



*Kern County Sheriff's Office*  
**Policies and Procedures**

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| <b>TITLE: OFF ROAD VEHICLE TEAM (O.R.V.T.)</b>     |                                | <b>NO: H-1300</b>           |                               |
| <b>APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner</b> |                                |                             |                               |
| <b>EFFECTIVE:</b><br>March 11, 2002                | <b>REVIEWED:</b><br>10/20/2020 | <b>REVISED:</b><br>00/00/00 | <b>UPDATED:</b><br>11/28/2007 |

## **POLICY**

The Kern County Sheriff's Office Off Road Vehicle Team (O.R.V.T.) is a specialized unit deployed to remote areas of Kern County to provide law enforcement services for those who pursue off road vehicle recreation. The unit will perform general law enforcement duties and its equipment will be made available to other specialized units of the Sheriff's Office who comply with the provision of this policy.

- The O.R.V.T. is to provide law enforcement services to the remote areas of Kern County that are used for off road vehicle recreation. The O.R.V.T. will focus their effort on off highway vehicle (O.H.V.) safety related enforcement into areas not normally accessible by patrol vehicles.
- The O.R.V.T. is deployed under the direction of the East Area Substation Division Commander and is available to deploy anywhere in Kern County at the direction of the Sheriff or Sheriff's Command Staff.

## **DIRECTIVE A: STAFFING**

The O.R.V.T. will consist of the Unit Coordinator (UC), Assistant Unit Coordinator (AUC), and Training Cadre. Additional sworn, reserve and non-sworn Sheriff's personnel will be trained, on an as needed basis, to operate in the O.H.V. environment and participate in O.R.V.T. deployment.

- The O.R.V.T. Unit Coordinator will hold the rank of Sheriff's Sergeant, and Assistant Unit Coordinator will hold the rank of Sheriff's Sergeant, Senior Deputy Sheriff, or Deputy Sheriff. Coordinators are responsible for the administrative operation of the unit, scheduling, and on-scene deployment supervision. Coordinators will develop, oversee, maintain, and supervise the training program; track and facilitate vehicle maintenance; write and maintain the O.R.V.T. procedures manual; manage and account for the O.R.V.T. budget; maintain unit records; seek funding through and comply with the California State Parks Service Grant Program requirements.
- The UC will maintain contact with the various groups and organizations that have an interest in O.H.V. recreation in Kern County.

- The O.R.V.T. Training Cadre members will hold the rank of Senior Deputy Sheriff, Deputy Sheriff or Sheriff’s Reserve Deputy. Personnel will be under the direct supervision of the UC while conducting O.R.V.T. activities. Team members will participate in operational deployments; assist the UC with writing, conducting and maintaining the training program and records; track and maintain the vehicle maintenance records; assist with maintenance of the O.R.V.T. grant records; and conduct other duties at the direction of the UC.
- O.R.V.T. assignments will be made to qualified individuals who have an interest in the O.H.V. program. Candidates shall submit a Kern County Sheriff’s Office Special Assignment Application to the UC. When the mission of the O.R.V.T. requires additional personnel, selection of candidates will be made on an as needed basis.
- Initially, candidates chosen to participate in the O.R.V.T. will be assigned to work with a member of the training cadre. When a candidate has demonstrated a working knowledge of O.H.V. related issues, operational areas, and the ability to safely work in the O.H.V. environment, they will be eligible to work the O.R.V.T. assignment. O.R.V.T. assignments are made at the discretion of the UC.
- Applicants must demonstrate the following proficiencies:
  - Successfully complete the ATV rider course and/or the ROV Basic Driver Course.
  - Read and demonstrate a working knowledge of related OHV equipment owner’s manuals.
- Demonstrate proficiency to the UC or his designee in safely operating 4x4 vehicles in the O.H.V. environment and successful completion of a 4x4 training course.

**DIRECTIVE B: GENERAL DUTIES OF ALL O.R.V.T. PERSONNEL**

All personnel of the Kern County Sheriff’s Office O.R.V.T. will comply with the directives outlined in this manual. The success of the O.R.V.T. depends on the adherence to reasonable rules while operating the all terrain vehicle (ATV) and proper care of the equipment. Unsafe or negligent operation of O.R.V.T. equipment shall be grounds for removal from the program.

- The O.R.V.T. may investigate any criminal matters brought to their attention during their deployments, including but not limited to driving reckless or under the influence; vehicle registration violations; trespassing, and other related issues such as fence removal or illegal dumping; Grand Theft Auto (GTA) recoveries and abatement of abandoned vehicles; locating lost or missing persons; illegal shooting and drug enforcement.

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- When an O.R.V.T. member makes an arrest, a patrol unit will assist and transport the arrested person(s). The O.R.V.T. member will ensure a proper investigation and all appropriate paperwork are completed.
- O.R.V.T. personnel will complete an activity log during each deployment. The activity log will include the numerical totals for individuals contacted; identification of the types of vehicles operated; the type and number of citations, arrests, and other enforcement actions taken; the condition of or damage to O.R.V.T. equipment.
- OHV equipment shall not be ridden off designated trails in environmentally sensitive areas unless the operational situation or officer safety concerns make it necessary. Sheriff's Office vehicles will not be ridden/driven at a speed or in a manner so that control of the vehicle is lost.
- Passengers will not be allowed on ATV's or motorcycles except in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- While driving OVH equipment, personnel will adhere to DPPM Sections E-100 (code three operations) and E-200 (pursuits). Pursuing vehicles or code three operations on OHV equipment is generally prohibited. In progress felonies, posing an immediate threat to the safety of the public or officers, in the operational area may require a code three response. When violators refuse to stop for vehicle code violations or misdemeanors, personnel are encouraged to follow them at a safe speed and locate their camp or parking spot. Team members will coordinate multiple units in an effort to contact fleeing violators.
- OHV equipment will not tow or push other vehicles except in emergencies.
- OHV equipment should not be driven through water deep enough to wet any portion of the vehicle other than the tires.
- Personnel assigned to work the O.R.V.T. will be required to operate 4x4 vehicles, patrol cars, ATV's, motorcycles, and ROV's.
- The O.R.V.T. personnel will be assigned a desert utility vehicle (DUV) call sign.
- Personnel working in the O.H.V. environment generally will be in remote areas operating on unpaved roadways in rugged terrain. Personnel are cautioned to operate Sheriff's Office equipment within the limitations of the equipment design and within their own personal limitations. The necessity of a given enforcement action versus the danger it presents to themselves, other team members, and the public should be kept in mind.
- The O.R.V.T. possesses two types of trailers: open transport, and enclosed toy box. The ATV trailers will be towed to the operational area with the assigned tow vehicle. Caution should be used when towing.

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- Prior to moving any trailer and tow vehicle the operator should walk completely around the unit to ensure that it is safe to proceed.
- The trailers shall not be towed into areas that may cause them to become stuck or damaged. At the deployment location, the vehicles, trailer, and all assigned equipment shall be secured prior to leaving them unattended.
- When maneuvering in close conditions, such as parking, backing, or getting fuel, a second team member, if available, should stand outside the vehicle and help guide the driver.
- Personnel who are towing or using the Command Post trailer will be provided with a system briefing by the UC prior to deployment. All gray and black water holding tanks will be emptied only at approved dumpsites.
- A checklist will be provided to ensure that the trailers are ready for deployment. When trailers are returned the checklist should include the status of all fluids, gas, supplies, vehicle damage or needed repairs.

**DIRECTIVE C: MINIMUM SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

- DOT approved helmet. (Personal helmet may be worn after approval by the UC)
- Safety goggles.
- Appropriate Off-Road gloves.
- Duty belt – Sheriff’s Office issued.
  - Alternative A: Black nylon gun belt.
  - Alternative B: Personnel may use approved soft military “Alice” style gun belt and suspenders with appropriate BBC brand accessories. Holster will be a military M-12 style flap holster for the Glock handgun.
  - Other alternate duty gear that is approved for wear by other special units of the Sheriff’s Office may be worn with UC approval.
- Over the ankle boots.
- Trained O.R.V.T. members may carry the collapsible baton as their primary baton while working O.H.V. Patrol.
- Other personal O.H.V. safety gear may be worn as an individual preference.

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## **DIRECTIVE D: O.R.V.T. DEPLOYMENT**

The O.R.V.T. can be deployed with ATV and 4x4 vehicles or with 4x4 vehicles only. The O.R.V.T. will generally be utilized during daylight hours. Team members on the ATV motorcycles will be teamed in pairs. ATV teams will be supported by at least one team member deployed in the same area in a 4x4 vehicle.

- Deployed personnel will coordinate their efforts in support of each other. O.R.V.T. personnel will be cognizant of their visibility and exposure to the public and will conduct their duties in a professional manner in accordance with Sheriff's Office policies and procedures.

### **Single Day Deployment**

- The single day deployment will consist of at least two O.R.V.T. personnel. A supervisor will be available in the local area during all deployments. Personnel deployed on ATV's, motorcycles, and ROV's will be teamed in pairs. ATV teams will be supported by at least one additional team member operating a Sheriff's Office 4x4 vehicle. The operation will be for a single day in the area of deployment.

### **Multiple Day Deployment**

- O.R.V.T. members deployed for a multiple day mission will establish a base camp. The O.R.V.T. trailer will be set up as a command post. The deployment will consist of a supervisor and enough personnel to accomplish the mission objective. Personnel deployed on ATV's, motorcycles, and ROV's will be teamed in pairs. Each team will be supported by at least one team member in a 4x4 vehicle. Team members may be assigned to work in the same or neighboring operational area.
- Team members assigned to work the multiple day deployments may stay in the O.R.V.T. trailer. There is no requirement that team members assigned to multiple day deployments stay at the camp. Civilian members of the Sheriff's Office from the Citizen Service Unit, Explorers, and Search and Rescue Team will be welcome to attend multiple day deployments. They will perform their regular duties, assist with maintaining the camp, and provide security for Sheriff's Office equipment.

### **Public Relations Deployment**

- The O.R.V.T. will be available to speak to interested service groups or schools. All requests will be directed to the UC. The UC will schedule personnel for the presentation and determine what equipment is needed.

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**DIRECTIVE E: MAINTENANCE**

**ATV's, Motorcycles, and ROV's**

- O.R.V.T. staff, the dealer, or an approved vendor will perform maintenance on OHV equipment, as outlined in the owner's manual or as needed.
- Prior to every deployment, a safety inspection will be performed on the OHV equipment. Vehicles found to be unsafe will not be ridden until the maintenance issues are resolved. The result of the safety inspection will be entered on the maintenance log.

**Trailers**

- The dealer or approved vendor will service the trailers on an as needed basis. Required maintenance or repair should be brought to the attention of the UC.

**Equipment Cleaning**

- The O.R.V.T. equipment shall be cleaned at the end of each deployment. The ATV's will be cleaned per the instructions in the owner's manual.

**PROCEDURE A: EQUIPMENT USE BY OTHER SHERIFF'S OFFICE UNITS**

The O.R.V.T. equipment is available, upon request, to other units of the Sheriff's Office. Other units using the equipment will comply with the provisions of this section. The UC or AUC will be briefed by the requesting unit supervisor on the intended use of O.V.R.T. equipment.

- The UC or AUC will determine if equipment can be deployed safely for the mission required. The O.R.V.T. equipment will be deployed by, monitored, and recovered by trained O.R.V.T. staff.

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