

<b>Somerville Police Department</b> 		<b>TYPE:</b> <b>GENERAL ORDER</b>		<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b> <b>131</b>	
		<b>Subject:</b> <b>Patrol Rifles</b>			
		<b>Issuing Authority:</b> <b>Charles Femino</b> <b>Chief of Police</b>		<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Effective Date:</b> <b>December 4, 2023</b>
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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for officers regarding the use of the department patrol rifle while on duty.

## Policy

It is the policy of the Somerville Department to ensure that all personnel will follow procedures designed to ensure safety and proficiency with department patrol rifles. All rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the Department are incorporated by reference.

## Procedures

### 1. Police Patrol Rifle

- A. The authorized patrol rifle is the M16/AR15 style Platform, and any other long gun issued and authorized by the Department.
- B. No mechanical alterations are permitted unless specifically authorized in writing by the Chief of Police or department armorer.

### 2. Regulation Ammunition

- A. Department issued ammunition is the only ammunition to be used.

### 3. Training and Qualifications

- A. Officers authorized to use the patrol rifle will be trained in the familiarity, safety, operation, proficiency and range qualification of the firearm by a qualified patrol rifle instructor. Officers must successfully complete these elements before being allowed to deploy the rifle.

- B. Officers authorized to use the patrol rifle will meet the requirements each year during the department annual firearms qualification.
- C. Records relative to training, range qualification and authorized personnel to use the patrol rifle will be maintained by the Training Division.
- D. A list of authorized officers will be maintained by the Training Division and updated following every range qualification, or otherwise as appropriate. The list will be distributed to all supervisors and a copy housed in the Somerville Police Academy training files.

#### **4. Authorized Use**

- A. Patrol rifles may be used, but are not limited to, the following situations:
  - 1. To provide a more immediate tactical response to calls involving armed and/or violent offenders.
  - 2. To provide a perimeter/containment for a hostage and/or barricaded person.
  - 3. A felony or high-risk traffic stops involving firearms.
  - 4. An active shooter situation.
  - 5. When an officer has a reasonable expectation that there is the potential for an armed suspect encounter.
  - 6. Upon the request of a supervisor.
  - 7. Any other use in conformance with the Use of Force Policy.

#### **5. Deployment/Discharge of the Patrol Rifle**

- A. When the officer anticipates using the rifle they shall remove the weapon from the cruiser rack and charge a round into the chamber.
- B. After the rifle has been deployed, the following procedures shall be employed.
  - 1. Deployed but not fired. With the safety on, remove the magazine from the rifle, remove the round from the rifle, and re-load it into the magazine. The rifle shall then be returned to the rack in the cruiser. A second officer must verify the rifle is unloaded and safe prior to securing the rifle in the cruiser.
  - 2. Deployed and fired. Officer shall follow the procedures outlined in the Use of Force Policy.

## **6. Deployment Criteria.**

- A.** Only a patrol rifle certified officer shall deploy and use the patrol rifle. Each deployment shall be in accordance with department policy, such as during a spontaneous incident and, for example, when there is reason to believe a suspect is:
  - 1.** Wearing protective body armor.
  - 2.** Armed with or has immediate access to a high powered weapon which surpasses the capability of weapons normally carried by field personnel and/or, deployment of the patrol rifle reasonably appears necessary to neutralize the threat posed by the suspect[s].
  - 3.** Any other incidents where there is a reasonable expectation of armed confrontation.
  - 4.** Any other use consistent with the Use of Force Policy.

## **6. Supervisor Responsibilities**

- A.** A Supervisor shall respond to each incident at which a patrol rifle is deployed and used. In the event a rifle is discharged, procedures promulgated in the Use of Force Policy shall be followed.
- B.** Take charge of any tactical incident and determine if the incident is within the capabilities of the unit[s] at the scene or if NEMLEC SWAT should be requested.
- C.** Ensure all patrol rifles are secured once the threat is resolved.
- D.** Document the incident in a supervisor's report and ensure a Defensive Tactics report is filed.

## **7. Patrol Rifle Maintenance**

- A.** Officers authorized to use the patrol rifle are responsible for the proper care, cleaning, functioning and handling of the rifle and all associated equipment while it is in their control.
- B.** No mechanical alterations are permitted unless specifically authorized in writing by the Chief of Police or department armorer.
- C.** All patrol rifles and all associated equipment is subject to inspection at any time and will be inspected by a firearms instructor, department armorer and/or a supervisor.
- D.** Any loss of a patrol rifle and any associated equipment will be reported to the officer's supervisor immediately.

## 8. Storing and Securing of Patrol Rifles

- A. Officers that are assigned to work patrol cruiser duty are to leave the patrol rifle assigned to those fully marked patrol cars locked in their designated carriers inside the vehicle, unless otherwise instructed by a superior officer or the officer perceives a high risk threat. Street supervisor cruisers not being used during any shift shall be parked in a designated parking spot located in the garage.
- B. Officers assigned to cruisers are to ensure at the beginning of the shift that both patrol rifle and/or shotgun along with ammunition are secured in their proper carriers.
- C. Officers assigned are to check the working condition of both rifle and shotgun carriers to ensure they function as designed. If a carrier or any of the weapons systems is found to be faulty or damaged the officer's immediate supervisor is to be notified along with dispatch so it can be logged. The weapon or weapons are to be removed from said unit and secured as indicated in this policy under **Return of Weapon to Station**.
- D. Superior officers that are notified of any malfunctions or damage with said weapon systems or their carriers will notify the Armorer along with Fleet management and the commanding officer in Charge. This can be done through electronic e-mail. The supervisor will also ensure that the communications room documents the event in the CAD system as directed by the officer discovering system failures or damage. The rifle shall be removed from the defective carrier as soon as practicable and stored according to this policy under Return of Weapon to Station.
- E. Any Somerville Police cruiser will be out of service for longer than 8 hours will need to have the patrol rifle removed and secured as indicated in this policy under **Return of Weapon to Station**. The exception to this clause will be units assigned to Somerville officers that are currently active members of the NEMLEC Swat Team.
- F. Any Somerville Police cruiser that is taken out of service for repairs at either the fleet management or another location will need to have weapon systems removed from the cruiser and secured as indicated in this policy under **Return of Weapon to Station**.
- G. At no time will any Somerville Police Officer assigned to a police cruiser with said weapon or weapons systems housed inside leave their assigned vehicle unattended while the engine is on or the electrical system is active. This will render the weapon system vulnerable. The engine is to be shut off and ignition key removed and kept with the officer. The vehicle is to be locked upon leaving the vehicle.
- H. Violations of the criteria set forth within this Section may result in discipline up to and including termination.
- I. A department Armorer will be responsible for the annual inspection of the patrol rifles.

**9. Return of Weapon to Station**

- A. The key to the weapon locker shall be retrieved from the Commanding Officer/ Officer in Charge.
- B. The weapon shall be retrieved from the unit inside the patrol vehicle housing the weapon.
- C. The officer that has retrieved the weapon shall proceed directly to the weapons locker located in the Commanders Office.
- D. The officer shall remove the magazine from the weapon.
- E. The officer shall ensure that the weapon is in the “safe” mode.
- F. The officer shall deposit the weapon into the locker. The officer shall then secure the locker.
- G. The officer shall then proceed directly to the officer in charge, return the key to the Commanding Officer/Officer in charge.

**10. Conclusion**

- A. In the event the reader needs clarification on any subject matter contained herein, he/she shall request said clarification from a superior officer, forthwith.