



# NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

## CHAPTER: 46.7

### TITLE: CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT - SWAT

**EFFECTIVE: 11/26/2017**

**REVISED: Replaces Policy/Procedure 408**

---

#### PURPOSE

The Crisis Response Unit (CRU) is comprised of two specialized teams: the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and the Special Weapons and Tactics team (SWAT). 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 appears to be necessary.

#### POLICY STATEMENT

1. The mission of the Special Operations Division's SWAT Team shall be limited to providing a specialized response to critical situations where a tactical response is required, such as hostage rescue, barricaded subjects, high-risk warrant service, high-risk apprehension, and terrorism response.
2. SWAT team tactics and equipment shall be prohibited from deployment or use for routine or proactive patrol functions, crime prevention, or for the service of non-high-risk warrants, unless approved in writing by a Deputy Chief.
3. Nothing in this Chapter prohibits SWAT Team members from providing uniformed policing services.
4. Barring emergency circumstances, the SWAT Team shall have the primary responsibility for execution of any high-risk warrant utilizing SWAT team officers equipped with special equipment, training, and weapons.
5. 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 shall develop sufficient resources to perform three basic operational functions:
  - (a) Command and control
  - (b) Containment
  - (c) Entry/apprehension/rescue
6. The New Orleans Police Department maintains a **Level III SWAT Team**.

## DEFINITIONS

Definitions relevant to this Chapter include:

**SWAT Team**—A designated unit of law enforcement officers, , including a multijurisdictional team, which 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, terrorist acts and other high-risk incidents.

**Level III SWAT Team**—An advanced level SWAT team whose personnel function as a unit. Generally, 25 percent of their on duty time is devoted to training and maintaining certifications. Level III teams operate in accordance with contemporary best practices. Such units possess both skills and equipment to utilize tactics beyond the capabilities of Level I and Level II teams.

## OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

7. The sections of this Chapter pertaining to the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) are divided into Administrative and Operational sections. The situations that necessitate the need for specialized a law enforcement response vary greatly from incident to incident, and such events often demand on scene evaluation.
8. The Operational section outlined in this Chapter serves as a guideline to Department personnel, allowing for appropriate on scene decision making. The Administrative section, however, is more restrictive and few exceptions should be taken.
9. 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 Chapter 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.
10. The SOD Commander, or his/her authorized designee, shall conduct an annual assessment to determine the type and extent of SWAT missions and operations that are appropriate to this department. The assessment shall consider the team's capabilities and limitations and review its training. This assessment shall be reported, in writing, to the Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES

11. The Commander of the Special Operations Division and the Deputy Chief of Field Operations shall jointly develop organizational procedures that should address, at a 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
  - (e) Procedures for activation and deployment
  - (f) Command and control issues, including a clearly defined command structure
  - (g) Multiagency response
  - (h) Multi-Jurisdictional response
  - (i) Specialized functions and supporting resources

## OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

12. The Commander of the Special Operations Division and the Deputy Chief of Field Operations shall jointly develop operational procedures, in accordance with SOD's level

of capability, using sound risk reduction practices. The operational procedures should be patterned after the ***National Tactical Officers Association's Suggested SWAT Best Practices***.

13. Operational Procedures are specific to CRU members and will outline tactical and officer safety issues, they are **CLASSIFIED** as **Confidential Security Data** and are not included within this Chapter. The operational procedures shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:
- (a) Personnel responsible for developing an operational or tactical plan should be designated prior to, and/or during SWAT operations (time permitting).
  - (b) All SWAT team members should have an understanding of operational planning.
  - (c) SWAT team training should consider planning for both spontaneous and planned events.
  - (d) SWAT teams should incorporate medical emergency contingency planning as part of the SWAT operational plan.
  - (e) Plans for mission briefings should be conducted prior to an operation, unless circumstances require immediate deployment.
  - (f) When reasonably possible, briefings should include the specialized units and supporting resources.
  - (g) Protocols for a sustained operation should be developed. These may include relief, rotation of personnel and augmentation of resources.
  - (h) A generic checklist to be worked through prior to initiating a tactical action should be developed. This will provide a means of conducting a threat assessment to determine the appropriate response and resources necessary, including the use of SWAT.
  - (i) The appropriate role for a trained negotiator should be defined.
  - (j) A standard method of determining whether a warrant should be regarded as high risk should be developed.
  - (k) A method for deciding how best to serve a high risk warrant should be developed, with all reasonably foreseeable alternatives being reviewed in accordance with risk/benefit criteria prior to selecting the method of response.
  - (l) The elements of post incident scene management should include:
  - (m) Documentation of the incident should be prepared by the Negotiation Team.
  - (n) Transition to investigations and/or other units.
  - (o) Debriefing after every deployment of the SWAT team.
  - (p) 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.
  - (q) Debriefing should not be conducted until involved officers have had the opportunity to individually complete the necessary reports or provide formal statements.
  - (r) To maintain candor and a meaningful exchange, debriefing will generally not be recorded.
  - (s) When appropriate, debriefing should include specialized units and all personnel present during the incident.
  - (t) Sound risk management analysis should be included.
  - (u) Standardization of equipment should be addressed.

## INITIAL TRAINING

14. SWAT team officers and SWAT supervisors/team leaders should not be deployed until successful completion of the **NOPD 4 Week Basic SWAT Course**. To avoid unnecessary or redundant training, previous training completed by members may be considered equivalent after evaluation by the SOD Training Officer.
15. Required team training for the specialized SWAT functions and other supporting resources shall be completed prior to full deployment of the team.

16. SWAT team officers and SWAT supervisors/team leaders shall complete a two week update or refresher training course every 24 months.

### **SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING**

17. Command and executive personnel in the chain of command for SWAT are encouraged to attend training for managing the SWAT function at the organizational level. This ensures that the personnel who provide active oversight at the scene of SWAT operations understand the purpose and capabilities of the team.
18. Command personnel who may assume incident command responsibilities during a SWAT team deployment shall attend a SWAT or critical incident commander course or its equivalent. SWAT command personnel shall attend a SWAT commander or tactical commander course or its equivalent that has been approved by the department.

### **SWAT ONGOING TRAINING**

19. Training exercises shall include a review and critique of personnel and their performance in the exercise, in addition to the specialized training. Training shall consist of the following:
  - (a) Each SWAT member shall perform a physical fitness test twice each year. The physical fitness test is outlined within the SOD Standard Operating Guidelines and is a Pass / Fail test and must be successfully completed by each team member.
  - (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 and 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 leave, sick or are on limited duty status with a medical provider's notation of illness and treatment 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) Quarterly each SWAT team member shall perform the mandatory SWAT handgun qualification course. The qualification course shall consist of the SWAT basic drill for the handgun. Failure to qualify will require the officer to seek remedial training from a Range Master approved by the SOD 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) Quarterly each SWAT team member shall perform a mandatory SWAT 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 Range Master approved by the SOD 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.

### SCENERIO BASED TRAINING / TRAINING SAFETY

20. SWAT teams shall participate in scenario based training that simulates the tactical operational environment. Such training is an established method of improving performance during an actual deployment.
21. Use of a designated safety officer shall be employed for all tactical training. (Reference **Chapter 1.4.3 – Scenario Based Firearms Training** for general safety officer guidelines.)

### TRAINING DOCUMENTATION

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

### UNIFORMS

23. SWAT team officers shall wear uniforms that clearly identify team members as law enforcement officers unless certain tactical conditions require covert movement. Attire appropriate to the specific mission shall be determined by the Commander of SOD.

### EQUIPMENT

24. SWAT teams shall be adequately equipped to meet the specific missions identified by the Department and SOD Operational Procedures. (See: **Chapter 46.2.3 – CRU / SWAT Equipment.**)

### FIREARMS

25. Weapons and equipment used by SWAT, the specialized units and the supporting resources shall be department issued, including any modifications, additions or attachments. **No personal weapons are authorized for SWAT officers other than the duty handgun.**

### OPERATIONAL READINESS INSPECTION

26. The Commander of SOD shall appoint a CRU supervisor to perform an operational readiness inspection of all unit equipment at least quarterly. The result of the inspection will be forwarded to the SOD Commander. The inspection will include all equipment issued to members of the unit as well as special use equipment maintained for periodic or occasional use in the SWAT vehicles.

### MANAGEMENT / SUPERVISION OF CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT

27. The commander of SOD shall be selected by the Superintendent of Police. The Commander of SOD shall select the commander of the CRU with the Superintendent's approval.

### TEAM SUPERVISORS

28. The Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and each SWAT team will be supervised by a Team Leader who has been appointed by the SOD Commander.

29. The Team Leaders shall be selected by the Superintendent of Police upon specific recommendation by the SOD Commander.
30. The CNT supervisor's primary responsibility is to supervise the operations of the team, to include deployment, training, first line participation and other duties as directed by the SOD Commander.
31. The SWAT team supervisor's primary responsibility is to supervise the operations of the team, which will include deployment, training, active incident participation and other duties as directed by the SOD Commander.

### **CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM (CNT) ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

32. The CNT provides skilled, verbal communicators who may be utilized to deescalate and affect the suspects' surrender in critical situations where suspects have taken hostages, barricaded themselves or have suicidal tendencies.

### **SELECTION OF PERSONNEL FOR CNT**

33. NOPD commissioned members, who are not on probation as a PO1 and have served 2 years, shall submit a request for training as a CNT member to their appropriate Division Commander. A copy of the request shall be forwarded to the SOD Commander and the CNT Team Leader.
34. Qualified applicants will then be invited to an oral interview. The oral interview board will consist of the SOD Commander, the CNT sergeant and a third person to be selected by the two. Applicants shall be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - (a) Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance as a police officer.
  - (b) Demonstrated good judgment and an understanding of the critical role of a negotiator and the negotiation process.
  - (c) Effective oral communication skills to ensure success as a negotiator.
  - (d) Special skills, training or appropriate education that may pertain to the assignment.
  - (e) Commitment to the unit's goals, understanding that the assignment may necessitate unusual working hours, conditions and training obligations.
35. The oral interview board shall submit a ranked list of successful applicants to the Field Operations Bureau Commander for final selection.

### **TRAINING OF NEGOTIATORS**

36. Those officers selected as members of the CNT shall attend a department approved, 40 hour basic negotiator's course prior to deployment in an actual crisis situation. Untrained officers may be used in a support or training capacity only. Additional training will be coordinated by the team supervisor.
37. A minimum of one training day per quarter, and an additional 40 hour annual training shall be required to maintain proper skills and certification. This will be coordinated by the team supervisor.
38. Continual and ongoing evaluation of a CNT team member's performance and efficiency as it relates to the positive operation of the team shall be conducted by the team supervisor as part of every After Action Report. Performance and efficiency levels established by the team supervisor must be met and maintained by all team members.

Any of the CNT who performs or functions at a less than satisfactory level shall be subject to dismissal from the CNT.

## **SWAT TEAM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

### **SELECTION OF PERSONNEL FOR SWAT**

39. NOPD commissioned members, who are not on probation as a PO1 and have served 2 years as a platoon officer, shall submit a request for training as a SWAT member to their appropriate Division Commander. A copy of the request shall be forwarded to the SOD Commander and the SWAT Team Leader.
40. Qualified applicants will then be invited to participate in the testing process. The order of the tests will be given at the discretion of the SOD Commander. The testing process will consist of an oral board, physical agility test and a SWAT basic handgun and team evaluation.
41. The oral interview board will consist of personnel selected by the SOD Commander. Applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - (a) Recognized competence and ability as evidenced by performance as a police officer.
  - (b) Demonstrated good judgment and an understanding of the critical role of a SWAT team member.
  - (c) Special skills, training or appropriate education that may pertain to the assignment.
  - (d) Commitment to the unit's goals, understanding that the assignment may necessitate unusual working hours, conditions and training obligations.
42. The physical agility test will 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 SOD Commander. A passing score shall be attained by the applicant to be considered for the position.
43. Selected applicants will be invited to shoot the SWAT basic drill for the handgun to assess his/her skill level.
44. Current SWAT team members will individually evaluate each candidate on field tactical skills, teamwork, ability to work under stress, communication skills, judgment and any special skills the applicant possesses that could benefit the team.
45. A ranked list of successful applicants shall be submitted to the Deputy Chief of Field Operations Bureau by the SOD Commander for final selection.

### **TEAM EVALUATION**

46. Continual and ongoing evaluation of a SWAT team member's performance and efficiency as it relates to the positive operation of the team shall be conducted by the team supervisor as part of each After Action Report. Performance and efficiency levels established by the team supervisor must be met and maintained by all team members. Any member of the SWAT team who performs or functions at a less than satisfactory level shall be subject to dismissal from SWAT.

### **OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT**

47. The following procedures serve as guidelines for the operational deployment of the

Crisis Response Unit. Generally, the SWAT team and the CNT will be activated together. A SWAT team may be used in a situation not requiring the physical presence of the CNT, such as high risk warrant service operations at the discretion of the SOD Commander.

### **ON SCENE DETERMINATION**

48. The on scene supervisor in charge at the scene of a particular event will contact Communications Services to notify the SOD Commander, or his designee, and advise him/her of the circumstances. The SOD Commander or designee shall determine if the Crisis Response Unit should respond and advise the on scene supervisor.

### **APPROPRIATE SITUATIONS FOR USE OF A CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT**

49. The following are examples of incidents that may result in the activation of the Crisis Response Unit:
  - (a) Barricaded suspects who refuse an order to surrender.
  - (b) Incidents where hostages have been taken.
  - (c) Cases of suicide threats.
  - (d) Arrests of persons reasonably believed to be dangerous that qualify as high-risk.
  - (e) Any situation in which CRU or CNT deployment could enhance the ability to preserve life, maintain social order and ensure the protection of property.
  - (f) Special consideration should be given to structures requiring forced entry. These structures require specialized equipment to safely execute entry and may pose a significant threat to uniformed personnel.

### **OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUESTS**

50. Requests for assistance from outside agency crisis units must be approved by the Superintendent of Police, or his designee. Deployment of the New Orleans Police Department Crisis Response Unit in response to requests by other agencies must be authorized by Superintendent of Police, or his designee.

### **MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL SWAT OPERATIONS**

51. The NOPD SWAT team, including specialized units and supporting resources, shall develop protocols, cooperative endeavor agreements (CEA), and memorandums of understanding (MOU), as well as working relationships to support multi-jurisdictional or regional responses.
52. If it is anticipated that multi-jurisdictional SWAT operations will regularly be conducted, SWAT multiagency and multidisciplinary joint training exercises should be conducted.
53. Members of the New Orleans Police Department SWAT team shall only operate under the policies, procedures, supervision and command of the New Orleans Police Department when working in a multiagency situation.
54. Outside agency SWAT Teams requested by NOPD and deployed in the City of New Orleans shall be under the command of NOPD SOD supervisors. The only exception, absent a specific MOU or CEA, is the Louisiana State Police SWAT Team when called to handle a secondary location deployment where they operate independent of direct NOPD supervision. LSP has concurrent jurisdiction in Orleans Parish.



**MOBILIZATION OF CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT**

55. The on scene supervisor shall make a request to the District Platoon Commander for the Crisis Response Unit to respond. The District Platoon Commander shall then notify Communications Services and request the SOD Commander. If unavailable, a CRU team supervisor shall be notified. An up to date mobilization list shall be maintained in the SOD and CRU Platoon Commander's office by the SOD Commander. The Platoon Commander will then notify the Field Operations Bureau Deputy Chief as soon as practicable after activation of CRU.
56. The District Platoon Commander shall brief the SOD Commander with the following information if available:
- (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 or engaged on the scene.
  - (h) Whether the suspect has refused an order to surrender.
  - (i) Any other important facts critical to the immediate situation.
57. The SOD Commander shall call selected SOD / CRU / SWAT officers to respond based on his/her assessment of the tactical situation and resource needs.

**FIELD UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES**

58. While waiting for the Crisis Response Unit, District 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:
    - Securing any subject or suspect who may surrender.
    - Taking action to mitigate a lethal threat or behavior.
    - Evacuate any injured persons or citizens in the zone of danger if it can be done without placing them at risk.
    - Attempt to establish preliminary communications with the suspect.**(NOTE: Once the CRU has arrived, all negotiations should generally be halted to allow the negotiators and SWAT team time to set up.)**
  - (d) Be prepared to brief the SOD Commander on the situation.
  - (e) Plan for and stage anticipated resources.

**ON SCENE COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES**

59. Upon arrival of the Crisis Response Unit at the scene, the Incident Commander shall brief the SOD Commander and team supervisors. Upon review, it will be the decision, of the SOD Commander, whether to deploy the Crisis Response Unit.
60. Once the Incident Commander authorizes deployment, the SOD 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 Crisis Response Unit. The Incident Commander and the SOD Commander or the authorized designee shall maintain communications at all times.

**COMMUNICATION WITH CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT PERSONNEL**

61. All persons who are non-Crisis Response Unit 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 CRU personnel directly. All non-emergency communications shall be channeled through the CNT sergeant or his/her authorized designee.

**REVIEW AND REPORTING**

62. Supervisory review of CRU / SWAT Team deployments shall be conducted by an uninvolved, command level supervisor possessing the requisite knowledge and expertise to analyze and critique specialized response protocols, and shall identify any policy, training, equipment or tactical concerns raised by the action. Command staff shall identify areas of concern or particular successes, and shall implement the appropriate response, including modifications to policy, training, or tactics.
63. The SOD Commander or his/her designee will track and analyze the number of CRU / SWAT Team deployments. The analysis shall include the reason for each activation, the legal authority, type of warrant (if applicable), and the result of each deployment, including:
- (a) The location,
  - (b) The number of arrests,
  - (c) The type of evidence or property seized,
  - (d) Whether a forcible entry was required,
  - (e) Whether a weapon was discharged by SWAT Team member, and
  - (f) Whether a person or domestic animal was injured or killed.
64. Supervisory review of CRU / SWAT Team deployments shall be maintained in a database that is accessible through INSIGHT and included in the NOPD's annual Use of Force Report.
65. In addition to any Use of Force Reports, the CRU / SWAT Team shall document its activities, in detail, including preparing written operational plans in consistent formats, and written after-action reports subsequent to call-outs and deployments to critical situations, such as hostage rescue, barricaded subjects, high-risk warrant service, high-risk apprehension, and terrorism response. After-action reports shall address any areas of concern related to policy, training, equipment, or tactics.