Special Operations

Emergency operations plans are accessible to all command personnel and are reviewed and updated as needed. (150.2)

PURPOSE/POLICY

The Federal Heights Police Department, in addition to the provisions outlined in the Unusual Occurrences Manual shall maintain a S.W.A.T. (Special Weapons And Tactics) Unit designated to assist first responding officers with situations that require special training and tactics. The unit is responsible for handling high-risk situations involving the possible risk of death or injury to the public, police officers, or suspects who initiate such actions.

Guidelines:

I. Special Weapons And Tactics Team

Call Out Procedures:

1. The duty supervisor or senior officer shall call out the SWAT team for these situations:
   
   A. Hostage Situations
   B. Barricaded Subjects
   C. All Immediate Entry Warrants
   D. All High Risk Warrants
   E. High Risk Stakeout and Surveillance
   F. Special Assignments that require urban tactical expertise

2. The duty supervisor or senior officer in charge shall have the responsibility and discretion in making the SWAT call out. In some situations, the circumstances may not allow enough time to mobilize the SWAT team and immediate action by the first responding officers may be necessary.

Supervisory Responsibility

3. The SWAT team shall work under the direction of the Team Commander. The Chief of Police shall appoint a Team Commander. The Team Commander may appoint additional support positions to the team. The Patrol Division Commander is responsible for overall supervision of the unit.

4 The Team Commander shall designate a Team Leader. An Assistant-Team-Leader shall be appointed by the Team Leader. The team leader shall coordinate and implement all
tactical operations in emergency life threatening situations. The team leader shall coordinate with the on scene commander to approve all tactical plans when time permits. The team leader is responsible for basic and continuing in-service training for the SWAT team.

A. The SWAT Team Leader, in coordination with the Team Commander, shall make an effort to provide monthly SWAT training to include operational simulations and tactical drill. It is recognized that on rare occasions monthly training may not be accomplished due to staffing considerations.

B. The SWAT Team Leader shall maintain training records on all SWAT training functions for reference.

5. The SWAT Team Leader shall assume responsibility for the team in the absence of the Team Commander.

6. The Assistant Team Leader shall assume responsibility for the team in the absence of the Team Leader.

Minimum Tactical Manpower

6. Due to the high risk involved in all tactical operations, no SWAT team tactical operations shall be initiated unless four members of the team can be assembled. When consisting of four personnel, the team shall consist of the following:

A. Team Leader or Assistant Team Leader
B. Three (3) additional operators

7. The Chief of Police, Team Commander, or Team Leader may authorize the use of SWAT Operators from another agency(s) if additional manpower is needed. During the course of an in progress crisis situation individual operators may be deployed directly to the scene of an incident.

8. Exception: Based on the circumstances presented on the scene of any incident; the Chief of Police, Commander, or ranking on duty officer may authorize the use of Tactical team members in numbers less than the minimum manpower requirements. The officer making this decision shall make a written report to the Tactical team Leader as to the nature of the incident and the circumstances that lead to the decision to use Less than minimum manpower.

SWAT Team Member Selection

9. Team members shall be selected by the SWAT Team Commander and the Chief of Police. Applicants shall be screened by the existing members of the team and a recommendation made to the SWAT Team Commander and Chief of Police.

A. Selection Criteria

1. Applicant must be a volunteer
2. Applicant must have completed the department’s probationary period
3. Must be in good physical condition as verified by the applicant’s last physical examination by the City authorized physician.
4. Oral interview with existing team members.
5. Internal background check with emphasis on the applicant’s mental
suitability for SWAT.
6. Must maintain a 85% average in firearms qualification for the previous 12 months
7. Must pass a job related obstacle course.
8. Swat related psychological testing

Tactical Operations

10. All tactical plans, decisions, and operations will be based on the safety of:
    A. Hostage-Victim
    B. Community
    C. Officers
    D. Suspects

11. Due to the inherent dangers and changing conditions encountered in tactical operations, the SWAT team use whatever tactics deemed necessary and reasonable in neutralizing a critical incident. Alternative to deadly force will be used whenever possible.

Tactical Weapons and Equipment

12. With the approval of the Team Commander or Swat Team Leader, team operators shall utilize any and all equipment available in order to complete the mission and enhance success.

    A. The Department shall make available the following tactical equipment to team members as needed

        1. Rifle, automatic weapon, shotgun, optical sighted rifle, or tear gas gun.
        2. Radio.
        3. Chemical agent mask.
        5. Dark colored BDIJ uniform.
        7. Flashlight.
        9. Nomex gloves & face mask

    B. Other items of tactical equipment may be provided to the SWAT Team such as, but not limited to

        1. Ballistic shields.
2. Breaching equipment.
3. Tear gas.
6. Fire extinguisher.
7. Miscellaneous hand/power tools & devices

**Outside Requests for SWAT Services**

13. Any requests for assistance from other agencies shall be directed to the SWAT Team Commander. The Chief of Police shall be notified upon all outside requests.

**SWAT Paramedic Program**

14. The SWAT team may have a trained Federal Heights Firefighter/Paramedic assigned to the team. The team paramedic shall train with the SWAT team and be familiar with tactical strategy and concepts.

15. The SWAT Paramedic shall comply with all Federal Heights Fire Department Rules and Regulations while in the capacity as a SWAT Paramedic. During SWAT function or operations the paramedic shall work under the supervision of the SWAT Team Leader.

16. The SWAT Paramedic’s first priority is to provide Life saving medical treatment to public safety employees. The team paramedic may provide medical treatment as necessary to victims, citizens, and suspects.

17. The SWAT team paramedic may carry a firearm for the purpose of self-protection. The SWAT team paramedic must meet and comply with all provisions of the Use of Force Directives and the Firearms Qualification Directives of the Federal Heights Police Department Rules and Regulations before carrying a firearm.

18. The SWAT team paramedic shall be in conformance with Colorado Revised Statute (18-1-107) 1A., B., 2A., B., 3 and 4. The use of deadly force is to be used in life threatening situations only.

**Additional Regulations**

A. The firearm can only be carried while on duty in a City of Federal Heights sanctioned training event or call out.

B. The SWAT team paramedic shall not be deployed as an armed member of an assault team or in an armed, containment position. At the direction of the SWAT team leader, the paramedic may accompany members of the assault team or containment team in a paramedic role only. Exception: At the direction of the Swat Team leader, the paramedic may serve in a variety of support roles to assist the team.

**II. Hostage - Barricaded Situations / Negotiations (160.1, 160.2)**

1. Purpose

A. It is the purpose of this policy to establish guidelines for incidents involving barricaded subject5 or hostage situations. The Patrol Division Commander and SWAT Team Leader shall conduct an annual review
of this directive and its provisions.

2. Definitions

A. Hostage Situations - An incident in which a person is held by a subject against his/her free will. To meet the definition the subject must demonstrate the ability to use violence, threaten the use of violence, or have a history of violence.

B. Barricaded Subject - An isolated subject who refuses to present himself/herself upon the issuance of a lawful order. To include but not limited to armed or possibly armed subjects that threaten harm to himself or others. This definition shall include armed subjects threatening suicide.

3. Policy

A. It shall be the responsibility of the duty supervisor or senior officer in charge to immediately respond to the situation and assume control. The supervisor or officer in charge shall evaluate the situation and make the proper emergency notifications. The supervisor or officer in charge shall ensure that enough police personnel are on scene to affectively contain the situation.

4. Procedure

A. In the event of a Hostage/Barricade situation the following guideline is established to assist in the organization and management of such a situation, it is recognized that in some situations the presence of exigent circumstances may exist that calls for immediate action by the first responding officers to neutralize the situation.

SWAT Team Notification

5. Upon evaluation of the situation, the duty supervisor or officer in charge shall notify the SWAT team as soon as possible.
   A. The supervisor shall instruct the dispatcher to contact the team members via telephone or pager.
   B. Team operators shall report to the Police Department for briefing when time allows. Individuals may be dispatched directly to the scene.

6. The duty supervisor, scene commander, and SWAT team leader shall coordinate to determine other notification and requests for service to include but not limited to:
   A. Fire - Rescue
   B. Other Police Agencies

Perimeters

7. The duty supervisor or officer in charge should isolate the situation by
establishment of perimeters. The scope of the initial perimeter shall depend on the seriousness of the situation and available personnel. The use of outside agencies should be considered in establishing and maintaining a perimeter.

8. Upon arrival of the SWAT team, considerations for both or inner and outer perimeters should be made.

9. Under normal circumstances the inner perimeter shall be maintained and supervised by the SWAT team and SWAT Team Leader.

10. The outer perimeter shall be maintained by patrol personnel and the duty supervisor or officer in charge.

Evacuations of Victims, Residents, and Bystanders

11. The duty supervisor or officer in charge shall determine the need for immediate evacuation of nearby residents, victims, and bystanders.

12. The safety of the public and officer in performing the evacuations must be considered.

13. In some extremely volatile situations, the evacuation of victims, residents, and bystanders may impose a greater danger than leaving these persons in their present locations. In these situations, every effort should be made to provide comfort and safety.

14. SWAT team personnel may be used in evacuations that pose a danger to those involved.

15. In situations where immediate evacuation is not imperative, consideration shall be given to notifying residents and bystanders of the situation.

16. Under normal circumstances, notification of an evacuation should be made by uniformed personnel. The duty supervisor or officer in charge may authorize the use of telephone, media, or public address systems to make notification of an emergency evacuation. Reverse 911 may be activated in accordance with established procedures.

Command Post/Chain of Command

17. Upon arrival of a scene commander, a command post shall be established if necessary. A line of communication shall be established between the duty supervisor, scene commander, SWAT team leader, and negotiators.

A. The Chain of Command shall be in a descending order from the Chief of Police down to the Patrol Officer.

1. The Chief of Police and SWAT Team Commander may delegate Tactical Command authority to the SWAT Team Leader, as required due to their immediate absence or other tactical necessities.

2. The Chief of Police and SWAT Team Commander shall retain responsibility for all tactical operations of the SWAT Team and other officers assigned to the incident.

B. The on duty Patrol Supervisor, or designated officer in charge, will remain in charge of normal functions and shall ensure coverage for unrelated incoming calls for service. The Patrol Supervisor shall supervise the outer perimeter of the tactical situation unless otherwise directed by the scene commander.

C. The Command Post shall be located such as to provide adequate facilities, to include;

1) An area to establish operation and deploy personnel.
2) Restrooms.
3) Parking.
4) Telephones.

News Media

18. The department shall closely observe the right of the public to be informed through the media. However, this right must be balanced with the rights of the accused, or others subject to media inquiries.

19. Media shall not be allowed access to private property if the owner or agent of that property requests they be excluded.

20. Media shall not be allowed access to any area where it would jeopardize the life of or present substantial risk of injury to any employee or citizen other than the member of the media themselves.

21. Media should not be denied access to an area solely due to the possibility of injury or death to themselves.

22. Media should be advised of the danger, then allowed to make the decision on their own.

23. If there is any question as to identification and legitimacy of media you shall request credentials.

24. A media briefing officer and location shall be established and the briefing officer shall keep the media informed of all updates as soon as possible.

Use of Force/Chemical Agents

25. The SWAT team leader shall present the scene commander with tactical plans to include rules of engagement, use of chemicals, explosive diversions, and other tactical ploys for review and approval.

26. When emergency conditions exist that call for immediate action, the SWAT team leader may authorize the use of chemical agents, diversions, or other tactical ploys to neutralize the situation.

Communications with the Suspects

27. The first responders to a situation may establish communication with a suspect in an effort to stabilize a situation. Upon the arrival of a scene commander, he shall designate an officer to negotiate with the subject.

A. In situations that require expertise in the negotiations process, the scene commander may request a negotiations team from an outside agency. When an outside agency negotiation team is utilized the Federal Heights Police negotiations guidelines shall be in effect in addition to the outside agencies own protocol.

1. In the event of contradicting policies or procedures the Federal Heights Directives shall take precedence.

B. The following agencies may provide trained and equipped negotiating teams:
1. Adams County Sheriff’s Department
2. Northglenn Police Department
3. Thornton Police Department
4. Westminster Police Department

Negotiation Guidelines

28. Negotiators shall work in coordination with the SWAT team Leader and Scene Commander.

29. The negotiators initial duty after establishing contact is to attempt to delay the actions of the subject and to gain time in order to resolve the situation.

30. Any agreement made with the subject must be approved in coordination with the scene commander. Negotiators do not have the sole authority to agree to any terms or conditions made by the subject.

31. Non-negotiable items include but are not limited to:
   A. Weapons
   B. Replacement Hostages - an exception would be a police officer assigned as a driver to gain a tactical advantage
   C. Prisoners
   D. Narcotics
   E. Allowing a subject to leave a contained area - an exception would be a tactical plan, designed gain tactical advantage

32. An on-going evaluation of the value and effectiveness of negotiations is essential.

33. In the event of a “planned” tactical assault/rescue, the negotiator shall cooperate and coordinate with the SWAT Team Leader to gain tactical advantage.

Travel Routes / Surveillance Vehicles

34. Every effort shall be made to contain the suspect to one location and not allow the situation to become mobile. A situation may be allowed to become mobile under the following circumstances:
   A. The scene commander and SWAT team leader have the authority to determine when to allow a situation to become mobile.
   B. A tactical advantage can be gained from the mobilization.

   B. In the event that a hostage situation is voluntarily allowed to become mobile, a tactical plan should be implemented prior to the mobilization. The tactical strategy should consider surveillance vehicles, travel routes, ram vehicles, and a vehicle assault team.

III. Special Purpose Vehicle Operation

1. Policy

   A. Special purpose vehicles may be used at the discretion of the scene commander.
2. Procedure

A. Under normal conditions only personnel trained in the operation of any special purpose vehicle shall operate them.

IV. Decoy Operations

1. Policy

A. Decoy operations are inherently dangerous and stressful for the decoy officer. Operations of this type, conducted by the department, shall be planned in advance, thoroughly briefed and directly supervised by a Police Commander or higher.

2. Procedure

A. Before any decoy operation is undertaken, a thorough study of the problem shall be conducted to include analyzing crimes, victims and locations.

B. The supervisor of the decoy operation shall ensure that the specific process used in the operation has been reviewed and approved by the office of the prosecutor.

C. The supervisor of the decoy operation shall ensure that the Patrol Watch Commander or supervisor on duty is briefed on the operation.

D. The decoy officer shall be visually monitored on a continual basis during the operation by a sufficient number of back-up officers. A preplanned “bust” and “help” signal shall be utilized.

E. The decoy officer shall wear a concealed microphone and transmitter, and be monitored and recorded on a continual basis during the operation.

F. The decoy officer shall wear bullet-resistant garments at all times during the operation unless exempted by a Division Commander or higher.

G. The decoy officer shall be evaluated frequently for adverse effects of stress brought on by the decoy operation.

H. Decoy operations shall be planned in advance. There shall be no deviation from the plan without approval of the supervisor and advisement of all participants. The plan shall outline at least the following:

1. Operational procedures to be followed;
2. Contact of suspects (when, where, how);
3. Types of surveillance to be used;
4. Communications procedures;
5. Assignments and schedules;
6. Equipment needed;
7. Legal ramifications;
8. Guidelines for arrest,

V. Undercover Surveillance/Stakeouts

1. Policy

A. Undercover operations may be necessary during some investigations. All stakeout and surveillance operations shall be approved by an officer at the rank of sergeant or above. The officer in charge of the operation shall insure that enough personnel are available to control the situation. The department may use any legal means available and deemed necessary to carry out the operation.

VI. Bomb Threats and Bomb Disposal

A. The department shall respond to bomb threats and actual bomb incidents in a coordinated manner to protect innocent civilians and property and to preserve the scene for bomb disposal personnel and investigators.

2. Procedure

A. Upon Receipt of a Bomb Threat:
   
   i. Responding officer shall “code out” at least one city block away to prevent accidental discharge of the device from radio transmissions.
   
   ii. Dispatch shall place the Fire Department on stand-by at the firehouse.

B. Upon Arrival at the Scene:

   1. The primary officer shall interview the person who received the bomb threat to determine whether the caller or the note provided any of the following information:
      
      A. When it will go off;
      
      B. Where it is.
      
      C. What kind is it;
      
      D. What it looks like;
      
      E. Why it was planted;
      
      F. Who planted it.

   2. If the threat was made by telephone, the person receiving the call might be able to provide information as to the age and sex of the caller; whether the caller had a speech impediment or accent and whether there was any identifiable background noise heard over the telephone.

   3. For their own safety and to eliminate congestion, curious on-lookers at the scene shall removed to a safe area in a manner which will not cause them to panic.
C. Search/Evacuation of Premises:

1. The decision to evacuate a premise before a search has been made or a bomb has been found rests not with the police, but with the civilian in direct charge of that premises. However, if the decision made is to evacuate, the route selected should be checked for suspicious objects before the evacuation begins.

2. Where a large area is to be searched, the officer in charge shall establish a command post to organize and to coordinate the search.

3. Although police officers shall assist in the search, their primary role is that of an overseer. The search is best made by those most familiar with the premises; that is, by the people who work there.

4. Officers shall instruct the people conducting the search not to disturb any suspicious objects found but to immediately notify the nearest officer.

5. Members of the Fire Department and the Ambulance Corps shall not be permitted to assist in the search as their services will be needed in the event of an explosion.

D. Upon Locating a Possible Bomb:

1. Do not disturb the suspected bomb.

2. The officer in charge shall be responsible for designating the areas to be evacuated and secured.

3. Notify Dispatch immediately, via landline, of the finding.

4. Dispatch shall dispatch to the scene the following units:

   A. The Adams County Sheriff’s Bomb Disposal Unit; or, if they cannot respond, the Denver Police Bomb Disposal Unit.

   B. The on-call detective, if requested by the Watch Supervisor.

5. A photograph shall be taken of the suspected bomb, if circumstances permit, and, so that the photograph is protected, the film shall be immediately removed to a safe area.

6. The Bomb Disposal Unit shall take control of the endangered area upon their arrival. The area shall not be relinquished until such time as the suspected bomb is rendered harmless. During the interim, the primary responsibility of the officers is to secure and maintain the perimeter of the area, but they shall follow instructions of the Bomb Disposal Unit to the extent that those instructions are reasonable and do not involve handling of the suspected bomb.

3. Rule

   A. Radio transmissions shall not be made from close proximity to the endangered area.

   B. Department personnel shall not touch any suspected bomb or explosive device until it is rendered safe by the appropriate bomb disposal unit.

VII. Special Events Coverage
1. Policy

A. A special event is any planned occurrence placing additional requirements on the department.

2. Procedure

A. The Department shall plan for traffic control, crowd control, and security problems associated with these events to minimize any adverse impact. A written evaluation and plan shall be established and disseminated to all personnel involved in the coverage of the event.

B. All special events shall be coordinated through the Patrol Division Commander. The Patrol Division Commander may appoint an event supervisor that will be responsible for the specific detailed planning of the event. The planning of the event will, when necessary, include coordination with other agencies and/or other City of Federal Heights’ Departments.

C. The nature of the event may dictate the type of personnel needs for that event. Specialized personnel or outside agencies may include:

1) SWAT Team, (including outside agencies).
2) Investigators.
3) Fire/Rescue (including outside agencies).
4) Reserve Police Officers.
5) Outside agency police personnel.

D. At the discretion of the event supervisor, a briefing session may be held prior to the event in order to successfully coordinate and inform those officers and other personnel of the details relating to the plan. Any written information of maps may be distributed as part of the briefing.

VIII. VIP Protection

1. Policy

A. The Department shall provide, when requested, security and protection of dignitaries, visiting officials of major governmental entities, VIP’s, or other persons against whom a significant threat is perceived; or to assist other agencies in their assigned security missions while the visiting persons are in the City.

2. Procedure

A. Requests for VIP protection or assistance shall be approved by the Chief of Police.
B. Supervision of a VIP protection operation shall be by a police corporal or higher.

C. Before any VIP protection is undertaken, a thorough study of the problem shall be conducted to include analyzing the VIP’s background, the known or perceived threat, and the departmental assets available.

D. VIP protection operations shall be planned in advance. There shall be no deviation from the plan without the approval of the supervisor and advisement of all participants. The plan shall include at least the following:

1. Operational procedures to be followed.
2. Number and type of vehicles needed.
4. Size and composition of the protection team (if a high risk or terrorist threat, the Tactical Team shall be utilized in accordance with the Departmental manual).
5. Planning and reconnoitering travel routes and alternatives.
6. Inspection of sites and facilities.
7. Coordination with various intelligence sources.
8. Coordination with outside agencies.
10. Communications procedures and equipment.

3. Rule
   A. Any time a visiting VIP is a political or foreign governmental official, prior coordination shall be made with the United States Secret Service and, if applicable, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
   
   B. No member of the Department shall utilize any weapon for VIP protection unless he is qualified that weapon and authorized to carry the weapon on duty

IX. Coverage of Disasters

1. Policy

   A. The department shall provide the necessary support in the event of a disaster, natural or man-made.
B. Disasters shall be handled in accordance with the City of Federal Heights Unusual Occurrences Manual.

X. Civil Disorders - Demonstration

1. Policy

   A. The department shall protect the rights of any person or group to conduct a peaceful and lawful demonstration within the city.

2. Procedure

   A. Unlawful activity, to include violence, will be countered by prompt and effective action by the department.

   B. Civil Disorders/Demonstrations shall be handled in accordance with the City of Federal Heights Unusual Occurrences Manual.

   C. The department shall take any appropriate and legal action to discourage and counter unlawful act

XI. Civil Defense Emergencies

1. Policy

   A. The department shall provide the necessary support in the event of a civil defense emergency.

2. Procedure

   A. All civil defense emergencies shall be coordinated through the City Manager, Chief of Police, and Fire Chief.

   B. Civil Defense Emergencies shall be handled in accordance with the City of Federal Heights Unusual Occurrences Manual.

XII. Search and Rescue Operations

1. Policy

   A. Rescue operations other than tactical rescues shall be conducted by the Federal Heights Fire Department in accordance with their protocol.

   B. Tactical rescues shall be conducted by the SWAT Team.

   C. Outside agencies may be utilized for specialized search and rescue operations, as deemed appropriate by the Police and Fire Scene Commander.

   D. For underwater search and rescue the below listed agencies may be utilized:


      2. Other available trained Underwater Recovery/Rescue Teams.