the tactical commander due to vacation, training or other reason, the tactical commander will temporarily assign a team leader or another designee to assume the role of tactical commander. In the absence of the team leaders, the next ranking tactical member based upon the pre-determined ranking will be assigned the position of team leader.
- D. Team members are expected to be reasonably available for calls at all times. Team members will notify the commander or team leader whenever they are unavailable for call-outs. Team members will note dates of absence on the SRT sign out board located outside of the records division office.

### **21.3.3 Tactical Incident Command Structure**

Tactical situations necessitate a variety of personnel to respond and be actively involved in helping resolve the situation. Personnel that may be required to assist have been identified and a description of their roles and responsibilities follows:

- A. First officer on the scene: The first officer at the scene will assume the role of incident commander until relieved by a higher ranking officer. The primary responsibilities of this officer will be to:
  - 1. Contain and assess the situation;
  - 2. Attempt to make contact with suspect(s) and victim(s);
  - 3. Obtain information on suspect and victim locations;
  - 4. Obtain descriptions of suspects and victims;
  - 5. Know the location of deployed officers;
  - 6. Control/direct the actions of deployed officers and assisting agencies;
  - 7. Conduct operations at the incident site until relieved by the shift supervisor or higher ranking officer;
  - 8. Inform the shift supervisor and dispatch of the following:

- a. Type of criminal activity;
  - b. Threat/risk level;
  - c. Incident site information;
  - d. Suspect and victim descriptions and information;
  - e. Hostages, victims, and occupants status;
  - f. On scene officers' deployment and status;
  - g. Need for additional units and location needed;
  - h. Statements made by suspect or hostage.
- B. The primary responsibilities of the shift supervisor will be to:
  - 1. Assume role of incident commander until relieved by higher ranking officer unless other duties require presence elsewhere;
  - 2. Establish a field command post in the immediate vicinity of the incident site and communicate location and access route to dispatch;
  - 3. Establish a staging area within the outer perimeter;
  - 4. Verify location of scene;
  - 5. Verify situation is contained;
  - 6. Verify the location of all officers deployed;
  - 7. Verify attempt to make contact with suspect(s);
  - 8. Develop and execute emergency evacuation and lock down notifications if appropriate;
  - 9. Notify and communicate all information about the situation to the tactical commander;
  - 10. Assess need for additional resources (i.e. ambulance and fire);
  - 11. Develop tactical options such as a crisis response which will be supervised by the senior tactical team member on scene, if present;
  - 12. Establish and communicate the mission and the assignment to all officers committed to the incident;
  - 13. Continue to develop, verify and pass on information as it relates to essential elements of the incident;
  - 14. Provide ongoing support to the tactical commander and team leader.
- C. Tactical commander: The tactical commander coordinates tactical operations in conjunction with the incident commander. Tactical units and all inner perimeter personnel will be under the control of the tactical commander. The tactical commander is also responsible for establishing liaisons and effecting integration of other law enforcement units committed to the incident site into the overall tactical operation. Other tactical commander responsibilities are to:
  - 1. Verify the exact incident site and area of operations;
  - 2. Establish a tactical command post; position an immediate action team (IAT), position precision marksmen positions, position a chemical munitions team, position the entry teams.
  - 3. Advise the incident commander of the location of the tactical command post and establish communications with the incident command post;
  - 4. Evaluate the situation in terms of manpower and equipment needs;
  - 5. Verify access to additional resources (i.e. ambulance and fire suppression teams);
  - 6. Obtain a tactical talk group for the incident;
  - 7. Notify communications and responding units of the talk group;
  - 8. Prepare an overall tactical plan, along with a second plan, in the event the first does not work;
  - 9. Brief the incident commander regarding the tactical plan and associated risks;

10. Make recommendations to the incident commander regarding course of action;
  11. Ensure equipment needed to execute tactics is on hand;
  12. Ensure a rehearsal of plan takes place, when possible;
  13. Ensure inner perimeter personnel are apprised regarding the implementation of the plan and when personnel are deployed;
  14. Ensure that weapon control is maintained and that all personnel are aware of the conditions for the use of force;
  15. Ensure that all building occupants and escaped or released hostages are questioned;
  16. Ensure the orderly removal of equipment and personnel in the proper sequence to protect the crime scene, tactical options, victims, hostages and suspects.
- D. Tactical team leaders: Upon activation of the tactical team, the team leaders will be responsible to:
1. Ensure all available data pertaining to the incident is obtained;
  2. Ensure all available team members have been notified and are responding;
  3. Ensure all equipment has been acquired;
  4. Ensure initial information has been passed on to responding tactical personnel;
  5. Ensure that tactical team personnel make an organized response to the scene/tactical command post:
    - a. Verify that a safe route is established and communicated to responders; and
    - b. Verify response to the scene is communicated to the tactical commander.
  6. Obtain current briefing information pertaining to the situation;
  7. Establish communication link with tactical commander;
  8. Ensure the scene has been analyzed by tactical team personnel:
    - a. Assign necessary duties to specific team members; and
    - b. Verify available information has been gathered.
  9. Prepare situation resolution plans;
  10. Brief tactical team members;
  11. Brief tactical commander on situation resolution plans;
  12. Verify that all necessary equipment is readily available and operable;
  13. Establish rehearsal area, when practical;
  14. Ensure rehearsal, if time permits;
  15. Establish a relief schedule for tactical personnel;
  16. Ensure the delivery of necessary sustenance to tactical team members;
  17. Secure final situational plan approval from tactical commander;
  18. Communicate situational resolution plans to tactical team members;
  19. Control the deployment of tactical team members;
  20. Control the removal of tactical team personnel from the scene;
  21. Assist in the debriefing and report writing of the situation;
  22. Act as tactical commander in the absence of the tactical commander.
- E. General responsibilities of the incident commander
1. Overall command of the entire operation to include all tactical and support resources committed to the incident;
  2. General direction to supervisory personnel assigned to the incident;
  3. Determine the degree of danger to:
    - a. Hostages;
    - b. Bystanders;

- c. Officers at the scene.
  - 4. Ensure that supporting tactics minimize risk to hostages, bystanders, officers and all other subjects;
  - 5. Review all tactical plans to determine if they are "risk acceptable";
  - 6. Approving a general plan of action or "strategy" setting forth the operational guidelines for resolving the incident. The general plan is the basis of all actions of personnel committed to the incident;
  - 7. Authorizing the final plan to resolve the incident;
  - 8. Authorizing the implementation of tactical actions on a timely basis to allow execution under the most advantageous conditions conducive to success.
- F. Specific duties of the incident commander
- 1. Obtain a situation report from the previous commander and evaluate the situation;
  - 2. Ensure that an incident command post has been established at a strategic and protected location near the scene of the event as soon as it is practical to do so and a safe route to the command post has been designated;
  - 3. Determine if the perimeter deployment is adequate, and if not, take appropriate action:
    - a. Ensure an inner perimeter has been established to contain the incident and respond to emergencies;
    - b. Ensure that an outer perimeter has been established and is adequate to prevent innocent bystanders from entering or being part of an emergency situation;
    - c. Ensure crowd control and traffic control is being maintained; and
    - d. Ensure that a plan for evacuation of residents has been prepared or implemented as deemed necessary by situation.
  - 4. Designate a patrol supervisor to be in charge of handling calls for service outside of the emergency situation, and see that the normal police business is conducted as normal as possible;
  - 5. Ensure that the tactical commander is notified and is responding to the scene if needed;
  - 6. Verify that special talk groups (tactical, command) have been established;
  - 7. Request sufficient personnel, specialized units and equipment to support existing needs:
    - a. Ensure presence of fire department/medical support and request additional units as needed;
    - b. Request telephone and utility company support as needed;
    - c. Ensure that the appropriate county attorney is notified and facts presented.
  - 8. Determine extended logistical requirements and resources;
  - 9. Establish relief plan for personnel to include overlap shifts for transition of duties, positions, and equipment;
  - 10. Order responding units to report to staging area for assignment via appropriate routes;
  - 11. Designate an area for the press to meet for briefings on the situation. This area should be a location within the outer perimeter and away from the general public;
  - 12. Act as a liaison officer to other agencies such as fire, emergency medical, etc;
  - 13. Ensure that all witnesses, victims, or other involved parties are identified, separated, debriefed, and readily available for subsequent debriefings;
  - 14. Any other duties as required by the incident.
- G. The incident commander, if necessary, will employ a command staff to assist him or her in managing the operation. The command staff may consist of the following, which can be

multiple responsibility/duties performed by the same individual depending upon each situation and resources available:

1. Assistant incident commander: Will assist the incident commander in his or her duties;
2. Public information officer (PIO): Will coordinate communications with media;
3. Investigator-in-charge: Will ensure information is gathered, recorded, evaluated and communicated to the tactical commander and incident commander;
4. Radio technician: Will receive and record radio transmissions and maintain log summary;
5. Intelligence officer: Will gather, record and evaluate information, and communicate information to the incident commander and tactical commander.

### 21.3.4

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- C. All tactical members are expected to be familiar with all tactical equipment, and assist in keeping all equipment in operating condition. Any member who observes a piece of equipment in need of repair shall make notification to the equipment officer at the first available opportunity.
- D. One tactical member will be assigned as the equipment officer. The equipment officer will be responsible for the maintenance and operational readiness of all tactical team equipment that is not personally assigned to individual tactical members.
- E. Tactical team members are authorized to use weapons necessary to accomplish its mission as authorized by department policy (see section 11.3.7) and legal constraints.
- F. Tactical team members who are issued a weapon will be required to keep that weapon accessible to them at all times. They must maintain a current level of proficiency with their assigned weapon on the appropriate qualification course. It shall be their responsibility to secure and maintain said weapon in operating condition with sufficient ammunition for call-out.
  - 1. Officers who have a full automatic weapon issued to them are required to keep them locked in the vehicle gunlock or other locked container. If the weapon cannot be locked in an approved secure manner as determined by the tactical commander and chief of police, then officers are required to store the weapon in the department armory.
  - 2. Tactical team members who are issued a full automatic weapon will be required to have a minimum of ten (10) hours of training on that weapon each year. Additionally each tactical member issued a full automatic weapon will be required to have two (2) duty and two (2) SRT qualifications of at least 90% on that weapon each year.
- G. Other Specialized Equipment
  - 1. Team members will utilize a variety of equipment such as chemical gases, less lethal impact weapons, noise and flash distraction devices, and breaching devices as the situation requires.
  - 2. Team members using the specialized equipment will be trained on their use and will have an understanding of their potential before utilization. The use of said equipment will be consistent with the department's use of force policy (see section 11.1).
  - 3. Flash and sound diversionary devices
    - a. Flash and sound diversionary devices are effective tools. In order to reduce the potential for injury, these lifesaving, less-lethal devices must be properly deployed and their use supervised. Only personnel who have successfully completed a departmentally approved training course in the proper use and deployment of flash and sound diversionary devices shall be authorized to deploy them during actual operations. Personnel shall successfully complete a refresher course on an annual basis.
    - b. Unless otherwise directed by the tactical commander, the use of flash and sound diversionary devices will be left to the discretion of the team leader. Generally, use of flash and/or sound diversionary devices may be considered whenever the use of a less-lethal diversion would facilitate entry, enable arrest, and potentially reduce the risk of injury.
    - c. Flash and/or sound diversionary devices may be used in circumstances such as, but not limited to:
      - i. Barricaded suspect and/or hostage situations;
      - ii. High-risk warrant services;

- iii. Circumstances wherein distraction of violent mentally deranged persons or those under the influence of alcohol or other drugs is believed necessary in order to facilitate apprehension; and
  - iv. Situations wherein the authorizing person deems their use necessary to safely resolve the incident.
- d. Prior to deploying flash and/or sound diversionary devices, personnel shall consider available intelligence information and circumstances (ie.-the presence of children, elderly persons, the preservation of evidence, etc.). Circumstances may dictate that exterior deployment is preferable to deployment on the interior of the structure. Whenever possible, devices shall be deployed to an area visible to the deploying officer. Whenever possible devices shall be deployed while attached to purpose specific poles known as “bang poles”.
- e. Because flash and sound diversionary devices have the potential to ignite flammable materials, a portable fire extinguisher shall be readily accessible whenever devices are to be deployed.
- f. The tactical team commander shall review the use of flash and 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.
- g. Any use of flash or sound diversionary devices during training or call out shall be properly documented in the Sheridan Police Department diversionary device log book.

#### **21.3.6 Negotiation Team**

- A. The negotiation team works in conjunction with the tactical commander, the entry team, and the marksman team to resolve situations.
- B. Negotiators shall maintain proficiency with the equipment necessary to perform their function. Completing telephone hook-ups and operation of the mobile command post are part of that function.
- C. During tactical situations the negotiations leader shall coordinate with the tactical team commander. Coordination between the team commander and the negotiations leader is necessary to prevent compromising the team and to assist in resolving the situation.
- D. Openings on the negotiation team will be announced and posted in writing for a minimum of 10 days. Interested candidates must notify the tactical commander in writing of their desire to take the negotiation team test. Candidates must have 3 years of police or related experience. Two years of this experience must be with the Sheridan Police Department, with satisfactory evaluations during this time.
  - 1. Candidates may also expect that written recommendations and comments will be requested from their current supervisor. Candidates may also anticipate a review to occur of their personnel files, and sick leave records.
  - 2. Candidates will then participate in an oral examination.
  - 3. Candidate’s letters of interest will be reviewed with the current team members and their input considered.
  - 4. The candidate's ability to meet the needs of the team and their ability to be immediately available for call-outs will be considered. A candidate's personal and social obligations

can be grounds for disqualification if they are detrimental to an immediate call-out need. A candidate who lives out of the city, and has a significant response time, can also be disqualified from further consideration despite meeting all other criteria for selection.

5. If any candidate fails to meet any of the standards, he or she may be disqualified from further consideration until the next negotiation team testing is held.
6. All candidates are subject to final approval by the chief of police.

#### **21.3.7 Training**

- A. Members of the tactical team will receive training in tactical operations and will be kept abreast of new techniques. Team members will engage in training and readiness exercises averaging eight (8) hours every six (6) weeks.
- B. The tactical team commander will document this training and submit the documentation to the senior administrative assistant.

#### **21.3.8 After Action Review**

- A. Following a tactical team deployment, team members should meet to discuss the events that took place. Personnel are encouraged to speak of events that went well and address areas needing improvement.
- B. Following a tactical team deployment, the team commander, with assistance from other designees, will complete a detailed after action report (AAR) as required in section 21.2.2.A.9 and 10.