

Somerville Police Department 	TYPE: GENERAL ORDER		POLICY NUMBER: 425		VERSION: 6.00	
	Subject: Special Response Team (SRT)					
	Issuing Authority: Charles Femino Chief of Police		Signature: 		Effective Date: July 19, 2023	
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Accreditation Standards (6th Edition) 33.6.1, 46.2.2			<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised <input type="checkbox"/> Amended			
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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the department's selection, training, equipping, and activation procedure for the Somerville Special Response Team.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Somerville Police Department Special Response Team (hereinafter SRT) is to support the Somerville Police Department and any other law enforcement agency with a tactical response to critical incidents.

Critical incidents would include but are not limited to the following:

1. Hostage, barricaded situations and armed emotionally disturbed individuals.
2. Shots fired calls or a fire in progress.
3. The subject is armed with a long arm (i.e. rifle, assault weapon, or shotgun).
4. The subject is armed and wearing body armor.
5. The subject is armed and concealed behind a barricade or substantial cover.
6. The subject is armed and in a vast open area, or large parking lot, where the lack of available cover would place an officer at risk.
7. Other situations of a high risk nature in which a specialized unit response would be beneficial.
8. Special Assignments: Any assignment approved by the Chief of Police, based upon the level of threat or the need for special expertise.

Procedures

A. Composition and Structure

The Somerville Police Department Special Response Team will consist of sworn members, each member having a specific function. All SRT members will engage in tactical operations on a part-time basis. [46.2.2]

- 1. Command Structure:** The following outlines the Somerville Police Department Special Response Team's
 - a.** Somerville Police Department Special Response Team Commander (Captain) - The SRT commander for the Somerville Police Department shall act as the liaison between members of the Special Response Team and the Department and City administration. The Commander shall maintain a high level of discipline and morale. The Commander shall perform other duties and responsibilities as directed by the Chief of Police or designee. The Commander can be an operational member of the SRT.
 - b.** SRT Supervisor (Lieutenant/Sergeant) - Shall assume the duties of the Commander in their absence. An operational member of the SRT, the Supervisor controls and directs the actions of the Team Leader and/or Assistant Team Leader. Shall oversee the Tactical Operations and be in direct communication with the Somerville Police Department SRT Commander.
 - c.** Team Leader-Controls and directs the actions of team members during all operations/activations. The Team Leader, an operational member, may act as a member of a perimeter or entry team. The Team Leader is responsible for providing a high level of specialized training for the SRT members and shall ensure that all members are properly equipped.
 - d.** Assistant Team Leader-Shall assume the duties of the Team Leader in their absence. Shall assist the Team Leader with any/all other relevant duties. May act as a member of a perimeter or entry team.
 - e.** Operator shall act as a member of a perimeter or entry team.

B. Command and Control Structure

The SRT is under the command of the SRT Commander. When activated for an operation, the SRT Supervisor reports either to the incident commander where one has been designated, or to the on-scene commander /supervisor. The SRT Supervisor is responsible for the deployment of the SRT tactical decision-making and tactical resolution of the incident. The Incident Commander or on-scene supervisor has the authority to deactivate the Special Response Team at any time.

C. Activation Procedure

1. The Street Supervisor will respond to and assess the incident and inform the Shift Commander of all pertinent information.
2. The shift Commander (OIC) will evaluate the information and contact the following (in order) for authorization to deploy SRT:
 - a. Chief of Police
 - b. Deputy Chief of Operations
 - c. Deputy Chief of Support Services
 - d. Patrol Captain
3. Upon receiving authorization, the OIC shall contact the Somerville Police Department SRT Commander or SRT Supervisor to commence the activation. In **exigent circumstances** (i.e. active shooter) when one of the above members of the Command Staff cannot be contacted, the Shift Commander or SRT Commander may activate the SRT. The Shift Commander or SRT Commander will continue in their attempts to contact the Command Staff until contact is made.
4. The Somerville Police Department SRT is available, with the approval from the Chief of Police or designee, to any law enforcement agency. When a request for the team is received it shall be immediately forwarded to the Chief of Police, or designee, who will determine if in fact the situation warrants the activation of the team.
5. Any unit supervisor within the Somerville Police Department, may request the assistance of the SRT in planning or conducting appropriate operations. Once a request for the Somerville Police Department SRT assistance is made to the SRT Commander or SRT Supervisor, and permission is granted, the activation will follow standard procedures.

D. Response Procedures

1. SRT members responding to activation must operate their personal vehicle with due regard for the safety of all persons and must obey all rules of the road.
2. When operating a Department- owned vehicle equipped with emergency lights and siren, SRT members may utilize lights and sirens as appropriate.

E. Selection Process [46.2.2]

Following an email from the Chief or designee to all sworn members of the Department, employees interested in trying out for SRT shall make an application to the Chief.

1. The Chief or designee will select applicants eligible to try out for the SRT based on the following criteria:
 - a. Successful completion of the physical ability components, described in Selection Criteria (Section 6, below).
 - b. Active members must be non-probationary sworn members of the Department.
 - c. Members must demonstrate proficiency in the safe use and handling of any issued or authorized weapon system as determined by the Department's annual weapons qualification.
 - d. Members must be capable of meeting the minimum standards as established by the MPTC.
 - e. Members must present a letter of recommendation from a supervisor.
 - f. The Chief's consideration of members' disciplinary and attendance history.

F. Selection Criteria [46.2.2]

Candidates must satisfactorily complete each of the following components to be eligible for the SRT.

1. Fitness Component

The candidates will have to complete the following three exercises with a time limit and have a minimum number of repetitions needed to attain an acceptable standard. The occupational fitness measurement is based on the same standards regardless of age or gender.

a. Push Ups

(1). Exercise Procedure:

- i. The candidate will start in the up position, hands placed slightly wider than shoulder width apart, the candidates back should be straight.
- ii. The candidate will then bend their elbows and lower their body until their chest is approximately four inches from the floor.
- iii. The candidate then returns to the upright position. The score will be the number of correct full body pushups performed in one minute.
- iv. Example: A candidate must complete 24 pushups in a one minute.

b. Sit Ups

(1).Exercise Procedure:

- i. The candidate will lie on the floor with their knees fully bent while a partner holds their feet.
- ii. The candidates fingers must be interlocked behind their head and can only rest in the upwards position.
- iii. The candidate will then complete as many full sit ups as they can in one minute.
- iv. The candidate will only be scored for the number of sit ups performed correctly.
- v. Example: A candidate must complete 35 sit ups in one minute.

c. 1.5 Mile Run

(1).Exercise Procedure:

- i. The candidate will be required to run, walk, or jog - one and a half miles.
 - ii. The candidate will be scored based on their time within their age and gender bracket.
 - iii. Example: A candidate will have to complete a 1.5 mile run in 12:46 or less.
2. Any candidate unable to complete any of the above exercises will be dismissed from further testing. Any candidate dismissed due to tryout performance may try out again at another scheduled try out. Any candidate looking to move forward in the SRT assessment must pass the physical fitness standards as stated above.
 3. In addition to the above, the candidate must complete an obstacle course followed by stress shooting qualifications with each weapon system (Handgun and Rifle) per standards of the Massachusetts Police Training Council.

G. Continuing Fitness Expectations

Once accepted and assigned to the Somerville Police SRT, all operational members, regardless of rank or position, must maintain acceptable standards of performance as described above. Operational SRT members will participate in annual retesting. Operational SRT members must also meet the standards set forth by the Somerville Police Department

firearms training unit and the Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee for certified firearms instructors on an ongoing basis. The Commander will place any operational member who fails to meet the minimum acceptable standards on a temporary, non-deployable status until such time as the member can meet all minimum standards and in no case for longer than 6 months. An operational member who the Commander places on temporary, non-deployable status twice within 3 years may result in removal from the team.

H. Training Standards

1. Once selected for the team, the candidate must successfully complete the Basic Special Tactical Response Course. Failure to successfully complete the Basic Course will result in dismissal from the team. [33.6.1]
2. The SRT must attend 40 hours of yearly in-service training on appropriate subject matter related to their mission, as well as at least 16 hours of ongoing training per month, consistent with the National Tactical Officers Association standards. All training will comply with those techniques and skills approved by the Somerville Police Department and the Massachusetts Police Training Committee. In addition, the Lieutenant/Academy, along with certified firearms instructors will document and conduct a quarterly review and testing process, according to the approved training policy. The Department's related policies and relevant legal issues will be a regular part of required training. [33.6.1]
3. Once selected, officers must maintain proficiency in all standards established by the Somerville Police Department Special Response Team command staff. The Lieutenant/Academy will conduct an annual audit to ensure that all team members have participated in readiness exercise's and satisfied the training standards. [33.6.1]

I. Dismissal / Withdrawal

The Chief or the SRT OIC may dismiss any operational team member from the SRT based on his or her failure to successfully comply with the continuing training and fitness standards explained in this Policy. Additionally, the Chief or his or her designee may dismiss any operational team member from the SRT in the interests of public safety. A team member may voluntarily withdraw from the team, following a one year mandatory commitment.

J. Equipment Standards

1. The Somerville Police Department SRT will supply team members with, at minimum, the following safety equipment:
 - a. Ballistic helmet
 - b. Safety glasses and goggles
 - c. Hearing protection

- d. Complete coverage ballistic entry vest with Threat Level IV insert
 - e. Load bearing vest or duty belt for tactical equipment
 - f. Special Weapons as authorized by the Chief of Police
 - g. Appropriate amount of ammunition for duty, weapons training and qualification
2. SRT members will utilize appropriate utility type uniforms of an approved color/pattern, and footwear. Uniforms will utilize visible and identifiable placards, patches, badges, or lettering that identifies the wearer of the uniform as a law enforcement officer. All other items of personal wear or equipment must be approved by the Chief of Police.
 3. SRT members, to whom any item of equipment is issued, are responsible for the care and maintenance of the equipment. Failure to appropriately care for or maintain the equipment in full operational readiness may be grounds for removal from the team.

K. Special Equipment

1. All members of the Somerville Special Response Team will make themselves familiar with and will follow the regulations set forth in the [ARTICLE V. - TEAR GAS AND CROWD CONTROL](#).
2. Recognizing that the directives of the Somerville Police Department SRT are performed in a hazardous environment and recognizing that the safety of citizens, officers, and suspects is often jeopardized by the hazardous conditions, it is the intent of the Somerville Police Department SRT to utilize special equipment, such as listed below, in an attempt to lessen the risk of injury, death or significant property or infrastructure damage to all involved during the performance of an operation.
 - a. Primary Containment/Entry Weapons: Long guns or other short barreled high caliber rifles which enable the team to acquire rapid target acquisition, enhance high levels of accuracy, and provide maneuverability, reliability, stopping power, and sustained fire capability. ([124 - Use of Force](#))
 - b. Less Lethal Weapons or Ammunition: Weapons or ammunition, which propel a round or device that is not typically lethal. Designed to offer an alternative to the use of deadly force when appropriate.
 - c. Breaching Tools and Ammunition: Items such as rams, pry bars, hydraulics or electronic machines, special frangible shotgun rounds, etc. which are designed to force entry into barricaded or secured areas.

- d. Noise/Flash Diversionary Devices: Designed to save lives and reduce the potential for shooting situations by providing for a diversion for the entry of S.R.T. members into hazardous areas. Utilizes a bright flash of light followed immediately by a loud noise.
 - e. Smoke Generating Devices: Designed to save lives by reducing the potential for shooting situations by concealing the movements of team members during a hazardous entry or exit of a barricaded / secured area or any area(s) adjacent thereto. (
3. The SRT Team Leader will ensure that only team members properly trained and certified in the use of special equipment will utilize the equipment. The SRT Commander/Supervisor will responsible for establishing the special equipment certification standards and criteria for the team.

L. Documentation of Activation

The Somerville Police Department SRT Leader will verify that the appropriate SRT member(s) generate incident report(s) detailing the activation and the use of the team. At minimum, the team leader will generate a written "After Action Report," which details the operation and all pertinent information regarding the actions of the team during said operation.

M. Critical Incident Debriefing

Members of the Somerville Police Department SRT must conduct a critical incident debriefing after every team activation. This debriefing will be in accordance with the Department practice and will take place as soon as possible after the conclusion of said activation.