

HEADQUARTERS MEMORANDUM 06-02

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Subject: Special Events Response Team (SERT)

The department, in collaboration with other Montgomery County law enforcement agencies, has established the Special Events Response Team (SERT). This specially trained and equipped team can respond to a variety of events that occur within Montgomery County, as well as provide mutual aid to neighboring jurisdictions requiring personnel and/or equipment beyond their resources. Events can be spontaneous or pre-planned. The following are some of SERT's abilities and responsibilities:

1. The SERT is trained and equipped in the tactics to respond to, mitigate, and investigate a terrorist event involving the deployment of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and/or other conventional weapons. (CALEA 46.1.2)
2. The SERT is trained and equipped to respond to and mitigate a civil disturbance or similar type event where the ability and resources of first responders are either insufficient or incapable of safely resolving the incident. (CALEA 46.1.2)
3. The SERT is capable of deployment to a neighboring jurisdiction for a pre-planned or spontaneous event requiring significant law enforcement support. The Chief, an Assistant Chief, or Car 10 must grant approval prior to the deployment of the SERT outside of Montgomery County. (CALEA 46.2.1)
4. The SERT is responsible for staffing pre-planned large-scale events within the county, such as the Montgomery County Fair. (CALEA 46.1.1)
5. The SERT provides training to all department personnel, through mandated training as well as selective courses, to enhance the patrol officers' ability to respond in conjunction with the SERT. (CALEA 46.1.11d)

The SERT will eventually consist of six platoons of police officers from the Montgomery County Department of Police, as well as the other law enforcement agencies within Montgomery County. Each platoon will have a lieutenant and 33 officers. The Director, Special Operations Division, will be the SERT Commander. A second captain will be assigned as the SERT Deputy Commander. Lieutenants will be assigned to the SERT as platoon commanders and in other appropriate positions.

Personnel, the rank of sergeant and below, will be assigned to the unit on a voluntary basis. These positions will be filled through the position vacancy announcement process. SERT training and deployment will require a high degree of physical endurance and commitment. Prospective SERT officers must be able to effectively function as part of a well disciplined team in order to be selected. Officers must have completed their probationary period in order to apply. (CALEA 46.1.1, 46.1.10a, 46.1.11b)

Training/Certification Requirements (CALEA 46.1.11d)

SERT training is an on-going process and consists of multiple courses. All SERT personnel must complete the Basic Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU) course (40 hours) and the WMD Operations course (10 hours). SERT members are required to attend semi-annual training days. Annual skills training includes:

1. Wearing the gas mask under stressful conditions for a 20 minute period.
2. Wearing the gas mask and completing a course of fire with the service weapon.
3. Dragging a 150 pound dummy a distance of 15 yards.
4. Being able to maneuver in a CDU formation and navigate obstacles used in crowd control for a distance of 50 yards while fully dressed in CDU equipment.
5. Engaging a heavy bag using the riot shield and baton while fully dressed in CDU equipment.
6. Completing qualifications with all issued weapons/protective instruments while wearing the gas mask.
7. Maintaining certification in any specialty area used in the SERT mission.

Selected SERT personnel will receive additional training depending on their specific mission within the team. These courses include but are not limited to:

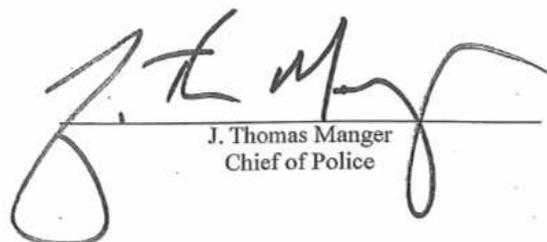
1. Hazardous Materials Technician Course (40 hours)
 2. WMD Hazardous Materials Course (16 hours)
 3. Incident Command for Weapons of Mass Destruction (10 hours)
 4. Emergency Medical Technician course for WMD (10 hours)
 5. Incident Command Course for CDU (10 hours)
 6. Chemical Munitions/Grenadier (20 hours)
 7. Protestor Device Extraction Training (30 hours)
 8. Evidence Collection and Preservation for a WMD Incident (40 hours)
 9. Relevant courses from the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) and other sources
- Note: ODP is a component of the Department of Homeland Security responsible for developing and providing training to local law enforcement to deal with terrorism and the threat from WMD.

The SERT Commander, in coordination with the Training and Education Division, is responsible for developing training for CDU and WMD for the department. ***Any requests for 40 hours or less of professional improvement leave (PIL) will be submitted to the unit/district commander for approval or denial. The unit commanders should consult with the unit commander in charge of the SERT if they have questions that could assist them in determining whether the requests meet the criteria for either approval or disapproval that are listed in FC 341, Travel and Training Requests.***

The SERT Commander is responsible for the formation and implementation of the department's CDU and WMD response plans. The SERT will serve as a ready resource for any incident, event, disaster, or public emergency. The on-scene SERT Commander will serve as the Police Incident Commander for any county event to which SERT responds.

Any questions regarding SERT should be directed to the SOD staff at 301-840-2881.

This Headquarters Memorandum cancels Headquarters Memorandum 05-08.



J. Thomas Manger
Chief of Police