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## Special Weapons and Tactics Team

### 318.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) is comprised of two specialized teams: the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and the Tactical Teams. The unit has been established to provide specialized support in handling critical field operations where intense negotiations and/or special tactical deployment methods beyond the capacity of field officers appear to be necessary. This policy is written to comply with the guidelines established in the Attorney General's Commission on Special Weapons and Tactics Report (September 2002) and the POST 2005 SWAT Operational Guidelines and Standardized Training Recommendations (Penal Code § 13514.1).

#### 318.1.1 OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

The Policy Manual sections pertaining to the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) are divided into Administrative and Operational Policy and Procedures. Since situations that necessitate the need for such a police response vary greatly from incident to incident and such events often demand on-the-scene evaluation, the Operational Policy outlined in this manual section serves as a guideline to department personnel allowing for appropriate on scene decision making as required. The Administrative Procedures, however, are more restrictive and few exceptions should be taken.

#### 318.1.2 SWAT TEAM DEFINED

A SWAT team is a designated unit of law enforcement officers that is specifically trained and equipped to work as a coordinated team to resolve critical incidents that are so hazardous, complex, or unusual that they may exceed the capabilities of first responders or investigative units including, but not limited to, hostage taking, barricaded suspects, snipers, terrorist acts and other high-risk incidents. As a matter of department policy, such a unit may also be used to serve high-risk warrants, both search and arrest, where public and officer safety issues warrant the use of such a unit.

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#### 318.2.1 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A needs assessment should be conducted to determine the type and extent of SWAT missions and operations appropriate to this department. The assessment should consider the team's capabilities and limitations and should be reviewed annually by the SWAT Commander or his/her designee.

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### **318.3 TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The SWAT Commander shall conduct an annual SWAT Training needs assessment to ensure that training is conducted within team capabilities, department policy and the training guidelines as established by POST (11 C.C.R. § 1084).

#### **318.3.1 INITIAL TRAINING**

The Tactical Team operators and tactical team supervisors/team leaders should not be deployed until successful completion of the POST-certified Basic SWAT Course or its equivalent.

- (a) To avoid unnecessary or redundant training, previous training completed by members may be considered equivalent when the hours and content (topics) meet or exceed department requirements or POST standardized training recommendations.

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#### 318.3.2 UPDATED TRAINING

Appropriate team training for the Tactical Team's functions and other supporting resources should be completed prior to full deployment of the team.

Tactical Team operators and tactical team supervisors/team leaders should complete update or refresher training as needed.

#### 318.3.3 SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Command and executive personnel are encouraged to attend training for managing the SWAT function at the organizational level to ensure personnel who provide active oversight at the scene of SWAT operations understand the purpose and capabilities of the teams.

Command personnel who may assume incident command responsibilities should attend a SWAT or Critical Incident Commander course or its equivalent. SWAT command personnel should attend a POST-certified SWAT commander or tactical commander course, or its equivalent.

#### 318.3.5 TRAINING SAFETY

Use of a designated safety officer should be considered for all tactical training.

#### 318.3.6 SCENARIO BASED TRAINING

SWAT teams should participate in scenario-based training that simulates the tactical operational environment. Such training is an established method of improving performance during an actual deployment.

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#### 318.3.7 TRAINING DOCUMENTATION

Team training shall be documented and records maintained by the SWAT Team (both CNT and the Tactical Team).

### **318.4 UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT, AND FIREARMS**

#### 318.4.1 UNIFORMS

SWAT teams from this agency should wear uniforms that clearly identify team members as law enforcement officers. It is recognized that certain tactical conditions may require covert movement. Attire may be selected appropriate to the specific mission.

#### 318.4.2 EQUIPMENT

SWAT teams from this agency should be adequately equipped to meet the specific mission(s) identified by the agency.

#### 318.4.3 FIREARMS

Weapons and equipment used by SWAT (both CNT and the Tactical Team), the specialized units, and the supporting resources should be agency-issued or approved, including any modifications, additions, or attachments.

### **318.5 MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISION OF THE SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS TEAM**

The SWAT Commander shall be selected by the Chief of Police upon recommendation of staff.

#### 318.5.1 PRIMARY UNIT MANAGER

Under the direction of the Chief of Police, through the Operations Division Commander, the Special Weapons and Tactics Team shall be managed by a lieutenant.

#### 318.5.2 TEAM SUPERVISORS

Each Crisis Negotiation Team and Tactical team will be supervised by a sergeant.

The team supervisors shall be selected by the Chief of Police upon specific recommendation by staff and the SWAT Commander.

The following represent the supervisor responsibilities for each team on SWAT.

- (a) The Crisis Negotiation Team supervisor's primary responsibilities are to supervise the operations of the Crisis Negotiation Team which will include deployment, training, first line participation, and other duties as directed by the SWAT Commander.
- (b) The Tactical Team supervisor's primary responsibilities are to supervise the operations of the Tactical Team, which will include deployment, training, first line participation, and other duties as directed by the SWAT Commander.

### **318.6 CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

The Crisis Negotiation Team has been established to provide skilled verbal communicators who may be utilized to attempt to de-escalate and effect surrender in critical situations where suspects have taken hostages, barricaded themselves, or have suicidal tendencies.

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The following procedures serve as directives for the administrative operation of the Crisis Negotiation Team.

#### 318.6.1 SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

Interested sworn personnel, who are off probation, shall submit a memorandum to the SWAT Commander. Qualified applicants will then be invited to participate in a testing process. Interested personnel shall be evaluated by the following criteria:

- (a) Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance.
- (b) Demonstrated good judgment and understanding of critical role of negotiator and negotiation process.
- (c) Effective communication skills to ensure success as a negotiator.
- (d) Special skills, training, or appropriate education as it pertains to the assignment.
- (e) Commitment to the unit, realizing that the assignment may necessitate unusual working hours, conditions, and training obligations.

The SWAT Commander shall submit a list of successful applicants to staff for final selection.

#### **318.7 SWAT TEAM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

The Tactical Team was established to provide a skilled and trained team which may be deployed during events requiring specialized tactics in such situations as cases where suspects have taken hostages and/or barricaded themselves as well as prolonged or predictable situations in which persons armed or suspected of being armed pose a danger to themselves or others.

The following procedures serve as directives for the administrative operation of the Tactical Team.

#### 318.7.1 SELECTION OF TACTICAL TEAM PERSONNEL

Interested sworn personnel who are off probation shall submit a memo of interest to the SWAT Commander. Those qualifying applicants will then be invited to participate in the testing process.

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The type and order of the tests will be given at the discretion of the SWAT Commander. The testing process will consist of an oral board, a physical agility test (PAT), SWAT basic firearms course, a scenario-based test, and input from Command staff and supervisors.

#### 318.7.2 TEAM EVALUATION

Continual evaluation of a team member's performance and efficiency as it relates to the positive operation of the unit shall be conducted by the SWAT Commander. The performance and efficiency level, as established by the team supervisors, will be met and maintained by all Tactical Team members. Any member of the Tactical Team who performs or functions at a level less than satisfactory shall be subject to dismissal from the team.

#### **318.8 OPERATION GUIDELINES FOR THE SPECIALIZED WEAPONS AND TACTICS (SWAT) TEAM**

The following procedures serve as guidelines for the operational deployment of the SWAT Team. Generally, the Tactical Team and the Crisis Negotiation Team will be activated together. It is recognized, however, that a Tactical Team may be used in a situation not requiring the physical presence of the Crisis Negotiation Team or vice versa. This shall be at the discretion of the SWAT Commander.

##### 318.8.1 ON-SCENE DETERMINATION

The supervisor in charge on the scene of a particular event will assess whether the SWAT Team is to respond to the scene. Upon final determination by the watch commander, he/she will notify the SWAT Commander.

##### 318.8.3 OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUESTS

Deployment of the Department SWAT Team to assist an outside agency must be approved by the Chief of his/her designee.

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#### 318.8.7 COMMUNICATION WITH SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS TEAM PERSONNEL

All of those persons who are non-Special Weapons and Tactics Team personnel should refrain from any non-emergency contact or interference with any member of the unit during active negotiations. Operations require the utmost in concentration by involved personnel and, as a result, no one should interrupt or communicate with SWAT Team personnel directly. All non-emergency communications shall be channeled through the SWAT Sergeant(s) or his or her designee.