



Kern County Sheriff's Office
Policies and Procedures

TITLE: SWAT CRITICAL INCIDENTS		NO: H-110	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: April 29, 2005	REVIEWED: 10/20/2020	REVISED: 00/00/00	UPDATED: 08/30/2018

POLICY

Recognizing that the presence of a highly trained, highly skilled tactical unit has been shown to substantially reduce the risk of injury or loss of life to citizens, deputies and suspects; and recognizing that a well managed "team" response to critical incidents usually results in successful resolution of critical incidents, it is the intent of the Kern County Sheriff's Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) to provide a highly trained and skilled tactical team as a resource for the Kern County Sheriff's Office in the handling of critical incidents. The success of any crisis plan hinges on a good team approach, good communications, and coordination of the situation by management and supervisory personnel. The SWAT Team will assist other units with tactical contingency planning for resolving potential confrontations with dangerous suspects. SWAT is also available to respond anywhere within the county and when properly requested, can assist other law enforcement agencies with incidents that fall within the scope of the SWAT Team's defined role.

DIRECTIVE

It is important to remember a SWAT critical incident may be time sensitive. Deputies and supervisors should be able to recognize either immediately, or by the escalation of actions by a suspect, the need for SWAT intervention. The following procedures will outline generally the types of missions SWAT is used for and provide guidelines for decision making on the need for SWAT. **PROCEDURE A**

The following situations are generally an automatic SWAT response:

1. Hostage Situations: The holding of any person(s) against their will by an armed or potentially armed suspect. Including incidents at detention facilities.
2. Barricade Situations: The standoff created by an armed or potentially armed suspect in any location, whether fortified or not, who is refusing to comply with demands for surrender.
3. Sniper Situations: The firing upon citizens and/or police by an armed suspect, whether stationary or mobile.
4. Apprehension: The planned arrest or apprehension of armed or potentially armed suspect(s) where there is the likelihood of armed resistance.
5. Warrant Service: The service of search or arrest warrants where there is a likelihood of armed or potentially armed suspect(s) and there is the potential of armed resistance.

- 6. Personal Protection: The security of special persons, such as VIP's, witnesses, or suspects, based on threat or potential threat to the wellbeing of those persons.
- 7. Special Assignments: Any assignment, approved by the Sheriff, Chief Deputy, or SWAT Commander, based upon the level of threat or the need for a special expertise.

PROCEDURE B

The guidelines in "Attachment A" may be used to assess an incident for the appropriateness of a SWAT response. The guidelines are designed to be used as a field guide and do not fit all criteria. When in doubt request a SWAT response through the Watch Lieutenant/ Communications Center.

PROCEDURE C

When a SWAT response is requested, the Incident Commander, Watch Lieutenant, or Communications Center Supervisor shall contact the on-call SWAT Commander, or their designee, to be briefed on the situation. The SWAT Commander, or their designee must approve the request prior to the team being mobilized. In the event of an approved SWAT call-out, the SWAT Commander, or his/her designee, will direct the Communications Center to put out a group page alerting SWAT member of the call-out.

If the situation is such that an Incident Commander, Watch Lieutenant, or Communications Center Supervisor is unable to contact the SWAT Commander, or his/her designee, or if time is of the essence due to the nature of the situation, the Communications Center Supervisor can initiate a SWAT call-out upon request from the Incident Commander or Watch Lieutenant.

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ATTACHMENT A

This matrix is a threat assessment guideline. When preparing the operation plan, the following matrix should be used as a guide to evaluate the need for assistance from the SWAT team. This matrix is intended to provoke consideration of officer safety, potential risk and threat factors associated with warrant execution. Check any boxes that may apply. It is recognized that each situation is unique, and this matrix may not apply to every circumstance. Operational decision-making is ultimately the responsibility of the on-scene supervisor, Watch Commander or Incident Commander.

POINTS	SEARCH WARRANTS	X	SCORE
3	Search warrant is for evidence related to drug sales		
2	Search warrant is for evidence related to a crime against a person (no weapon)		
4	Search warrant is for evidence related to a crime against a person (weapon)		
ARREST WARRANTS /WANTED SUBJECTS			
2	PC to arrest or Ramey warrant obtained for a low level offense (property crime, drug possession, drug sales, non-violent crime against a person)		
10	PC to arrest or Ramey warrant obtained for violent crime against a person (felony)		
15	PC to arrest or Ramey warrant obtained for 664/187 or 187		
15	PC to arrest or Ramey warrant obtained for violent crime against a peace officer Type of crime: Injuries:		
SERVICE LOCATION ISSUES			
1	Minimal forced entry (ram, halligan, etc.)		
2	Guard dog(s) / vicious dog(s)		
2	Surveillance equipment present		
4	Location is heavily fortified requiring special breaching equipment		
5	Hazardous materials (labs, grows, explosives)		
10	Booby traps		
WEAPONS			
8	Firearms used in a crime within the past 48 hours		
15	Or Shooting in progress / just occurred		
25	Or Shots fired with suspects' knowledge of law enforcement personnel on-scene		
5	Handgun/long gun		
10	Fully-automatic firearm		
10	Explosives (<i>other than simple commercial fireworks</i>)		

2	Other known improvised weapons		
SUBJECTS CURRENTLY AT THE LOCATION			
1	Low level criminal history (property crimes, drug use)		
2	Statements of resistance		
3	Violent criminal history		
4	History of criminal firearms use		
3	History of evading / resisting law enforcement		
2	Gang member / associate		
2	Organized crime associate		
2	Military / law enforcement / martial arts trained		
2	Drug/alcohol influence		
2	Issues of mental illness		
SUBJECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LOCATION (continued)			
4	3 rd strike candidate		
1	Body armor available		
5	Prior assaults against law enforcement		
1+	Add 1 point for each additional subject present who is suspected of criminal behavior		

Total Points: _____

POINT EVALUATION:

- 0-14 Points Operation is within the capability of the investigating unit
- 15-24 Points Consultation with the SWAT Commander is recommended
- 25+ Points SWAT Team deployment is recommended