

	MARICOPA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURES	
	Subject SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM (SRT)	Policy Number DH-9 Effective Date 10-07-22
Related Information ARS 13-2501 CP-1, <i>Use of Force</i> EJ-4, <i>Barricaded Subjects and Hostages</i> GC-7, <i>Transfer of Personnel</i> GJ-2, <i>Critical Incident Response</i> GJ-8, <i>Tactical Support at Office Jail Facilities</i> GJ-23, <i>Firearms</i> GJ-30, <i>TASER Conducted Energy Weapon (CEW)</i> Maricopa County Internal Policy HR2471	Supersedes DH-9 (09-27-17)	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Office Policy is to provide guidelines and procedures for equipping, training, and activating the Special Response Team (SRT). A specially trained group of detention officers who are called upon to respond to emergency situations and high-risk incidents within custody bureau facilities and to provide armed/unarmed assistance with high-risk/high profile inmate transports, which may include outside appointments.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Office to ensure the safety and security of Office personnel, custody support personnel, visitors, and inmates within all custody bureau facilities. The SRT is to make every reasonable effort to affect the safe and expeditious resolution of all emergency situations and any high-risk incident overseen by the SRT.

DEFINITIONS

Activation: For the purpose of this Office Policy, request made by a commander or designee through the Communications Division for the assistance of the SRT regarding an emergency situation or high-risk incident within a custody bureau facility.

Air Purifying Respirator (APR): A respirator with an air-purifying filter, cartridge, or canister that removes specific air contaminants by passing ambient air through the air-purifying element.

Callback Time: Compensated travel time and hours worked for eligible non-exempt employees who are called back to work outside of their normal work schedule hours, as specified in Maricopa County Internal Policy HR2471.

Criminal Contraband: Any item specifically defined in ARS 13-2501, such as dangerous weapons or drugs.

De-Escalation: Taking action or communicating verbally or non-verbally during a potential force encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with a reduction in the force necessary. De-escalation may include the use of such techniques as command presence, verbal direction, warnings, verbal persuasion, and tactical repositioning.

De-escalation Techniques: Tactics and techniques used by employees, consistent with their training and experience, when reasonably safe and practical to do so without compromising law enforcement priorities, that seek

to minimize the likelihood of the need to use force during an incident and increase the likelihood of voluntary compliance.

Detention Planned Use of Force: An incident involving an inmate who is not posing an immediate threat to officers, detention support personnel, themselves, or other inmates, where force must be used to protect the inmate involved or to allow Correctional Health Services (CHS) staff to administer involuntary psychotropic medications.

Digital Recording Device: Any device designed to record, transmit, or receive voice communications, sound, video, or photographic images, including but not limited to, cellular phones, digital audio recorders, and digital video recorders. Personally owned digital recording devices, to include cellular phones, are not authorized unless exigent circumstances exist and with prior approval of a supervisor.

Exigent Circumstances: The sum of the conditions and information available in any event which, taken in their totality, dictate a need for immediate action.

Firearm: Any service firearm on the Approved Weapons List carried by a qualified employee in the course of their assigned duties. A loaded or unloaded handgun, pistol, revolver, long gun, shotgun, or other weapon that will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of expanding gases.

- A. ***Primary Firearm:*** Authorized primary service firearms with a barrel length of four inches or greater and are required for carry while in Class A, B, or C uniforms. Detention personnel primary service firearms are carried in a uniform duty holster when in uniform or in a concealed duty holster when not in uniform.
- B. ***Secondary Firearm:*** Authorized secondary service firearms with a barrel length of less than four inches and may be used for non-uniformed personnel. Detention personnel secondary service firearms are carried in a concealed carry duty holster.

Long Gun: Any rifle/carbine that has been approved for use by the Office and appears on the Approved Weapons List.

Special Response Team (SRT): A specially trained group of detention officers who are called upon to respond to emergency situations and high-risk incidents within custody bureau facilities and to provide armed/unarmed assistance with high-risk/high profile inmate transports, which may include outside appointments. SRT members are trained in specialty weaponry systems, tactical response, and are authorized to use reasonable force, tactics, or control techniques in the performance of their duties.

Special Response Team Division Commander: A detention captain assigned to oversee the SRT.

Special Response Team Field Training Officer (FTO): A detention officer assigned to the SRT who has successfully completed the Phases of the SRT Specialized Assignment Announcement recruitment, the MCSO Field Training Officer Academy, and is certified with the Office as a General Instructor. The SRT FTO is also responsible for coordinating, facilitating, and documenting all team meetings, tactical training, and tracking all advanced training/certifications for all members of the SRT. The SRT FTO will also assist other divisions with the maintenance of their Emergency Response Team (ERT) Carts.

Special Response Team Unit Commander: A detention lieutenant assigned to oversee the day-to-day operations of the SRT.

Squad: An SRT squad consisting of a detention sergeant (Team Leader), and assigned detention officers (Team Members).

Team Leader (TL): A detention sergeant assigned to be the first-line supervisor of an SRT Squad.

Team Member: A detention officer who has successfully completed the Team Member in Training (TMIT) program and the special assignment six-month assessment period; as well as maintains all current tactical training certifications as specified in the SRT Operations Manual.

Unit: For the purpose of this Office Policy, the Unit consists of the SRT Unit Commander, all assigned Team Leaders, Team Members and individual Squads as a whole.

PROCEDURES

1. **Operations of the Special Response Team (SRT):** The Custody Bureau shall maintain a team of specially trained and equipped detention officers who shall have the responsibility of responding to, and regaining control of, situations involving violent or dangerous inmates. All SRT members are subject to Callback Time by the SRT Unit Commander.
2. **Coordination of the SRT:** The SRT Unit Commander will coordinate and delegate activities to the applicable Team Leader (TL).
3. **Selection of SRT Members:** SRT members will be selected by designated SRT Commanders based on the needs of the division. Final selections shall be subject to the approval of the Chief of Custody or designee.
4. **SRT Member Candidate Requirements:**
 - A. All prospective members must be 21 years of age or older, and successfully complete the Arizona Peace Officers Standards and Training (AZPOST) firearms training and maintain certification with a primary firearm, a secondary firearm, less-lethal shotgun, and long gun. Unless otherwise certified upon selection, successful completion of the initial AZPOST firearms training shall be achieved at the next available training date. All Team Members shall be detention officers who have at least two years of custody experience.
 - B. All prospective members must meet certain basic physical fitness requirements and basic detention officer training related to the performance and endurance standards of the position. SRT member selection testing will encompass the following:
 1. Anaerobic strength;
 2. Aerobic strength;
 3. Basic detention officer weapons; and
 4. Basic detention officer duties.
 - C. In addition to the member requirements, all potential candidates shall meet the minimum qualifications for specialized assignments, as specified in Office Policy GC-7, *Transfer of Personnel*.
 - D. Upon selection for a specialized assignment with the SRT, Team Members are expected to continue to meet or exceed performance expectations. Team Members who do not meet performance expectations in the SRT may be provided additional training, mentorship, or other supervisor intervention, or may be transferred out of the SRT into another division, as specified in Office Policy GC-7, *Transfer of Personnel*.

5. Training:

- A. Upon assignment to the SRT, all new members shall complete the structured five-week Team Member in Training (TMIT) program, coordinated by the SRT Field Training Officer (FTO) and TLs.
- B. To maintain required certifications, each TL and Team Member shall satisfactorily complete proficiency training as specified in the SRT Operations Manual. Unit training will be conducted by the TL in conjunction with the SRT FTO with all documentation sent to the Training Division.
- C. SRT members shall complete required training prior to carrying or using any special purpose weapon or firearm, as specified in Office Policy GJ-23, *Firearms*. SRT special purpose weapons include, but are not limited to, less-lethal launcher systems, less-lethal munitions, diversionary devices, aerosol projectors, lethal weapons and their munitions, chemical agents, and other tactical devices to help control emergency situations and high-risk incidents with the least amount of injury to any persons.
- D. All SRT members shall maintain a high level of marksmanship with all less-lethal weapons systems by regular dynamic training sessions within Squad tactics training. SRT members shall also maintain a high level of marksmanship with all lethal weapons and munitions by means of regular dynamic training at the Office Firearms Training Range. SRT members who fail to meet requirements after their initial annual firearms recertification shall have their authorization to carry a firearm and long gun suspended until successful requirements are met in a remedial course, as specified in Office Policy GJ-23, *Firearms*. Failure to recertify annually, including a decision making/ judgmental course, shall result in an SRT member being immediately reassigned to other duties as a detention officer.
- E. Training in Squad tactics shall be conducted at a minimum of 12 hours every month at the direction of the Squad TL in conjunction with the SRT FTO. Joint Squad training/meetings should be conducted at a minimum on a monthly basis, coordinated by the TLs. A written report of each training session will be maintained by the SRT FTO. Training/meetings may include, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Pod dominations;
 - 2. Chemical environments with Air Purifying Respirator (APR) manipulation;
 - 3. Tactical cell extractions;
 - 4. Forced medications;
 - 5. Entering/exiting confined spaces;
 - 6. Convoy operations;
 - 7. Control techniques;
 - 8. De-escalation techniques;
 - 9. High risk/high valued inmate transports; and
 - 10. Scene control during emergency situations, high risk incidents and activations.

6. **Equipment:** Employees assigned to the SRT are authorized by their respective bureau chief or designee, to carry and use a variety of pre-approved firearms and special purpose weapons to meet the requirements of their assigned duties. The authorization to carry and use a special purpose weapon or firearm shall only apply as long as the individual is assigned to duties within the SRT and maintains certification as specified in the SRT Operations Manual. Detention personnel assigned to the SRT while working in the capacity of an SRT member have authorization to carry some of these items into Office jail facilities that other detention personnel may not normally be authorized to carry in secured Office jail facilities, which may include, but not be limited to, the following items:
 - A. Less-lethal 12ga shotguns; and
 - B. Batons.
7. **SRT Activation:**
 - A. The SRT may be activated for incidents to include, but not limited to:
 1. Detention Planned use of force;
 2. Cell extractions;
 3. Combative inmates (active resistance or greater);
 4. Group disturbances;
 5. Forced medication;
 6. Safe Cell/Safe Bed Placements (active resistance or greater);
 7. Individual targeted/inmate housing searches for criminal contraband; and
 8. High-risk/high profile inmate transports.
 - B. Prior to requesting SRT activation, a shift commander or designee shall respond to the scene and evaluate the need for SRT to respond to the emergency situation or high-risk incident.
 - C. All requests to activate the SRT shall be made through the Communications Division.
 1. The Communications Division shall notify the SRT Unit Commander or designee of the activation request.
 2. The SRT Unit Commander or designee shall contact the requesting division and make the final determination if an activation is warranted.
 - D. The requesting division shall coordinate with Correctional Health Services (CHS) mental health personnel to be available on site when SRT arrives on scene. The SRT shall initiate a Detention Planned Use of Force prior to developing a control or force option plan, as specified in Office Policy CP-1, *Use of Force*.
 1. The SRT decision to use force or control options will be based on consultation with CHS mental health personnel, the totality of circumstances known to the SRT at the time of the

incident, the SRTs training, and the subject's actions, as specified in Office Policy CP-1, *Use of Force*.

2. The SRT shall determine which level of force or control option is objectively reasonable given the totality of the circumstances. The SRT is not required to attempt each level before attempting to use the level of force or control necessary to address the situation. All incidents present unique circumstances and factors and may vary for each situation.
8. **Hostage Situations Notifications:** In the event a hostage situation takes place in an Office jail facility, whether the hostage is an employee, volunteer, visitor or inmate, the jail facility commander or designee shall follow the notification and response procedures, as specified in Office Policies GJ-8, *Tactical Support at Office Jail Facilities* and EJ-4, *Barricaded Subjects and Hostages*, as applicable.
9. **Activation Operations and Command Authority:** When the SRT is activated, authority to command the operation will be transferred to the SRT TL or SRT Unit Commander, if on scene. The shift supervisor of the requesting division will work jointly with the SRT TL to maintain security and minimize non-essential personnel from entering the affected area.
 - A. **Briefing/Coordination/Assistance of Other Personnel:** Upon arriving at the facility, the SRT shall be briefed, at a minimum, by the shift supervisor. The SRT Unit Commander or designee, in conjunction with the on-scene command staff and any high-risk response units, shall coordinate activities in the affected area.
 - B. **Less-Lethal Force Deployment/Follow-up:** In all cases where a less-lethal force option has been deployed on a subject, CHS medical staff shall be notified to examine the subject for injuries. When a TASER CEW deployment occurs, SRT members shall avoid removing TASER probes from sensitive and/or vulnerable areas of the body, as specified in Office Policy GJ-30, *TASER Conducted Energy Weapon (CEW)*. Photographs of any and all injuries sustained by the subject shall be taken and included with the associated IR and Blue Team Use of Force entry.
 - C. **Inmate Security:** All inmates in the affected area, and not directly involved in the emergency situation/high-risk incident or SRT activation, will be secured in their cells, if possible, or removed from the area and secured in other sections of the jail facility.
10. **Documentation:** Once activated, SRT documentation may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - A. *Incident Reports (IRs);*
 - B. Use of Force Blue Team entries;
 - C. *Disciplinary Action Reports (DARs);*
 - D. *Jail Commander Notification Forms (JCNFs);*
 - E. Reports by the TL, including control of the video footage, if available;
 - F. A written report of all SRT daily assignments and involvement in the shift summary report;
 - G. Interoffice memorandums;
 - H. *Property and Evidence Report;* and
 - I. *Request for Scientific Examination forms.*