

EMERGENCY RESPONSE UNIT OPERATIONS

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Omaha Police Department (OPD) to utilize the Emergency Response Unit (ERU), a special weapons and tactics team, to respond to requests for assistance in situations requiring specially trained and equipped police officers.

PROCEDURE:

I. ERU Call-Out Situations

- A. The ERU is available 24-hours a day for emergency services that may require the unit's specialized services. These situations may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Hostage situations.
 - 2. Armed/Barricaded situations.
 - 3. Suicidal parties (with or without hostages).
 - 4. Sniper situations.
 - 5. Terrorist activities.
 - 6. VIP protection (see the OPD "VIP Security/Police Escorts" policy).
 - 7. Specialized searches and seizures.
 - 8. Specialized forced entries.
 - 9. Serving of high risk felony warrants.
 - 10. Warrant services/raids.
 - 11. Any other situation where the threat of or loss of life may exist, or where a situation may deteriorate to the point where specialized operations and resources are needed to bring the incident to an efficient and successful conclusion.

II. ERU Authorization

- A. SWAT Team Authorization.
 - 1. Supervisors will request authorization of the SWAT team by contacting the ERU Commander.
 - 2. The ERU Commander will immediately determine whether the circumstances warrant the activation of the SWAT team and will advise the requesting supervisor accordingly.
 - a. If the ERU Commander determines that the SWAT team will be activated, the ERU Commander will notify the team.
 - (1) SWAT members will be prepared for a call-out at any time.
 - (a) Team members are equipped with digital pagers that shall be worn and kept on at all times.

- (b) Call-out equipment will remain with team members at all times.
 - (2) When called out, team members will call the number indicated on their pager and proceed to the designated location in full gear.
 - (3) The requesting supervisor will be responsible for notifying the Chief of Police via chain of command.
 - b. If the ERU Commander does not believe the circumstances justify activating the SWAT team, the requesting supervisor may appeal the decision to their Bureau Deputy Chief.
 - (1) The Deputy Chief may override the decision of the ERU Commander and notify the ERU Commander to activate the team.
 - (a) The Police Services Bureau (PSB) Deputy Chief will be notified via chain of command of the activation.
- B. Bomb Response Team Authorization.
 - 1. Supervisors will request authorization of the Bomb Response Team by contacting the Bomb Response Team Sergeant.
 - 2. The Bomb Response Team Sergeant and ERU Commander will evaluate the incident to determine what ERU resources are needed and will notify the requesting supervisor accordingly.
- C. Crisis Negotiations Team Authorization.
 - 1. The Crisis Negotiations Team is made up of officers who have been trained in crisis/hostage negotiations and resolving dangerous situations through verbal communication. Situations that may require a Crisis Negotiator include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Armed/Barricaded individuals.
 - b. Hostage incidents.
 - c. Suicidal individuals.
 - d. Terrorist activities.
 - e. Union strikes.
 - 2. If a need for a Crisis Negotiator exists, the ERU Commander will request that a negotiator be dispatched to a designated location.
 - 3. If an on-duty negotiator becomes aware of an incident before the ERU Commander, they will immediately notify the ERU Negotiations Team command to advise that they are responding. The ERU Negotiations Team command will advise the ERU Commander.
 - 4. If an off-duty negotiator becomes aware of an incident before the ERU Commander, they shall contact the ERU Commander to get approval to respond.

III. ERU Activation

- A. Whenever an ERU Team is activated, an ERU commander will respond to the scene to assess the situation and determine what resources are needed.
- B. The on-scene ERU command officer will report to and coordinate with the Incident Commander when practical. However, the ERU commander shall remain in charge of all ERU operations.
 - 1. If exigent circumstances arise that require the expertise of the ERU, the ERU commander will take command of the incident.

NOTE: If the Incident Commander disagrees with the ERU commander or feels that they cannot accommodate an ERU request and the two cannot agree, the Incident Commander will notify their chain of command of their concerns.

C. SWAT Procedures.

- 1. When the SWAT team is activated an ERU commander will report to Incident Command and take command of the inner perimeter as appropriate.
- 2. SWAT assets will only be commanded by an ERU Commander.
- 3. The ERU commander will be responsible for:
 - a. Replacing non-ERU personnel in the inner-perimeter as needed.
 - b. The creation and implementation of the tactical response plan.
 - c. The isolation, containment, and securing of the suspect(s).
 - (1) Once secured, the suspect will be turned over to the appropriate UPB or CIB personnel for final disposition.

D. Bomb Response Team Procedures.

- 1. If the Bomb Response Team is dispatched to a scene, the Incident Commander shall take safety directions from the Bomb Response Team.
- 2. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES shall any radio, cellular telephone, or any other type of electronic communication be allowed from the vicinity of the bomb scene that in all cases is a minimum of 500 feet from the inner perimeter. This includes all live broadcasts and electronic communication by the news media.
- 3. The Bomb Response Team may determine that the explosive device may not be rendered safe at the scene. When the Bomb Response Team transports an explosive device from the scene the following procedures shall be followed:
 - a. One officer in a marked cruiser will provide an escort.
 - b. All needed Fire Department units will follow the Bomb Response Team and the cruiser to the safe disposal area.
 - c. The Fire Department units will stand by until the device has been rendered safe.
- 4. The Bomb Response Team will notify Incident Command when civilian personnel are allowed to return to the scene and when normal radio traffic may resume.

E. Crisis Negotiations Team Procedures.

1. When a Crisis Negotiator is dispatched to a scene, they will be accompanied by an ERU command officer.
 - a. The ERU command officer will act as a liaison and evaluate the need for additional ERU resources.
2. Only sworn employees will conduct negotiations.

EXCEPTION: The ERU Commander may authorize a non-sworn person to participate in the negotiation process when appropriate. When a non-sworn negotiator is required, the negotiator will not be used unless the ERU Commander has been notified.

3. Negotiators will make every effort to not become physically involved in tactical situations.
4. The primary objectives of the Crisis Negotiations Team during an incident is to successfully resolve the situation while performing the following functions:
 - a. Gather intelligence on suspects or hostages.
 - b. Advise the ERU Commander of the status of involved persons throughout the incident.
 - c. Assist the SWAT team or other involved units as directed to divert, distract, or delay involved persons in order to gain a tactical advantage.

REFERENCES:

I. Previous OPD Orders

- A. Previous OPD General Orders include the following: #85-88, #13-90, #29-91, #30-91, #46-00, #5-17, and #46-17.