


## Understanding the 2015 NTOA Tactical Response and Operations Standard





---

National Tactical Officers Association • 800-279-9127 • [www.ntoa.org](http://www.ntoa.org)

## Standard Review Committee

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ed Allen</li> <li>• Chuck Bazile</li> <li>• Thor Eells</li> <li>• Fred Farris</li> <li>• Alan Ivey</li> <li>• Paul Jaskot</li> <li>• Joe Kistle</li> <li>• Jason Mudrock</li> <li>• Dan Savage</li> <li>• Jeff Selleg</li> <li>• Tobie Weberg</li> </ul>	<p>Major, Seminole County (FL) Sheriff's Office and NTOA Consulting Editor</p> <p>Beauregard Parish (LA) Sheriff's Office and President, Louisiana Tactical Police Officers Association</p> <p>Commander, Colorado Springs (CO) Police Department and Chairman, NTOA Board of Directors</p> <p>Sergeant, Lenexa (KS) Police Department and Board President, Kansas City Metro Tactical Officers Association</p> <p>Unit Chief, SWAT Operations, Federal Bureau of Investigation</p> <p>Supervisory Special Agent/Assistant Section Chief, Hostage Rescue Team, Federal Bureau of Investigation</p> <p>Chief of Police (ret), Franklin Police Department (NJ) and Chairman, IACP Patrol and Tactical Operations Committee</p> <p>Sergeant, Unified Police Department of Salt Lake (UT) and President, Utah Tactical Officers Association</p> <p>Deputy Chief of Operations, Grand Rapids (MI) Police Department and West Michigan Tactical Officers Association</p> <p>Commander, Port of Seattle (WA) Police Department and Washington State Tactical Officers Association Vice President</p> <p>Deputy Inspector, Milwaukee County (WI) Sheriff's Office and Executive Board, Association of SWAT Personnel (WI)</p>
---	---



## Introduction and Objective

The objective of this document is to establish a basic set of standards for the association's member agencies and to serve as an efficient core set of concepts and principles that improve standardization within the profession of tactical law enforcement services. Any agency that chooses to use this standard as a benchmark for performance and operations does so voluntarily. The NTOA does not mandate compliance with this standard or attach such compliance as a prerequisite for any benefit granted under membership.



## Section 1.0 - SCOPE OF STANDARD

1.1 - The scope of this standard includes concepts and principles that relate to the organization, training, operational tactics, personnel management and equipment of tactical law enforcement teams. The standard will not dictate how member agencies will write and apply any specific policies as it relates to such operations, but rather provide guidance based upon the terminology and collective viewpoint of the NTOA organization and its stakeholder partners.



## Section 2.0 - DEFINING TACTICAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

- 2.1.1 - Based upon the need to protect and ensure the safe delivery of tactical law enforcement services, the NTOA believes that a SWAT Tier 1 team must be mission capable in ALL of the following areas: hostage rescue, barricaded gunman, sniper operations, high-risk warrant service and high-risk apprehension, high-risk security operations, terrorism response, special assignments and other incidents which exceed the capability and/ or capacity of an agency's first responders and/or investigative units. The most resource demanding of these missions is clearly planned deliberate hostage rescue operations. An appropriate number of personnel is necessary to rapidly and effectively dominate a structure and have an adequate number of operators in place for a failed breach. Those teams that do not possess the appropriate number of personnel, but maintain all of the necessary mission capabilities are defined as SWAT Tier 2 teams. SWAT Tier 2 teams may be faced with conducting emergency hostage rescue operations if circumstances require it.



- 2.1.2 - Tactical Response Teams are typically formed to address one or more mission capabilities other than hostage rescue operations, such as warrant service, barricaded subject or some type of high-risk security operations.



2.1.3 - Perimeter Control and Containment Teams are typically formed as an immediate response to an ongoing incident and primarily responsible for containing the incident, evacuations and establishing incident command.



TYPE	CAPABILITIES	PERSONNEL*
SWAT Tier 1 – a stand-alone team or a combination of teams through an MOU	All mission capabilities in Section 3.0 of this standard and is capable of serving as a primary SWAT mutual aid team to another Tier 1 or 2 team.	26 members 1 Team Commander 3 Team Leaders 4 Snipers 18 Operators
SWAT Tier 2 – a stand-alone team or a combination of teams through an MOU	All mission capabilities in Section 3.0 of this standard, except planned deliberate hostage rescues. Emergency hostage rescue operations only.	19 members 1 Team Commander 2 Team Leaders 4 Snipers 12 Operators
Tactical Response Team	Can conduct any single or combination of capabilities listed Section 3.1.2 – 3.1.6.	15 members 1 Team Commander 2 Team Leaders 12 Operators
Perimeter Control and Containment Team	Can conduct all capabilities of Section 2.3 of this standard.	Any number of appropriately trained personnel.



\* The personnel allocations depicted in Figure 1 represent recommended minimums based upon typical residential applications. They were promulgated as a guideline with input and the concurrence of local, federal and international partners. Jurisdictional conditions including but not limited to, topography, operational tempo and anticipated mission requirements may necessitate modifications to these configurations.



## Section 3.0 – Tactical Law Enforcement Capabilities

- 3.1.1 – Hostage Rescue Operations
- 3.1.2 – Barricade Subject Operations
- 3.1.3 – Sniper Operations
- 3.1.4 – High Risk Warrant service and High Risk Apprehension Operations
- 3.1.5 – High Risk Security Operations
- 3.1.6 – Terrorism Response Operations



### 3.2 SWAT and TRT teams should have the following elements available when appropriate:

- **Tactical Command**: typically consists of the commander, team leader and command post support personnel such as tactical dispatchers, intelligence officer and incident recorder.
- **Containment Team**: typically consists of a two-person (or more) element capable of utilizing either lethal or less-lethal force, per area of responsibility. This may also include the use of tactical canine teams.
- **Entry Team** (either emergency or deliberate): members required will be based upon the mission type, complexity of target environment and ability to adhere to officer safety priorities.
- **Sniper Team**: typically consists of a two-person element per area of responsibility.
- **Tactical Emergency Medical Support** (TEMS)



#### 3.2.1 - Operational support functions may also include, but are not limited to, the following mission specific elements:

- **Tactical Bomb Squad Support**: Bomb technicians to provide direct and general support to SWAT in high-risk incidents involving explosive hazards. Refer to Guide to Writing Standard Operating Procedures For Operations Involving the Combined Resources of Bomb Squads and SWAT Teams.
- **Hazardous Material (Haz Mat) Support Unit**: Haz Mat technicians to provide direct support in decontamination, hazard detection, air monitoring, etc.
- **Tactical Canine Support**: Canine handlers that assist with perimeter control and high-risk search operations.
- **Aviation Support** (both manned and UAS): Fixed wing aircraft for surveillance, rotary aircraft for team insertion/rescue and aerial shooting platforms and Unmanned Aerial Systems for surveillance and intelligence collection.



## Section 4.0 - AGENCY POLICY GOVERNING SWAT TEAMS

- 4.2.1 - Policy that identifies team organization and function which includes an organizational diagram. Command relationships between the SWAT or TRT team, incident commander, Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) ....
- 4.2.2 - Personnel management policy that addresses selection, retention, mandatory physical and tactical competency and other appropriate personnel management processes to include the development of protocols and processes for the selection of team leaders.....



- 4.2.3 - Policy that outlines training requirements as designated by tasks. Minimum time periods should be established to develop and maintain assigned critical skills.....
- 4.2.4 - Policy that explains the activation and deployment approval process of the team. Teams operating through an MOU, should include an automatic notification and activation system to ensure the appropriate resources are deployed for the significance of the event.



- 4.2.5 - Policy that addresses the appropriation, care, maintenance and inventory of team equipment. It should also address normal life-cycle wear and removal of obsolete or faulty team equipment.
- 4.2.6 - Policy that explains the design, activation and implementation of an appropriately staffed command post, which may include a Tactical Operations Center, Crisis Negotiation Center, Media Relations Center, etc.



- 4.2.7 - The development of appropriate protocols and procedures for the conduct of long-term or extended operations. Protocols shall include, at a minimum, processes for relief and rotation of personnel and proper staffing and training of a supplemental incident command center.
- 4.2.8 - Policy requiring a threat/risk assessment for team deployments, specifically for pre-planned events such as high-risk warrant service. The operational threat/risk assessment should include an appropriate medical response plan.





- 4.2.9 - Policy requiring after-action reports (AARs) which capture tactical and incident debriefing information for training purposes. SWAT command should review all AARs, critiques, tactics and actions taken by all elements during the critical incident.
- 4.2.10 - SWAT command should be capable of producing a written annual report, which should include a summary of all activations, nature of incident, resolution, injuries occurred, use of force and other critical information.



## Section 5.0 - Operational Planning

- 5.1 Appropriately trained and designated personnel should develop an operational plan in a consistent format for pre-planning purposes. The planning processes should include target scouting; development of detailed written operations orders, detailed operations order briefings, operation rehearsals and pre-mission inspections. Final approval for all operational planning documents should rest on the team commander or a designee.
- 5.2 All SWAT team members should be trained in and capable of demonstrating proficiency in operational planning concepts.



## 6.0 - MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL AND REGIONAL SWAT OPERATIONS

- 6.1 - The SWAT team (refer to Section 2.0 Team Typing) should develop appropriate agreements, protocols and procedures for support relationships between and among neighboring teams for the handling of extraordinary incidents which exceed the capabilities and resources of the primary jurisdictional team. Where SWAT teams have access to additional supporting elements, they may also establish internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and/or external Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) or Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs).



## 7.0 - Glossary

