

2.2.1 Unusual Occurrences and Special Operations

I. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Johnstown Police Department to plan, implement and manage unusual occurrences and special operations in accordance with this general order.

Pennsylvania C.S. Title 35 Health and Safety, Part V Emergency Management Services, Chapter 75 mandates each political subdivision to establish an Emergency Operation Plan.” The resolution approved and adopted by the Council, City Manager and City Solicitor of “The City of Johnstown”. They adopted an Emergency Operations Plan that can be found documented in the “City of Johnstown Manual”.

II. PURPOSE

To establish general guidelines for planning and deploying personnel for unusual occurrences.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Chief of Police

1. The chief of police is responsible for overall planning of the law enforcement response to unusual occurrences and for department participation in the regional emergency operation plan.
 - a. Unusual occurrences include both natural and man-made disasters. Natural disasters include hurricanes, tornadoes, storms, floods, blizzards, ice storms, fire, or any other natural catastrophe which results in property damage, suffering or hardship, or loss of life. A man made disaster includes transportation accidents, explosions, major power failures, hazardous materials exposure, or environmental contamination, which results in property damage, suffering or hardship or loss of life.
2. Map of the emergency evacuation of the city is in the roll call room. The emergency response plan is located in the Emergency Operations Center [E.O.C.] with the Public Safety Building.
3. The chief of police is responsible for coordinating all law enforcement plans with the municipal, county or state official charged with emergency activities.
4. Aid to other jurisdictions in unusual situations and mutual assistance is covered under the Cambria County Mutual Aid Agreement.

2.2.1 continued

B. Operations

1. The City of Johnstown's "Integrated Emergency Operations Center" [I.E.O.C.] maintains a variety of services, maps and photomaps to serve in plotting operation commitments to include the following:
 - a. Organization Chart
 - b. Emergency Medical Assistance [E.M.A.] Structure Mapping
 - c. Warning Systems
 - d. Emergency Management Software
 - e. Electronic Mapping
 - f. Satellite Connectivity
 - g. Disaster Management Taskforce
 - h. Evacuation Plan
 - i. "Ward" Specific
 - i. Staging Areas
 - j. Transportation during evacuation
 - k. Technical Rescue
 - l. Hazmat Response
 - m. Police Special Emergency Response Team [S.E.R.T.]
 - n. Public Works
 - i. Trained equipment operators

C. Special Operations

1. The I. E.O.C. must know the abilities of assigned personnel and shall use this information in assigning or calling out officers for special operations. They shall assign officers by skill qualification, training, physical fitness and agility, psychological stability and interpersonal communication skills, which are best, suited for requisite response.
2. Officers selected for special operations shall be under the authority of the commander directing the operation until properly relieved.
3. Bomb disposal operations must be conducted by specially trained "Bomb Technician's" such as the Pennsylvania State Police, Allegheny County Police, United States Military, etc.

D. Special Events

Special event plans shall include, at a minimum:

1. Special personnel qualification requirements, if any.
2. Command and control.

2.2.1 continued

3. Written estimates of traffic, crowd, or crime problems anticipated.
4. Logistics requirements.
5. Coordination with outside agencies.

E. Mobilization/call-back

1. In any emergency or special operation where additional law enforcement resources are required, the chief of police or his/her designee may:
 - a. Hold over the shift due to an emergency so that personnel of two shifts are available.
 - b. Call back additional personnel.
2. Some special operations are planned weeks in advance and, where possible, additional personnel required will be given advance notification of time, place, uniform, duties, etc. For other operations such as raids, security considerations may limit advance notification to minutes.
3. The chief of police or his/her designee shall assign personnel called back as required, using the skills, knowledge and abilities of recalled officers where appropriate.
4. Call back time is paid time and will be strictly controlled and accounted for, minimizing expenditure where feasible.

IV. BOMB THREATS

A. Responsibilities of Responding Officers

1. The responding officer will acknowledge the call by radio only if he/she is not in the immediate vicinity of the scene. All portable radios and cell phones will be turned off prior to arriving at the scene.
2. Make contact with the facility management personnel to assess the credibility of the threat and explain their responsibilities and options. Obtain additional information such as, whether previous threats have been made, vulnerabilities of equipment and personnel, and possible motives or suspects.
3. Interview the person who received the original call to collect information on what time the call was received, what the caller specifically said, the caller's voice, mannerisms and any background noises.
4. Contact should be made as soon as possible by non-mobile telephone with the 9-1-1 Center to update available information.
5. If an unusual device is located, do not touch it. The main concern is to safeguard lives by evacuating the area until the arrival of explosive experts.

2.2.1 continued

B. Responsibilities of the Shift Supervisor

1. The shift supervisor shall request the assistance of the handler and bomb dog.
2. The shift supervisor shall respond to the scene and assume command of the operation until relieved by a higher-ranking officer. The shift supervisor should honor any request made by the bomb dog handler.
 - a. If an explosion occurs, the ranking fire official on the scene shall become the incident commander.
3. Assess the situation and make a determination on notification of command personnel and/or Detective Bureau.
4. Determine what outside agencies should be notified. If a suspected explosive device has been detected an authorized bomb disposal unit will be notified.
5. Establish a security perimeter around the scene and assign officers to traffic control in the area.
6. Coordinate with outside agencies as they arrive on scene.
7. If the decision is made by management of the premises, to evacuate the building, the supervisor may assign officers to assist in the evacuation process.
8. If the decision is made, by the management of the premises to search the building, the supervisor may designate a search team who are knowledgeable of the buildings contents and layout. They should work in concert with the bomb dog handler.
9. A floor plan should be obtained for immediate reference. The search should be coordinated so as not to be repetitious.
10. Make certain no information is released to any news media until approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
11. If there is an audible recording of the caller secure a copy for evidence.
12. If 9-1-1 has the callers phone number and/or location. If not contact the phone company to determine if callback number or subscriber information can be obtained.
13. Coordinate with the Detective Bureau on the investigation.

V. HAZMAT

A. Responsibilities of Responding Officers

1. The first responding officer[s] are to only attempt to recognize, identify and report the hazard. Any action taken can increase the hazard. Properly trained and equipped personnel can only carry out a specialized approach to hazardous materials.
2. Remain at a safe distance, upwind, and do not enter the contaminated area.
3. Secure a perimeter and establish traffic control for vehicles and pedestrians.
4. Attempt to view any hazardous material placards, if present.

2.2.1 continued

B. Responsibilities of the Shift Supervisor

1. Coordinate with other responding agencies as they arrive on scene.
2. Determine if the incident is accidental or criminal. If the incident is criminal, notify the Detective Bureau.
3. Notify the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

VI. CIVIL DISTURBANCES

A. Responsibilities of Responding Officers

1. Observe the situation from a safe distance to determine if the crowd is peaceful or potentially violent. Also, attempt to visually identify the leader of the group.
2. Maintain communications with 9-1-1 providing information on the size of the crowd, area involved, and mood of the crowd, any damaged property and weapons involved.

B. Responsibilities of the Shift Supervisor

1. Assess the situation for seriousness and determine if it can be handled with existing resources. If not, request the dispatcher to call out the Johnstown/Richland Special Emergency Response Team.
2. The shift supervisor is the incident commander until relieved by a higher-ranking officer or until such time as the S.E.R.T. Team arrives on scene and the team leader or incident commander takes control.
3. Instruct 9-1-1 to notify other resources as needed, such as fire, EMS, hospital and/or surrounding police departments.
4. Notify the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

C. Mass Arrest Procedure

1. The on-duty District Judge will immediately be advised of the situation so that he/she may determine a place for arraignment.
2. Arrested persons will be removed from the point of disturbance by the arresting officer and transported to the point where processing will take place.
 - a. The Prisoner Transport Unit may be activated, if so that unit will transport the prisoner to the JPD and conduct the processing.
3. Any persons who are injured will be given medical treatment before processing begins.
4. In the event juveniles are arrested, care shall be taken to ensure they are kept separate from adult arrests. Also, their parent[s] or legal guardian should be notified as soon as possible.

2.2.1 continued

5. In circumstances where it is clear that the number of persons arrested will exceed the resources of the Johnstown Police holding facility, alternatives should be considered. Possible alternatives include, but are not limited to, the following.
 - a. Direct transportation to the Cambria County Prison by the JPD or Sheriff's Department.

VII. HOSTAGE, BARRICADED GUNMAN OR OTHER HIGH RISK INCIDENT

A. Responsibilities of Responding Officers

1. Determine the nature of the high-risk situation.
2. Contact 9-1-1 and shift supervisor and report all known information about the situation and subjects involved.
3. Take cover where surveillance can be safely maintained.
4. Establish a perimeter and evacuate civilians from the perimeter if this can be done safely.
5. Take no forceful action unless there is an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury and such action would prevent such injury or death.

B. Responsibilities of the Shift Supervisor

1. Evaluate and confirm the existing situation.
2. Keep all equipment and officers out of sight, if possible.
3. The on scene highest ranking supervisor is the incident commander until relieved by a lighter ranking officer or until such time as the S.E.R.T. Team arrives on scene to assume responsibility and the team leader or incident commander takes charge.
4. Notify the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
5. Make certain no information is released to any news media until approved by the Chief of Police.

VIII. JOHNSTOWN/RICHLAND SPECIAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

A. S.E.R.T.

The Johnstown/Richland Special Emergency Response Team is a highly trained, highly skilled police tactical unit that has been shown to substantially reduce the risk of injury or loss of life to citizens, police officers and suspects. Recognizing that a well managed team response to critical incidents usually results in successful resolution of critical incidents; it is the intent of the S.E.R.T. Team to provide a highly trained and skilled tactical team as a resource the Johnstown/Richland Police Departments in handling of critical incident.

2.2.1 continued

1. The decision to call out the S.E.R.T. Commander will be the responsibility of the shift supervisor.
2. The shift supervisor will advise the Records Department of the type of incident and location of incident.
3. 9-1-1, Records Clerk or Light Duty Officer shall activate the S.E.R.T. Team.
4. Situations not needing immediate response must be approved by the Captain or the Chief of police before the S.E.R.T. Team is activated.
5. Once the S.E.R.T. is on scene they will assume responsibility for the incident. The S.E.R.T. Team will act in accordance with their established policies and procedures.
6. An ambulance and/or fire equipment may be requested to stand-by during a S.E.R.T. operation. The following procedures shall be followed:
 - a. The S.E.R.T. commander will have EMS personnel available at a staged area.
 - b. The fire department supervisor should make contact with S.E.R.T. to obtain as much information as possible, including command post locations, time needed and any other pertinent information that may benefit the EMS crew. Based on the information, the crew may resort to a command post near the incident or be on stand-by at the firehouse.
 - c. The command leader of the S.E.R.T. operation will have the radio room contacted at the completion of the incident, in order to advise the EMS crew that the incident has been terminated.

IX. FLOODING/WEATHER EMERGENCIES

A. Responsibilities of the 9-1-1 Center

1. Receiving, requesting, evaluating and relaying information.
2. Determining priorities for emergency response.
3. Contacting the “Integrated Emergency Operations Center” [IEOC].

B. Responsibilities of the Shift Supervisor

1. Determining the nature and extent of disaster.
2. Coordinating response activities of local emergency services.
3. Organizing and implementing actions to reduce the impact of emergency to other areas, such as closing roads.
4. Informing and updating the IEOC and/or Media regarding the disaster and the response.
5. Warning the public as appropriate.
6. Determining the need for and coordinating evacuation of residents.
7. Initiating a request to IEOC for Mass Care Centers.
8. Assist in the documentation of the destruction and damage.

2.2.1 continued

9. Integrated Emergency Operations Center [IEOC] would establish a list of volunteers to be called on for the police to assist during flood, snowstorms or other type of emergencies.

Effective Date:

Date: March 16, 2007

By Order Of:

Craig Foust
Chief Of Police