
	MESQUITE POLICE DEPARTMENT
	244.50 SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM
	Effective Date: January, 2019
	Approved: _____  Chief of Police

I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Mesquite Police Department to facilitate free speech and assembly whenever possible, while preserving order and protecting persons and property. This order governs the Department's response to such events when public safety, property and transportation considerations are best served by a police presence. Officers on the scene of these incidents must balance the need to maintain order with the protection of the constitutional rights of all persons. The mission of the Special Response Team is to support the Department's operational goals by providing an organized team of properly trained and equipped officers capable of responding to and dispersing incidents involving civil disorder. The primary goal when handling any civil disturbance incident is to contain, control and resolve the conflict. Special attention should be given to protecting the constitutional rights of all persons and resolving the disturbance in a peaceful manner.

II. Definitions

- A. Riot – the assemblage of seven or more persons resulting in conduct which:
 - 1. Creates an immediate danger of damage to property or injury to persons;
 - 2. Substantially obstructs law enforcement or other governmental functions or services or;
 - 3. By force, threat of force, or physical action deprives any person of a legal right or disturbs any person in the enjoyment of a legal right.
- B. Special Response Team (SRT) – A team of officers trained in handling large crowds and riot situations, including specialized training in crowd dispersal, tactics and special weapons.

III. Activation Procedure

- A. Emergency Activation
 - 1. The SRT may be activated when incidents involving civil disorder escalate to a level that is either beyond the control of on-duty personnel or could potentially escalate into a situation that is beyond the control of on-duty personnel.
 - 2. SRT members should be mindful of their level of specialization and that they are subject to recall to duty.
 - 3. Field supervisors should respond to the scene to evaluate whether the situation is beyond the control of on-duty personnel and requires SRT activation.
 - 4. Field supervisor(s) should relay information to the Watch Commander.
 - 5. When needed, the Watch Commander will become the Incident Commander and take control of the scene. The SRT Lieutenant or Captain shall take over as Incident Commander upon their arrival.
 - 6. In the event it becomes necessary to activate the SRT, the Watch Commander will notify the:
 - a. SRT Lieutenant
 - b. SRT Captain
 - c. Tactical Team Captain
 - d. Operations Captain (who will ensure that the Chain of Command up to and including the Chief of Police are notified).

7. The SRT Lieutenant will notify SRT Sergeants and the SRT grenadiers.
 8. The SRT Sergeants will notify their squad officers.
 9. The SRT Lieutenant will notify Police Dispatch of the callout, giving details to include an estimated time of deployment, the muster location and any special needs of the SRT Lieutenant.
 10. The Incident Commander may also evaluate the necessity for assistance from other departments within the city and other agencies outside the City of Mesquite.
 11. The Incident Commander may also submit a request through the Chain of Command to the Chief of Police to request activation of the Emergency Operations Center in accordance to the Mesquite Emergency Activation Plan.
- B. Activation for Scheduled Events
1. If civil disorder is anticipated at a scheduled event, the SRT will be notified and appropriate responsive measures will be planned.
 2. The SRT Lieutenant will coordinate intelligence gathering, including:
 - a. Contacting event organizers to obtain information about the event.
 - b. Monitoring Social Media.
 - c. Using undercover officers among the crowd during the event.
- IV. Organization
- A. The SRT will consist of:
1. One Captain.
 2. One Lieutenant and one alternate.
 3. A minimum of three Sergeants.
 4. A minimum of 21 police officers.
 5. The team will maintain span of control of no more than one sergeant for every seven team members.
- B. The SRT Captain will:
1. Be accountable to the Chain of Command.
 2. Designate responsibilities to the SRT Supervisors.
 3. Submit an After Action Report to the Chief of Police in accordance with General Order 126.00.
- C. The SRT Lieutenant will:
1. Be accountable to the SRT Captain.
 2. Be responsible for the operations of the team.
 3. Select and maintain a tactically proficient team of officers.
 4. Coordinate training of the team.
 5. Assign SRT members, as needed, to:
 - a. Squad(s).
 - b. Arrest Team(s).
 - c. Grenadier, and/or
 - d. Extrication Teams.
 6. Coordinate with SRT Sergeants concerning deployment strategies, equipment readiness and training requirements.
 7. File Use of Force report(s) for Less Lethal Munitions delivery.
- D. The SRT Sergeants will:
1. Have direct responsibility for supervision of the officers assigned to them in their respective squads.
 2. Assist the SRT Lieutenant with the planning, training and deployment of personnel assigned to the team.
 3. Conduct annual inspections of all assigned equipment.

4. Ensure that all team members are equipped and ready to respond when needed.
 5. Inform the SRT Lieutenant of any unusual incidents or personnel issues.
 6. Document Use of Force incidents by officers assigned to their squad or under their supervision.
- E. SRT Officers:
1. Are directly accountable to their SRT supervisors.
 2. Are subject to being placed on stand-by in preparation for an appropriate response to large-scale or potentially violent situations.
 3. Will maintain all assigned equipment which shall be kept in proper working condition, including routine maintenance and shall be readily accessible for activation.
 4. Will activate department issued body worn cameras while taking enforcement action.
 5. Will report any Use of Force incidents to their supervisor.
- F. Grenadiers:
1. Are directly accountable to the SRT Lieutenant or, in his absence, an SRT Sergeant.
 2. Will maintain all assigned equipment and keep it in proper working condition, including routine maintenance.
 3. Will be responsible for maintenance, inventory and use of all chemical agents.
 4. Will maintain equipment certification(s) and be familiar with deployment methods and effects of chemical agents.
 5. Will be trained and proficient in using department approved equipment.
 6. Will be responsible for the delivery of chemical agents during any incident to which the SRT is deployed.
 7. Will only deliver chemical agents upon an order from an SRT Captain, SRT Lieutenant, or in their absence, an SRT Sergeant.
- V. Dispersal Order
- A. Upon determining that a crowd presents an imminent risk to public safety or large-scale property destruction appears likely, the Incident Commander shall issue a dispersal order to the crowd.
 - B. If possible, officer(s) should be placed at the rear of the crowd to verify the dispersal order could be heard by all. The officer(s) at the rear should attempt to make an audio/video recording of the dispersal order.
 - C. The order should be issued as follows:
 “I am (rank and name) of the Mesquite Police Department. I am now issuing a public safety order to disperse and I command all those assembled at (specific location) to immediately disperse, which means leave this area. If you do not do so, you may be arrested and subject to other police action. Other police action could include the use of chemical agents or less-lethal munitions, which may inflict significant pain or result in serious injury. If you remain in the area just described, regardless of your purpose, you will be in violation of city and state law. The following routes of dispersal are available: (routes). You have (reasonable amount of time) minutes to disperse.”
 - D. A reasonable amount of time should be allowed for compliance.
 - E. After a reasonable amount of time has passed, the Incident Commander should assess the effect of the warning and determine if subsequent warnings should be issued or whether another course of action is appropriate.

- F. Exigent circumstances including, but not limited to, the immediate threat to life and/or property may dictate taking action before dispersal order can be issued.
- VI. Inter-Agency Assistance
 - A. When an event is such that available personnel within the Department are not sufficient to accomplish the purpose of this order, the Incident Commander may request assistance from surrounding agencies.
 - B. Another agency's request for aid in controlling a crowd outside the City of Mesquite shall be directed to the Watch Commander and shall receive final approval from the Chief of Police.
 - C. The Watch Commander should attempt to determine the amount of personnel and resources an agency is requesting.
 - D. The Watch Commander will determine if enough resources are immediately available to meet the request and answer calls for service, or if the SRT needs to be activated.

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