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“Department Training Bulletins shall be used to advise members of current police techniques and procedures and shall constitute official policy.”

Risk Assessment Overview & Operations Plan

Introduction

Whenever officers are called upon to plan and conduct high-risk operations, they create a Risk Assessment Overview and Operations Plan.

A Risk Assessment Overview and an Operations Plan help protect officers, employees, and the public from injury and reduce the possibility of civil litigation.

The Risk Assessment Overview and Operations Plan are completed by the officer planning the operation and his/her supervisor before a warrant or other operation is signed, if possible, or when the operation goes into its final planning stage.

The Risk Assessment Overview and Operations Plan are submitted to a command officer for review and approval before implementation.

Officers who use software to create a Risk Assessment Overview and Operations Plan shall use software in compliance with General Order I-1, Personal Computers. Officers shall follow the instructions and examples of a Risk Assessment Overview and Operations Plan provided in Report Writing Manual inserts O-1 and O-2. Whether using software or not, officers shall include all applicable areas as described in this Bulletin and Report Writing Manual Insert O-1, Risk Assessment Overview, and O-2, Operations Plan.

The completed Risk Assessment Overview and Operations Plan are included in the final case packet and are public records.

In instances requiring an immediate response, limited time may not allow officers to prepare a Risk Assessment Overview. Officers are reminded, however, that Department policy requires they conduct all operations in accordance with the law and with respect for the civil rights and dignity of all persons and that safety of the public and Department personnel takes precedence over the apprehension of wanted persons or the recovery of evidence.



Risk Assessment Overview (Form TF-3115, Report Writing Manual Insert O-1)

A Risk Assessment Overview evaluates the risk(s) in a planned operation and helps determine the need for specialized tactical teams.

An officer completing a Risk Assessment Overview completes Form TF-3115 (Report Writing Manual Insert O-I).

Preparing a Risk Assessment Overview is a tool. Its usefulness depends upon a thorough investigation and an unbiased appraisal by the case officer(s), supervisor, and command officer.

Specifically, a Risk Assessment Overview is designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Helps the planning officer, supervisor, and command officer obtain an objective view of the operation.
- Directs focus to the risks of the planned operation rather than to its end result, i.e., the seizure of evidence or the number of arrests.
- Shows the command officer the risk officers will confront to help the command officer determine the need for tactical teams.
- Assists the Tactical Operations Team, if called, to assess the situation and identify appropriate tactics.
- Documents and provides a public record of the facts and considerations which influenced the decision to take a particular course of action in a potentially high-risk situation.

The officer and his or her supervisor completing a Risk Assessment Overview assign a point value to each significant factor recorded in the form in an attempt to quantify the level of risk the operation presents. The higher the point value an officer assigns to any factor in the form, the more that factor increases the risk officers may confront in completing the operation.

Point values take into consideration the skills and abilities of the personnel involved and the equipment of the unit completing the assignment.

The sum of the point values assigned in all categories indicates the overall risk of the operation and helps determine whether a Tactical Operations Team consultation and/or call-out is recommended.¹

Criteria for the deployment of a Tactical Operations Team are identified in General Order K-5, Tactical Operations Team.

¹ Some responses answered in the affirmative, such as site fortification, booby traps, or a subject's history of violence and weapon use, recommend a tactical team call-out regardless of the point total.



Operations Plan (Form TF-3116, Report Writing Manual Insert O-2)

An Operations Plan provides a method officers use to organize the gathered intelligence and anticipated execution of those police actions which allow for pre-planning, such as buy-bust operations, the serving of search and arrest warrants, surveillance, hostage rescue, and barricaded subject incidents.

An officer completing an Operations Plan completes Form TF-3116 (Report Writing Manual Insert O-2).

An Operations Plan includes information on suspects, weapons, and the incident site and allows officers to document personnel and equipment assignments and approach, entry, and search plans.

An Operations Plan includes a diagram of the scene and also addresses contingency concerns, such as shots fired, officer down, perimeter breach, and mission abort.

An Operations Plan is meant to be flexible in its conception. Some sections of the generic Operations Plan may not be applicable to a given operation. The Operations Plan may be modified to fit particular circumstances, and, if an officer identifies concerns not addressed in the generic plan, he or she may attach additional pages to Form TF-3116 or use TF-3116 as a guide for preparing a written Operations Plan.

An Operations Plan is completed by the officer responsible for planning the action and may be waived due to exigency or an emergency only with the approval of a commander.

An Operations Plan may also be used as a quick check list in rapidly developing situations when pre-planning is not possible.