




WINCHESTER POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATION ORDER

NOTE: This directive is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or case in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

Number 2-21		Effective Date February 1, 2008	Review Date August 28,2019	Reviewing Division Administration
Subject SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS		<input type="checkbox"/> New Directive <input type="checkbox"/> Amends <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Replaces: WPD GO 501 WPD GO 502 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised: April 23, 2010 III. B. 1. c. Feb.19, 2016 III.B.1.a and 5. August 28, 2019 III.C.2.,D.,2-6,F.2		This directive shall apply to personnel assigned to the following divisions: <input type="checkbox"/> All Personnel <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patrol Division <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administration Division <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Investigation Division
References VLEPSC: ADM.02.04 - .05, ADM.25.01, ADM.25.10, OPR.12.02, OPR.12.06, OPR.04.02 CALEA				
 <hr/> Chief of Police or Designee				
<hr/> March 23, 2023 Date				

I. PURPOSE

This directive identifies guidelines for governing the actions, activities, and functions of the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team.

II. POLICY

Recognizing that the presence of a highly trained, highly skilled SWAT team has been shown to substantially reduce the risk of injury or loss of life to citizens, police officers, and suspects during the handling of police special operations, and recognizing that a well managed team response to police special operations usually results in successful resolution of such operations, it is the intent of the Winchester Police Department to provide a highly trained and skilled SWAT team as a resource for the management of police special operations.

III. PROCEDURES

A. SWAT Team Structure

1. The SWAT team shall consist of the following personnel:
 - a. Team commander;
 - b. Team leader;
 - c. Assistant team leader;

- d. Tactical personnel; and
- e. Support personnel.

B. SWAT Team Selection

1. The team commander will post a notice for open positions on the SWAT team. Minimum eligibility requirements for SWAT candidates are:
 - a. Must have a minimum of three (3) years law enforcement experience and off of hiring probation with the Winchester Police Department;
 - b. Must be a Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) certified police officer; and
 - c. Must be a department member in good standing with no grievable disciplinary action within the previous year. Nongrievable disciplinary action within the previous year will be considered during the selection process, but will not eliminate officers from applying for this position.
2. Personnel will be selected for SWAT team assignment based on the results of entry level testing, consisting of marksmanship, physically demanding challenges, a mental aptitude test for retaining information and practically applying that information, and an interview with the team commander, team leader, and assistant team leader.
3. All candidates must meet the minimum test standards in each category in order to be considered for assignment to the SWAT team.
4. The final decision on SWAT team personnel selection will be made by the Chief of Police after recommendation from the team commander.
5. Upon selection, the approved candidate must successfully complete a one (1) year probationary period and complete an eighty (80) hour basic SWAT course within the probationary period.

C. SWAT Team Personnel Retention

1. SWAT personnel are required to meet physical fitness, marksmanship, and monthly training requirements and must be available for call out operations in order to retain their position on the SWAT team.
2. SWAT personnel must meet the minimum score of 95% with their department issued firearms.
3. SWAT team personnel not meeting retention requirements or complying with department rules and regulations, general orders, and directives are

subject to suspension from the SWAT team pending investigation and review by the team commander.

4. If justification exists, the team commander may reinstate SWAT personnel to the SWAT team or make recommendation to the Chief of Police for dismissal from the team.
5. Former SWAT personnel may be reinstated to the SWAT team if the former personnel meet all entry level eligibility and testing requirements. The final decision on reinstatement will be made by the Chief of Police after recommendation from the team commander.

D. Operations

1. It is the responsibility of the on-duty supervisor to evaluate each situation and determine the value of the utilization of the SWAT team. If necessary the team commander should be contacted for advice.
2. All requests for SWAT operations will be directed to the SWAT Commander. The team commander will be notified for approval before any SWAT operations are conducted. The team commander will be responsible for notifying the Chief of Police and other appropriate command level personnel concerning SWAT operations.
3. Warrant Risk Assessment Matrix & Tactical Analysis Worksheet
 - a. The Warrant Risk Assessment Matrix, along with the WPD Tactical Analysis Worksheet, may require consultation with the SWAT team commander to determine if the team and/or enhanced tactics will be used to execute a search warrant based on the various risk factors referenced in the two forms.
 - b. The Warrant Risk Assessment **shall** be completed prior to the execution of **any** search warrant that is obtained by a member of the Winchester Police Department. A copy of the matrix will be distributed to the SWAT Team Commander
4. The SWAT team should be activated for the following situations according to the threat level present or anticipated including but not limited to:
 - a. Barricaded persons;
 - b. Hostage situations;
 - c. Search warrants;
 - d. Major arrests; or
 - e. Interdiction of terrorist activity both foreign and domestic.

5. The response process utilized by the SWAT team for handling police special operations will be the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS).
6. The SWAT team, when necessary, will utilize a response protocol that enacts the following activities during the conduct of an operation:
 - a. Command post operations;
 - b. Containment;
 - c. Long rifle operations;
 - d. Emergency / deliberate action operations;
 - e. Negotiation operations;
 - f. Medical support operations; and
 - g. Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high yield explosive device operations (CBRNE).
7. Use of force by the SWAT team shall be consistent with applicable laws and department policies on the use of force and the resulting use of force investigation protocols. See GO 2-4, Use of Force.

E. Standard Operating Procedures Manual and Reporting

1. The SWAT team shall develop and maintain a current Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual that provides depth and detail to criteria and activities listed in this directive.
2. The SWAT team shall conduct formal and documented after action reports of all police special operations and all team training events. The team commander shall maintain copies of all after action reports and team training event reports for a period not to exceed Commonwealth of Virginia requirements for records retention.
3. The team commander shall produce an annual report that specifies team operations and training for the calendar year.

F. Training

1. The SWAT team shall develop and enact a formalized SWAT training program consistent with current National Tactical Officer's Association (NTOA) standards for the development of training calendars, schedules, and resourcing.
4. The SWAT team shall train, at a minimum, according to the following:

- a. A forty (40) hour basic SWAT course;
- b. Sixteen (16) hours training per month;
- c. Eight (8) hours additional training per month of specialized skills personnel, identified by the team commander as requiring additional training; and
- d. A forty (40) hour annual in-service team training event.

G. Equipment

1. SWAT team personnel shall be responsible and accountable for all individually assigned and team equipment. Team weapons and equipment shall be maintained by the designated SWAT personnel under strict security and shall be available to the designated SWAT personnel at all times.
2. The SWAT team shall develop a formal system for the maintenance and removal of obsolete equipment from the team's equipment inventory.
3. The team leader shall direct quarterly inventories of equipment and shall assign responsibility for the care and maintenance of individual and team equipment to appropriate team members. The team leader shall ensure the continuous certification of time sensitive equipment items.