
Operations Planning and Deconfliction

608.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for planning, deconfliction and execution of high-risk operations.

Additional guidance on planning and serving high-risk warrants is provided in the Warrant Service Policy.

608.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

High-risk operations - Operations, including service of search and arrest warrants and sting operations, that are likely to present higher risks than are commonly faced by officers on a daily basis, including suspected fortified locations, reasonable risk of violence or confrontation with multiple persons, or reason to suspect that persons anticipate the operation.

608.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Santa Ana Police Department to properly plan and carry out high-risk operations, including participation in a regional deconfliction system, in order to provide coordination, enhance the safety of members and the public, decrease the risk of compromising investigations and prevent duplicating efforts.

608.3 RISK ASSESSMENT

608.3.1 RISK ASSESSMENT FORM PREPARATION

Officers assigned as case agent for any operation shall complete a risk assessment form. (Attached)

When preparing the form, the officer should query all relevant and reasonably available intelligence resources for information about the subject of investigation, others who may be present and the involved location. These sources may include regional intelligence and criminal justice databases, target deconfliction systems, firearm records, commercial databases and property records. Where appropriate, the officer should also submit information to these resources.

The officer should gather available information that includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Photographs, including aerial photographs, if available, of the involved location, neighboring yards and obstacles.
- (b) Maps of the location.
- (c) Diagrams of any property and the interior of any involved buildings.
- (d) Historical information about the subject of investigation (e.g., history of weapon possession or use, known mental illness, known drug use, threats against police, gang affiliation, criminal history).
- (e) Historical information about others who may be present at the location (e.g., other criminals, innocent third parties, dependent adults, children, animals).

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- (f) Obstacles associated with the location (e.g., fortification, booby traps, reinforced doors/windows, surveillance measures, number and type of buildings, geographic and perimeter barriers, the number and types of weapons likely to be present, information that suggests the presence of explosives, chemicals or other hazardous materials, the potential for multiple dwellings or living spaces, availability of keys/door combinations).
- (g) Other environmental factors (e.g., nearby venues such as schools and day care centers, proximity of adjacent homes or other occupied buildings, anticipated pedestrian and vehicle traffic at the time of service).
- (h) Other available options that may minimize the risk to officers and others (e.g., making an off-site arrest or detention of the subject of investigation).

608.3.2 RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

Officers will present the risk assessment form and other relevant documents (such as copies of search warrants and affidavits and arrest warrants) to their supervisor and Division Commander.

The supervisor and Division Commander shall confer and determine the level of risk. Supervisors should take reasonable actions if there is a change in circumstances elevating the risks associated with the operation.

608.3.3 HIGH-RISK OPERATIONS

If the Division Commander, after consultation with the involved supervisor, determines the operation is high risk, the Division Commander shall consult with the SWAT Commander to determine if the use of the SWAT Team is appropriate. In the event the decision is made to utilize the SWAT Team, the SWAT Commander, or his/her designee, should:

- (a) Determine what resources will be needed at the location, and contact and/or place on standby any of the following appropriate and available resources:
 - (a) Additional personnel
 - (b) Outside agency assistance
 - (c) Special equipment
 - (d) Medical personnel
 - (e) Persons trained in negotiation
 - (f) Additional surveillance
 - (g) Canines
 - (h) Property and Evidence Section or analytical personnel to assist with cataloguing seizures
 - (i) Forensic specialists
 - (j) Specialized mapping for larger or complex locations
- (b) Contact the appropriate department member(s) or other agencies as warranted to begin preparation.

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- (c) Ensure all legal documents such as search warrants are complete and have any modifications reasonably necessary to support the operation.

608.4 DECONFLICTION

Deconfliction systems (ex. LA CLEAR) are designed to identify persons and locations associated with investigations or law enforcement operations and alert participating agencies when others are planning or conducting operations in close proximity or time or are investigating the same individuals, groups or locations.

The officer who is the case agent shall ensure the subject of investigation and operations information have been entered in an applicable deconfliction system to determine if there is reported conflicting activity. This should occur as early in the process as practicable, but no later than two hours prior to the commencement of the operation. The officer should also enter relevant updated information when it is received.

If any conflict is discovered, the supervisor will contact the involved jurisdiction and resolve the potential conflict before proceeding.

608.5 OPERATIONS PLAN

The SWAT Commanders shall ensure a written operations plan is developed for all high-risk operations. Plans should also be considered for other operations that would benefit from having a formal plan.

The plan should address such issues as:

- (a) Operation goals, objectives and strategies.
- (b) Operation location and people:
 1. The subject of investigation (e.g., history of weapon possession/use, known mental illness issues, known drug use, threats against police, gang affiliation, criminal history)
 2. The location (e.g., fortification, booby traps, reinforced doors/windows, surveillance cameras and/or lookouts, number/type of buildings, geographic and perimeter barriers, the number and types of weapons likely to be present, information that suggests the presence of explosives, chemicals or other hazardous materials, the potential for multiple dwellings or living spaces, availability of keys/door combinations), including aerial photos, if available, and maps of neighboring yards and obstacles, diagrams and other visual aids
 3. Other environmental factors (e.g., nearby venues such as schools and day care centers, proximity of adjacent homes or other occupied buildings, anticipated pedestrian and vehicle traffic at the time of service)
 4. Identification of other people who may be present in or around the operation, such as other criminal suspects, innocent third parties and children
- (c) Information from the risk assessment form by attaching a completed copy in the operational plan.

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- (a) The volume or complexity of the information may indicate the plan includes a synopsis of the information contained on the risk assessment form to ensure clarity and highlighting of critical information.
- (d) Participants and their roles.
 - (a) An adequate number of uniformed officers should be included in the operation team to provide reasonable notice of a legitimate law enforcement operation.
 - (b) How all participants will be identified as law enforcement.
- (e) Whether deconfliction submissions are current and all involved individuals, groups and locations have been deconflicted to the extent reasonably practicable.
- (f) Identification of all communications channels and call-signs.
- (g) Use of force issues.
- (h) Contingencies for handling medical emergencies (e.g., services available at the location, closest hospital, closest trauma center).
- (i) Plans for detaining persons not under arrest.
- (j) Contingencies for handling children, dependent adults, animals and other people who might be at the location. (See the Child Abuse, Adult Abuse, Child and Dependent Adult Safety and Animal Control policies).
- (k) Communications plan
- (l) Responsibilities for writing, collecting, reviewing and approving reports.

608.5.1 OPERATIONS PLAN RETENTION

Since the operations plan contains intelligence information and descriptions of law enforcement tactics, it shall not be filed with the report. The operations plan shall be stored separately and retained in accordance with the established records retention schedule.

608.6 OPERATIONS BRIEFING

A briefing should be held prior to the commencement of any high-risk operation to allow all participants to understand the operation, see and identify each other, identify roles and responsibilities and ask questions or seek clarification as needed. Anyone who is not present at the briefing should not respond to the operation location without specific supervisory approval.

- (a) The briefing should include a verbal review of plan elements, using visual aids, to enhance the participants' understanding of the operations plan.
- (b) All participants should be provided a copy of the operations plan and search warrant, if applicable. Participating personnel should be directed to read the search warrant and initial a copy that is retained with the operation plan. Any items to be seized should be identified at the briefing.
- (c) The operations director shall ensure that all participants are visually identifiable as law enforcement officers.

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- (a) Exceptions may be made by the operations director for officers who are conducting surveillance or working undercover. However, those members exempt from visual identification should be able to transition to a visible law enforcement indicator at the time of enforcement actions, such as entries or arrests, if necessary.
- (d) The briefing should include details of the communications plan.
 - (a) It is the responsibility of the operations director to ensure Communications Division is notified of the time and location of the operation, and to provide a copy of the operation plan prior to officers arriving at the location.
 - (b) If the radio channel needs to be monitored by Communications Division, the dispatcher assigned to monitor the operation should attend the briefing, if practicable, but at a minimum should receive a copy of the operation plan.
 - (c) The briefing should include a communications check to ensure all participants are able to communicate with the available equipment on the designated radio channel.

608.7 SWAT TEAM PARTICIPATION

If the SWAT Commanding Officer determines SWAT Team participation is appropriate, SWAT Team Leaders shall work together to develop a written plan. The SWAT Commander shall assume operational control until all persons at the scene are appropriately detained and it is safe to begin a search. When this occurs, the SWAT Commander shall transfer control of the scene to the handling supervisor. This transfer should be communicated to the officers present.

608.8 MEDIA ACCESS

No advance information regarding planned operations shall be released without the approval of the Chief of Police. Any media inquiries or press release after the fact shall be handled in accordance with the News Media Relations Policy.

608.9 OPERATIONS DEBRIEFING

High-risk operations should be debriefed as soon as reasonably practicable. The debriefing should include as many participants as possible. This debrief may be separate from any SWAT Team debriefing.

608.10 TRAINING

The Training Commander should ensure officers and SWAT Team members who participate in operations subject to this policy should receive periodic training including, but not limited to, topics such as legal issues (in consultation with the Legal Advisor), deconfliction practices, operations planning concepts and reporting requirements.

608.11 ATTACHMENT (RISK ASSESSMENT FORM)

See attachment: [SAPD Risk Assessment Matrix.pdf](#)

Attachments

SAPD Risk Assessment Matrix.pdf



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Risk Assessment Matrix



This Matrix **shall be completed for all search/arrest warrants requiring the entry into and security of a structure**. It is intended to serve as a guide in determining the necessary resources to minimize or mitigate risks to personnel and/or the community associated with search/arrest warrant operations. Operational decision-making is ultimately the responsibility of the on-scene supervisor, incident commander or watch commander.

Type of Operation: Search Warrant Arrest Warrant Other: _____

CI #: _____

Date: _____

Location Address (one form per location): _____

Name of Primary Suspect(s)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

SEARCH/ARREST WARRANT CRITERIA - POTENTIAL USE OF SWAT PERSONNEL	Yes	No
1. Heavily barricaded location (i.e. sally-port, internal fortifications, multiple gates, etc.)?		
2. Assault or automatic weapons, ballistic protection believed to be on premises (CI or reasonable belief)?		
3. Suspects wanted for armed assault on a peace officer?		
4. Hostages believed to be at location?		
5. Suspect discharged a firearm during the commission of any crime, he/she may be armed, and not in custody.		
6. Suspect displayed a firearm during the commission of any crime, he/she may be armed, and not in custody.		
7. Barred doors and windows or structure is large/multi-level and beyond the capability of the requesting unit to secure?		
8. Counter surveillance (i.e., closed circuit T.V., intrusion devices, lookouts, etc.)?		
9. Guard dogs or booby traps suspected?		
10. Third Strike candidate?		
11. Any subject believed to be present at the warrant location that has a violent criminal background?		
12. Handguns at the location (CI or reasonable belief)?		
13. Threats by suspect against officers or statements of suicide by cop?		
14. Any subject believed to be present at the warrant location that has criminal gang affiliations?		

Discussion with the SWAT Commander **shall occur** if a proposed operation contains **one or more** of the hazards listed in items 1 through 6. Additionally, if a proposed operation contains **three or more** hazards listed in 7 through 14, a SWAT Team Leader or Commander **shall be contacted** to give a recommendation on whether the SWAT Team or a tactical element should be utilized.

Completed by (Case Agent): _____

Reviewed by (Supervisor): _____

Division Commander: _____

SWAT recommended (circle): YES/NO

SWAT Commander/Team Leader: _____

SWAT recommended (circle): YES/NO

Bureau Commander: _____

SWAT use approved (circle): YES/NO