



MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD.

**DIVISION OF COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION SERVICES
DIRECTIVE**

Date: February 27, 2007

Number: 07-02

TO: All Fire and Explosive Investigations Section Personnel

FROM: Division Chief Michael T. Love

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Love".

SUBJECT: Protective Body Armor

I. Goal.

A goal of the Fire and Explosive Investigations Section (FEI) is to provide each Investigator with protective soft body armor. Although its use is not mandatory, Investigators are encouraged to wear the body armor at all times while on duty. Investigators are, however, **required** to wear their body armor during high-risk assignments (see Sec. III. below), and will be held accountable to properly care for and maintain this equipment.

II. Type of Armor Provided.

The FEI-issued soft body armor will be same brand and model that is issued to the Montgomery County Police Department, and will be custom fitted for each Investigator. Along with the soft body armor, each Investigator also will be issued a washable sleeve carrier and a quilted vest carrier, with the FEI badge sewn on the upper left pocket.

III. Wearing the Armor.

- A. The FEI Section Chief and the FEI Investigators are aware that wearing the body armor is voluntary and discretionary. However, all FEI Investigators **must** wear the body armor when unexpected, high-risk assignments occur.
- B. High-risk assignments are those other than the typical calls for service in the FEI Section. They may include, but are not limited to: civil disturbances, raids, hostage situations, and serving search and arrest warrants.

IV. Maintenance, Care, and Repair of the Armor.

- A. FEI Section Investigators must follow the manufacturer's instructions to care for and maintain their body armor.

- B. The soft body armor must not be altered in any way without the manufacturer's approval.
- C. If any part of the soft body armor is damaged and needs repair, the Investigator must return the armor to the FEI Section Chief, with a written statement of how the damage occurred. The Section Chief will arrange for the repair and/or replacement of the damaged body armor.
- D. If an Investigator lacks body armor because of a repair issue, the FEI Safety Officer will make every attempt to secure loaner armor for that Investigator. All loaned armor must meet the same requirements as listed in Section II of this Directive.

V. Procedure for Reissue of Secondary Protective Body Armor.

Investigators may retain their originally issued body armor when it is replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations. This body armor will be known as "secondary protective body armor." The Investigator may use the secondary protective body armor for off-duty protection. The guidelines below will apply.

- A. The Investigator must continue to wear the **primary** protective body armor **while on duty**.
- B. If the Investigator chooses to retain the secondary protective body armor, the Investigator will be given an FEI 413, "*Secondary Body Armor Reissue Notice*," and will be asked to acknowledge receipt of the reissue notice by signing it.
- C. The serial number of the secondary protective body armor will be recorded on the FEI 413, and the form will be retained by the FEI Safety Officer.
- D. Before being reissued, the Investigator must inspect the secondary protective body armor for obvious signs of wear, tear, abuse, deterioration, and proper fit. If the secondary protective body armor is found to be unsuitable for reuse, the Investigator must relinquish it to the FEI Safety Officer.
- E. This Directive does not create an entitlement to retain secondary protective body armor. Rather, it is intended to permit the *reissue* of protective body armor, subject to the conditions established, and at the discretion of the FEI Section Chief.
- F. The secondary protective body armor remains the property of the FEI Section, and Investigators remain responsible for its proper care and security.

- G. Upon separation from the Department, or upon the request of the FEI Section Chief, Investigators must relinquish all protective body armor assigned to them.

VI. Supervisor's Responsibility.

To ensure that the FEI Section's protective soft body armor is properly maintained and cared for, the FEI Safety Officer will conduct quarterly inspections of the protective body armor assigned to FEI Section personnel. The inspection of the armor's components are intended to identify any possible deficiencies or damage that may impair its effectiveness to perform up to its designed capabilities. Any identified defect must be repaired or replaced to restore the armor to its proper safety level.