

Crisis and Emergency Response

404.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Lorain Police Department has established two specially trained units to handle emergency crisis situations: the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and the Special Weapons and Tactics team (SWAT). These teams have 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 appears to be necessary.

404.1.1 OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

The Policy Manual sections pertaining to the Special Weapons and Tactics are divided into Administrative and Operational Policy and Procedures. Since situations that necessitate the need for such a law enforcement response vary greatly from incident to incident, and because such events often demand on-scene evaluation, the Operational Policy outlined in this 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.

404.1.2 SWAT TEAM DEFINED

SWAT Team - 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. This includes, but is not limited to, hostage taking, barricaded suspects, snipers, apprehension, personal protection, active shooters, special assignments, civil disturbances, 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.

404.1.3 COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

The Lorain Police SWAT Team is commanded by a supervisor that has tactical experience. When activated for an operation, the SWAT Team Commander, or the senior squad leader when the Commander is absent, reports directly to the Incident Commander, where one has been designated, or to the on-scene supervisor. The SWAT Team Commander is responsible for the deployment of the SWAT Team, tactical decision making and tactical resolution of the incident. The Incident Commander will determine the tactical course of action based on the threat level of the situation. The Incident Commander will utilize recommendations from the SWAT Commander to generate options, however, the Incident Commander will have ultimate authority in choosing the final course of action.

SWAT COMMANDER: The SWAT Commander shall be under the direct command of the Patrol Operations Captain. The SWAT Commander is given tactical control over the SWAT Team and is authorized to give orders to team members during an assault or other SWAT operation. The SWAT

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Commander shall also be responsible for documentation and file storage of all SWAT deployment and training reports.

SQUAD LEADER(S): Squad Leader(s) shall report directly to the SWAT Commander. Squad Leader(s) shall report any problems/needs of the SWAT Team to the Commander to include: equipment, personnel and training matters, etc. The Senior Squad Leader shall have tactical control of the SWAT Team in the absence of the SWAT Commander. The Squad Leader position(s) shall be composed of Sergeants or designated team members.

TEAM OPERATORS: Team Operators shall be composed of sworn officers who report directly to the SWAT Commander or Team Leader(s). Operators may be tasked with various positions within the unit to include: Inner perimeter security, breacher, reactionary/entry team element or sniper/observer.

404.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this department to maintain a SWAT team and to provide the equipment, manpower and training necessary to maintain a SWAT team. The SWAT team should develop sufficient resources to perform three basic operational functions:

- (a) Command and control.
- (b) Containment.
- (c) Entry/apprehension/rescue.

It is understood that it is difficult to categorize specific capabilities for critical incidents. Training needs may vary based on the experience level of the team personnel, team administrators and potential incident commanders. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit individual teams from responding to a situation that exceeds their training levels due to the exigency of the circumstances. The preservation of innocent human life is paramount.

404.2.1 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

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

404.2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES

This department shall develop a separate written set of organizational procedures that should address, at minimum, the following:

- (a) Locally identified specific missions the team is capable of performing.
- (b) Team organization and function.
- (c) Personnel selection and retention criteria.
- (d) Training and required competencies.

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- (e) Procedures for activation and deployment.
- (f) Command and control issues, including a clearly defined command structure.
- (g) Multi-agency response.
- (h) Extrajurisdictional response.
- (i) Specialized functions and supporting resources.

404.2.3 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

This department shall develop a separate written set of operational procedures, in accordance with its level of capability, using sound risk reduction practices.

The Lorain Police SWAT Team will utilize a written planning process for all operations that are proactive or anticipatory in nature, such as warrant service. The written process shall include a format that will document how the operation is to be conducted, command/control/communication, and support required. A copy of operational plans shall be forwarded to the Patrol Operations Captain. All operations plans shall be stored and maintained in a file. The SWAT Team Commander shall cause a log of events to be recorded on all operations, and shall also cause all planning or decision making documents to be recorded. These documents shall be attached to the incident report and a copy shall be stored and maintained in a file. The SWAT Commander will cause an incident report to be generated detailing the activation and the use of the team. The report will include details of the operation and pertinent information required for follow-up investigators, prosecutors, etc.

The operational procedures should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- (a) Designating personnel responsible for developing an operational or tactical plan prior to, and/or during SWAT operations (time permitting).
 1. All SWAT team members should have an understanding of operational planning.
 2. SWAT team training should consider planning for both spontaneous and planned events.
 3. SWAT teams should incorporate medical emergency contingency planning as part of the SWAT operational plan.
- (b) Plans for mission briefings should be conducted prior to an operation unless circumstances require immediate deployment.
 1. When reasonably possible, briefings should include specialized units and supporting resources.
- (c) Protocols for a sustained operation should be developed. These may include relief, rotation of personnel and augmentation of resources.
- (d) A threat assessment checklist to be worked through prior to initiating a tactical action should be developed to provide a means of conducting a threat assessment to determine the appropriate response and resources necessary, including the use of SWAT. [See attachment: Risk Assessment Form](#)

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- (e) The appropriate role for a trained negotiator should be defined.
- (f) A standard method of determining whether a warrant should be regarded as high risk using the SWAT threat assessment form.
- (g) A method for deciding how best to serve a high-risk warrant with all reasonably foreseeable alternatives being reviewed in accordance with risk/benefit criteria prior to selecting the method of response.
- (h) Post-incident scene management, including:
 - 1. Documentation of the incident.
 - 2. Transition to investigations and/or other units.
 - 3. Debriefing after every deployment of the SWAT team.
 - (a) After-action team debriefing provides evaluation and analysis of critical incidents and affords the opportunity for individual and team assessments. It also helps to identify training needs and reinforces sound risk management practices.
 - (b) Debriefing should not be conducted until involved officers have had the opportunity to individually complete the necessary reports or provide formal statements.
 - (c) To maintain candor and meaningful exchange, debriefing will generally not be recorded.
 - (d) When appropriate, debriefing should include specialized units and resources.
- (i) Sound risk management analysis.
- (j) Standardization of equipment.

404.3 TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The SWAT/SWAT commander shall conduct an annual SWAT training needs assessment to ensure that training is conducted within team capabilities and department policy.

404.3.1 INITIAL TRAINING

SWAT team operators and SWAT supervisors/team leaders should not be deployed until successful completion of an approved 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 or topics meet or exceed requirements determined by the Department.

404.3.2 UPDATED TRAINING

Appropriate team training for the specialized SWAT functions and other supporting resources should be completed prior to full deployment of the team.

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404.3.3 SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

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

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 SWAT commander or tactical commander course or its equivalent that has been approved by the department.

404.3.4 SWAT ONGOING TRAINING

Training shall be coordinated by the SWAT commander. The SWAT commander will conduct monthly training exercises that include a review and critique of personnel and their performance in the exercise, in addition to specialized training. Training shall consist of the following:

- (a) Each SWAT member shall perform a physical fitness test quarterly. A minimum qualifying score must be attained by each team member. The physical assessment requirements for specialized units are outlined in the department's procedural directive: Ongoing Physical Assessment Requirements For Specialized Units.
- (b) Any SWAT team member failing to attain the minimum physical fitness qualification score will be notified of the requirement to retest. Within 30 days of the previous physical fitness test date, the member required to qualify shall report to a team supervisor and complete the entire physical fitness test. Failure to qualify after a second attempt may result in dismissal from the team.
- (c) Those members who are on vacation, ill or are on limited duty status with a medical provider's note of approval on the test date shall be responsible for reporting to a team supervisor and taking the test within 30 days of their return to regular duty. Any member who fails to arrange for and perform the physical fitness test within the 30-day period shall be considered as having failed to attain a qualifying score for that test period.
- (d) Annually each SWAT team member shall perform the OPOTA Semi-Auto Pistol qualification course. Failure to qualify will require the officer to seek remedial training from a Firearms Training Supervisor approved by the SWAT commander. Team members who fail to qualify will not be used in SWAT operations until qualified. Team members who fail to qualify must retest within 30 days. Failure to qualify within 30 days with or without remedial training may result in dismissal from the team.
- (e) Annually each SWAT team member shall perform a mandatory OPOTA qualification course for any specialty weapon issued to or used by the officer during SWAT operations. Failure to qualify will require the officer to seek remedial training from a Firearms Training Supervisor approved by the SWAT commander. Team members who fail to qualify on their specialty weapon may not utilize the specialty weapon on SWAT operations until qualified. Team members who fail to qualify must retest within 30 days. Failure to qualify with specialty weapons within 30 days may result in the team member being removed from the team or permanently disqualified from use of that particular specialty weapon.

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404.3.5 TRAINING SAFETY

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

404.3.6 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.

404.3.7 TRAINING DOCUMENTATION

Individual and team training shall be documented and records maintained by the Training Division. Such documentation shall be maintained in each member's individual training file. A separate agency SWAT training file shall be maintained with documentation and records of all team training.

404.4 UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT AND FIREARMS

404.4.1 UNIFORMS

SWAT teams from this department 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. All other items of personal wear or equipment must be approved by the Division Commander.

404.4.2 EQUIPMENT

SWAT teams from this department should be adequately equipped to meet the specific mission identified by the Department.

The Lorain Police SWAT Team shall supply their team members with at least the following safety equipment:

- (a) Ballistic helmet.
- (b) Safety glasses or goggles.
- (c) Hearing protection.
- (d) Complete coverage ballistic entry vest with Threat Level IV insert.
- (e) A load-bearing vest or duty belt for tactical equipment.
- (f) Special weapons as authorized.
- (g) An appropriate amount of ammunition for weapons training.

Swat Team members to whom any item of equipment is issued, are responsible for the care and maintenance of the equipment. Failure to appropriately care for or maintain the equipment in full mission readiness will be grounds for removal from the team.

404.4.3 FIREARMS

Weapons and equipment used by SWAT, the specialized units and the supporting resources should be Department-issued or approved, including any modifications, additions or attachments, and will only be used by properly trained/certified members. Weapons and equipment not

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authorized by the SWAT Commander are prohibited. Such specialized weapons include sub-machineguns, shotguns, high caliber precision rifles, less lethal weapons, flash/noise diversionary devices, and breaching tools and ammunition.

404.4.4 OPERATIONAL READINESS INSPECTION

The commander of the SWAT Team shall appoint a SWAT Team member to perform an operational readiness inspection of all unit equipment at least quarterly. The result of the inspection will be forwarded to the SWAT Team commander. The inspection will include personal equipment issued to members of the unit as well as special use equipment maintained for periodic or occasional use in the SWAT vehicle.

404.5 MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISION OF SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The commander of the SWAT Team shall be selected by the Chief of Police upon recommendation of the Division Commanders.

404.5.1 SQUAD LEADER

Each squad will be supervised by a squad leader who has been appointed by the SWAT Commander.

The following represents supervisor responsibilities for the Special Weapons and Tactics:

- (a) The SWAT team supervisor's primary responsibility is to supervise the operations of the team, which will include deployment, training, first-line participation and other duties as directed by the Operations Commander or Chief of Police.

404.6 SWAT TEAM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The SWAT team was established to provide a skilled and trained team that may be deployed during events requiring specialized tactics, in situations where suspects have taken hostages and/or barricaded themselves, as well as prolonged or predictable situations in which persons who are 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 SWAT team.

404.6.1 SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

When a vacancy on the SWAT team exists, an announcement may be made requesting letters of interest. Interested sworn personnel who have completed three years full-time law enforcement experience, shall submit a letter of interest to the SWAT Commander. Those qualifying applicants will then be invited to participate in the testing process. The order of the tests will be given at the discretion of the SWAT Commander. The testing process will consist of an oral board, physical agility test and a SWAT basic handgun and team evaluation.

- (a) Oral board: The oral board will consist of the Operations Division Commander, SWAT Commander, and a third person chosen by the two. Applicants will be evaluated by the following criteria:
 - 1. Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance and time in service.

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2. Demonstrated good judgment and an understanding of the critical role of a SWAT team member.
 3. Special skills, training or appropriate education as it pertains to the assignment.
 4. Commitment to the unit, realizing that the additional assignment may necessitate unusual working hours, conditions and training obligations.
- (b) **Physical agility:** The physical agility test is designed to determine the physical capabilities of the applicant as they relate to performance of SWAT-related duties. The test and scoring procedure will be established by the SWAT Commander. A minimum qualifying score shall be attained by the applicant to be considered for the position.
- (c) **SWAT basic handgun:** Candidates will be invited to shoot the SWAT basic drill for the handgun.
- (d) **Team evaluation:** Current team members will evaluate each candidate on field tactical skills, teamwork, ability to work under stress, communication skills, judgment and any special skills that could benefit the team.

404.6.2 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 supervisor, will be met and maintained by all SWAT team members. Any member of the SWAT team who performs or functions at a level less than satisfactory shall be subject to dismissal from the team.

404.7 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The following procedures serve as guidelines for the operational deployment of the Special Weapons and Tactics. Generally, the SWAT team and the CNT 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 CNT, such as warrant service operations. This shall be at the discretion of the Operations Commander or Chief of Police.

404.7.1 ON-SCENE DETERMINATION

The supervisor in charge at the scene of a particular event will assess whether the Special Weapons and Tactics should respond. Upon final determination by the Patrol Operations Commander, the SWAT Commander will be notified.

404.7.2 APPROPRIATE SITUATIONS FOR USE OF A SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The following are examples of incidents that may result in the activation of the Special Weapons and Tactics:

- (a) Barricaded suspects who refuse an order to surrender.
- (b) Incidents where hostages have been taken.
- (c) Cases of suicide threats.

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- (d) Arrests of dangerous persons.
- (e) Any situation where a SWAT response could enhance the ability to preserve life, maintain social order and ensure the protection of property.

404.7.3 OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUESTS

Requests by field personnel for assistance from outside agency crisis units must be approved by the Operations Commander. Deployment of the Lorain Police Department Special Weapons and Tactics in response to requests by other agencies must be authorized by a Division Commander.

404.7.4 MULTIJURISDICTIONAL SWAT OPERATIONS

The SWAT team, including specialized units and supporting resources, should develop protocols, agreements, memorandums of understanding, collective bargaining agreements or working relationships to support multijurisdictional or regional responses.

- (a) If it is anticipated that multijurisdictional SWAT operations will regularly be conducted, SWAT multi-agency and multidisciplinary joint training exercises are encouraged.
- (b) Members of the Lorain Police Department SWAT team shall operate under the policies, procedures and command of the Lorain Police Department when working in a multi-agency situation.

404.7.5 MOBILIZATION OF SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The on-scene supervisor shall make a request to the Operations Commander for the Special Weapons and Tactics to respond. Upon authorization, the on-scene supervisor will activate SWAT through the communications center.

The on-scene supervisor should advise the SWAT Commander with as much of the following information as is available at the time:

- (a) The number of suspects, known weapons and resources.
- (b) If the suspect is in control of hostages.
- (c) If the suspect is barricaded.
- (d) The type of crime involved.
- (e) If the suspect has threatened or attempted suicide.
- (f) The location and safe approach to the command post.
- (g) The extent of any perimeter and the number of officers involved.
- (h) Any other important facts critical to the immediate situation, and whether the suspect has refused an order to surrender.

The SWAT Commander shall then call selected officers to respond. A call-out for the SWAT Team shall include all available team members. Some incidents may not require the entire SWAT Team. The decision to activate a limited number of team members shall rest with the SWAT Team Commander or Operations Division Commander.

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404.7.6 FIELD UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

While waiting for the Special Weapons and Tactics, field personnel should, if safe, practicable and if sufficient resources exist:

- (a) Establish an inner and outer perimeter.
- (b) Establish a command post outside of the inner perimeter.
- (c) Establish a patrol emergency/arrest response team prior to SWAT arrival. The team actions may include:
 1. Securing any subject or suspect who may surrender.
 2. Taking action to mitigate a lethal threat or behavior.
- (d) Evacuate any injured persons or citizens in the zone of danger.
- (e) Attempt to establish preliminary communications with the suspect. Once the SWAT has arrived, all negotiations should generally be halted to allow the negotiators and SWAT team time to set up.
- (f) Be prepared to brief the SWAT Commander on the situation.
- (g) Plan for and stage anticipated resources.

404.7.7 ON-SCENE COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon arrival of the Special Weapons and Tactics, the Incident Commander shall brief the SWAT Commander and team supervisors. Upon review, it will be the Incident Commander's decision, with input from the SWAT Commander, whether to deploy the Special Weapons and Tactics. Once the Incident Commander authorizes deployment, the SWAT Commander will be responsible for the tactical portion of the operation. The Incident Commander shall continue supervision of the command post operation, outer perimeter security and support for the Special Weapons and Tactics. Unless the SWAT Commander relinquishes his/her control to another person outside the SWAT Team, no other person who is not in a leadership position within the SWAT Team, will attempt to direct, supervise, or control any element or member of the SWAT Team.

404.7.8 COMMUNICATION WITH SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS PERSONNEL

All persons who are non-Special Weapons and Tactics personnel should refrain from any non-emergency contact or from interference with any member of the unit during active negotiations. Operations require the utmost in concentration by involved personnel. No one should interrupt or communicate with SWAT personnel directly. All non-emergency communications shall be channeled through the Incident Commander or designee.

404.8 CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The CNT 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. Crisis Negotiators are responsible for conducting negotiations with suspects and victims during the deployment of the team.

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

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404.8.1 SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

When a vacancy on the CNT exists, an announcement may be made requesting letters of interest. Interested sworn personnel, who are off probation, shall submit a request to their appropriate Division Commander. A copy will be forwarded to the CNT Commander. Qualified applicants will then be invited to an oral interview. The oral board will consist of the CNT Commander, Division Commander and a third person to be selected by the two. Interested personnel shall be evaluated by the following criteria:

- (a) Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance.
- (b) Demonstrated good judgment and an understanding of the critical role of a negotiator and the 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 oral board shall submit a list of successful applicants to the staff for final selection.

404.8.2 TRAINING OF NEGOTIATORS

Those officers selected as members of the CNT should attend a department-approved basic negotiator's course prior to deployment in an actual crisis situation. Untrained officers may be used in a support or training capacity. Additional training will be coordinated by the team supervisor.

A minimum of one training day per quarter will be required to provide the opportunity for role playing and situational training that is necessary to maintain proper skills. This will be coordinated by the team supervisor.

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 team supervisor. Performance and efficiency levels established by the team supervisor will be met and maintained by all team members. Any member of the CNT who performs or functions at a level less than satisfactory shall be subject to dismissal from CNT.

404.8.3 CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM COMMANDER

The Crisis Negotiator Team Commander's primary responsibility is to supervise the operations of the team, to include deployment, training, first-line participation and to coordinate negotiations operations with the SWAT Team Commander if deployed during a SWAT Team activation.

Risk Assessment Form exempt 149.43(A)(2)(D)