DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy Number:	**301.156**
Title:	**Emergency Response Team/Special Operations Response Team – Training Requirements**
Effective Date:	**8/7/18**

PURPOSE: To provide training requirements for qualified emergency response teams (ERT) and special operation response teams (SORT) and to outline minimum requirements of team individuals that could respond to an incident command system (ICS) emergency, including hostage rescue and specialized riot operations. Each correctional facility may have facility procedures that include the appropriate deployment of SORT.

APPLICABILITY: All correctional facilities (MCF)

DEFINITIONS:
Department Security Committee – the facility security captains, warden who chairs the committee, and director of office of special investigations (OSI).

Physical requirements – the SORT/special operations group (SOG)/marksman/observer team (MO) Physical Standards Test (attached) includes (completed in order):
1. Pushups: 25, wearing the agency-approved respirator mask;
2. Sit ups: 30, while wearing the agency-approved respirator mask;
3. 170-pound dummy drag: 50 feet, wearing the agency-approved respirator mask;
4. One-mile run: 1 mile – first 1/4 mile wearing agency-approved respirator gas mask; and
5. A total testing time of 17 minutes.

PROCEDURES:
A. Qualification and application process
  1. Qualifications
    a) Negotiator
      (1) Minimum of three years of corrections, law enforcement or military experience.
      (2) Supervisor's written approval.
      (3) Commitment to CNT for three years as a team member and six years for a CNT coordinator.
        (a) CNT coordinator must hold the rank of sergeant or equivalent, and be an active team member prior to appointment to a leadership position.
        (b) Exceptions must be approved by the director of OSI, and the appointing authority.

    b) SORT
      (1) Minimum of a correctional officer 2 (CO2) certification or comparable experience in a non-correctional officer position.
      (2) Complete and sign the SORT application form.

(3) Complete and sign the Respirator Qualification OSHA Questionnaire (attached), the Respiratory Fit Test Record (attached), and the SORT/ERT Physical Fitness Certification (attached).

(4) The SORT/ERT physical fitness certification must be completed by a private health care provider clearing the staff member for SORT fitness standards.

(a) The completed form must be returned to the facility human resources department.

(b) Re-certification must occur every three years.

(5) Successfully complete the minimum physical fitness standards test.

(6) Applicants must go through an oral interview conducted by the captain and SORT commanders.

(7) The captain and SORT commander make selections from the pool of applicants who have met all the requirements and have gone through the oral interview process.

(8) Selection is based on information from the application form, participation in exercises and training, satisfactory or above average job performance, good physical condition, ability to promote a positive image, and the interview process.

(9) After being selected for the SORT program, each applicant must participate in a facility SORT training program and the department's SORT academy.

(10) Commitment to SORT for three years for a team member and six years for a team leader.

(a) Team leaders and assistant team leaders must hold the rank of lieutenant (LT) or equivalent and be an active team member prior to appointment to a leadership position.

(b) The Facility Appointing Authority must approve their facility SORT Team Leader.

(c) Exceptions must be approved by the director of OSI and the appointing authority.

(11) Medical re-certification must occur every three years

(12) If a SORT member is injured or out of work on medical leave, he/she must provide medical re-certification documentation prior to resuming SORT activity.

c) SOG

(1) Minimum of three years as a certified CO2 or comparable non-correctional officer experience and active SORT membership for a minimum of one year.

(2) Pass yearly SORT physical fitness test.

(3) Successfully complete department weapons certification.

(4) Commitment to SOG for three years for a team member and six years for a team leader.

(a) Team leaders and assistant team leaders must hold the rank of LT or equivalent and be an active team member prior to appointment to a leadership position.

(b) Exceptions must be approved by the director of OSI and the appointing authority.

d) MO

(1) Minimum of three years as a certified CO2 or comparable non-correctional officer experience and active SORT membership for a minimum of one year.
(2) Pass yearly SORT physical fitness test.
(3) Successfully complete department weapons certification.
(4) Commitment to MO for three years for a member and six years for a team leader.
(a) Team leaders and assistant team leaders must hold the rank of LT or equivalent and be an active team member prior to appointment to a leadership position.
(b) Exceptions must be approved by the director of OSI and the appointing authority.

e) MO/SOG
Lateral moves between MO and SOC are acceptable with both commanders' approval, if a vacancy exists and with a written e-mail request copying the facility captain and both team commanders.

f) Communication unit leader (COML)
(1) Minimum of three years of certified CO2 or comparable non-correctional officer experience.
(2) Advanced training in the ARMER radio system.
(3) Completion of the all hazards type III COML training program and certification by the State Radio Board (SRB).

2. Medical requirements
a) No medical requirements exist for COML and CNT members to participate. Medical certification is required for all tactical team members and crisis negotiators participating in physical SORT/ERT training exercises.

b) An initial medical certification using the SORT/ERT – Physical Fitness Certification (attached) must be completed by the employee's private medical provider.
(1) Medical fitness re-certification must occur every three years thereafter.
(2) The initial medical certification and all medical recertification must be sent to facility specific human resources for processing/retention.

c) Employees injured or on medical leave must provide a medical re-certification prior to resuming SORT/ERT or MO activity.

3. Application process
a) Negotiator
(1) Apply through the application process when a posting for a position becomes available.
(2) A structured interview must take place with (at a minimum) a facility coordinator and the state coordinator or designee.

b) SORT
(1) Each facility must have staff apply through a written process at each facility at least 90 days before the start of a new SORT academy.

(2) Physical requirements – after medical certification, SORT commanders conduct physical fitness standards examinations (as outlined in definitions) for SORT applicants and annually for all SORT team members.

(3) All candidates must successfully complete a hands-on 40-hour experiential SORT academy before final team consideration and activation.

c) SOG

(1) Submission of a written request to his/her facility security captain or designee, who forwards a recommendation to the warden for final approval. The warden or captain forwards the request to the SOG leader.

(2) A captain, team leader, and assistant conduct a structured interview with the applicant and review the applicant's past performance reviews.

(3) Physical requirements – after medical certification, SOG commanders conduct physical fitness standards examinations (as outlined in definitions) for SOG applicants and annually for all SOG team members.

(4) SOG team members score a hands-on experiential test that is given.

(a) When a group of candidates is chosen that doubles the number of vacancies needed on the team, the candidates are trained and evaluated in a 40 hour transitionary handgun course and an 80-hour MO and SOG academy (40 hours specific discipline academy and 40 hours ERT academy training).

(b) New team members are chosen based on all of the training results.

(c) Successful candidates who are not selected for the team are kept on an alternate list, which is kept by the team leader.

(5) The SOG academy and vacancy filling process is completed every second or third year, as the need is identified.

d) MO

(1) Submission of a written request to his/her facility security captain or designee, who forwards a recommendation to the warden for final approval. The warden or captain forwards the request to the MO leader.

(2) A captain, team leader, and assistant conduct a structured interview with the applicant and review the applicant's past performance reviews.

(3) Physical requirements – after medical certification, MO commanders conduct physical fitness standards examinations (as outlined in definitions) for MO applicants and annually for all MO team members.

(4) When a group of candidates are chosen, the candidates are trained and evaluated in a 40-hour transitionary handgun course and a 40-hour MO academy which is conducted in conjunction with the ERT week.

e) COML

(1) Submission of a written request to his/her facility security captain or designee, who forwards a recommendation to the radio system administrator for final approval.

(2) A structured interview takes place, with (at a minimum) the facility radio lieutenant and the radio system administrator.

B. Training

1. Negotiator

a) Each quarter the department CNT members receive eight hours of large unit training.
b) Facility training occurs monthly and is conducted primarily by the facility primary negotiators.
c) Training includes integration with other emergency response components.
d) Negotiator candidates must receive a minimum of 40 hours basic negotiator training, of which 24 hours must be with an approved basic negotiator school, prior to qualifying as a primary negotiator.
e) Negotiators must attend an advanced negotiating school within 36 months of becoming a CNT member.
f) Each CNT member is responsible for attending 70 percent of yearly trainings. Failure to do so may result in removal from the CNT team.

2. SORT
a) A minimum of one eight-hour training each month, of which at least 16 hours annually is specifically related to SORT operations.

b) SORT training subjects include, but are not limited to:
(1) Empty-handed control measures (EHCM);
(2) Mechanical restraints;
(3) Batons/riot formations;
(4) Riot control chemical agents;
(5) Advanced delivery systems of less than lethal munitions; and
(6) Shooting lethal and less lethal.

3. SOG
a) Each SOG member receives eight hours training monthly including:
(1) Shooting qualifications:
(a) Staff must ensure weapon function and accuracy;
(b) Weapon maintenance; and
(c) Equipment readiness.
(2) Team shooting;
(3) Scenarios including the deployment of the FN 303 in lethal and less lethal applications (see Division Directive 301.107, "FN 303 Less Lethal Launcher System").

b) Each member must annually re-qualify for the team by meeting the following requirements:
(1) Shooting lethal and less lethal, rappelling, barricade breaching;
(2) Facilities familiarization;
(3) Physical fitness; and
(4) Team member performance of requirements is reviewed by the team leader and assistant team leader. Any concerns must be reviewed by the department-wide security committee for recommendations.

4. MO
a) Each member receives eight hours of training monthly including:
(1) Shooting qualifications:
(a) Staff must update data books, documentation of monthly training shots, and adjustments;

(b) Staff must insure weapon function and accuracy;
(c) Distance and obstacles, rapid/timed shoots;
(d) Weapon maintenance; and
(e) Equipment readiness;

(2) Team shooting;
(3) Scenarios; and
(4) Staff attendance. More than two unexcused absences may result in removal from the team. A monthly individual shoot may be rescheduled if approved by team leaders and the facility.

b) Each member must annually re-qualify for the team by meeting the following requirements:
(1) Shooting:
(a) Cold bore;
(b) Different distance; and
(c) Zero accuracy;

(2) Facilities familiarization;
(3) Range estimations;
(4) Data book accuracy and upkeep;
(5) Physical fitness; and
(6) Team member performance of requirements is reviewed by the team leader and assistant team leader. Any concerns must be reviewed by the department-wide security committee for recommendations.

c) Each team leader/assistant also must re-qualify as team leader/assistant every three years:
(1) The team leader/assistant must complete an outside agency instructor course (law enforcement, military, federal) within a three-year period; and
(2) The department security committee conducts a performance review on each team leader/assistant at the end of each fiscal year.

5. COML
a) Each COML must meet all of the qualifications as set forth by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the SRB for the position of all hazards type III COML.

b) Each COML must maintain their certification by meeting all ongoing training and re-certification standards as set forth by the DHS and SRB.

c) Each COML is required to have in-depth knowledge of the following:
(1) ARMER system design and operational considerations including:
(a) Interoperable resources;
(b) Patching;
(c) State Communication Interoperability Plan; and
(d) Regional Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan.

(2) DOC radio system design and operational considerations:
(a) Facility and work unit fleet maps and available resources;
(b) Deployable resources and failure recovery plans;
(c) Communications interoperability partners and mutual aid agreements; and

(d) Basic portable and mobile radio programming and system administration.

6. ERT/SORT general training requirements
   a) The ERT trains as a combined team at least once a year.
   b) Commanders of each ERT area of expertise and each facility SORT commander must keep concise training records, including specific curricula for the training session and attendance.
   c) ERT components at each facility must participate in a large drill once a year.
   d) K-9 units must participate in ERT training at the facility level during yearly large scale training. Only agency K-9 units may be activated for ERT participation, unless additional resources are needed for outside perimeter.
   e) The department security committee conducts a performance review on each team leader/assistant for SOG, MO, and CNT teams at the end of each fiscal year. This review must be conducted at a scheduled security meeting.
   f) Each SORT and ERT member is responsible for attending 70 percent of yearly trainings. Failure to do so may result in removal from the appropriate team.
   g) The facility SORT participates in annual facility drills.
   h) All facility SORT members train at least once a year with agency K-9 units.
   i) The facility SORT, as practical, attends joint training with other facility SORT and outside agencies.
   j) SORT training is monitored and approved through the department's appointed chair of the security committee. Training topics are discussed during security committee meetings and documented in minutes.

7. All training must be documented and retained in the agency training management system.

C. Discipline

1. If an ERT/SORT member receives formal discipline, written reprimand or above, they must be removed from the ERT /SORT team for a minimum of one year. Information regarding a team removal must be kept in the employee's supervisory file, not the human resource file.

2. The team member must reapply with their specific ERT coordinator or SORT commander. The decision to allow a member to return to the ERT/SORT team is made on a case-by-case basis.

3. The team commander and assistant commander review each member's performance review to determine whether the team member remains on the team. The performance review must be satisfactory or above standards.

4. Any team member may be temporarily suspended from voluntary participation pending review into conduct or circumstances that could affect the team member's continued participation on the team.

5. The facility appointing authority conducts the review of the conduct or circumstances that could affect the team member's continued participation on the team.

D. Equipment

1. SORT and ERT equipment, weapons, and training must be standardized to the extent possible in compliance with department policy.

2. SOG and MO firearms must be signed in and out of the armory on every instance. Weapons and ammunition can only be signed out for scheduled DOC training or activation. Weapons may not be checked out prior to training and must be checked in at the end of the training session. One team member may checkout/return for multiple team members with permission from the facility captain/designee.

3. Each facility must designate staff responsible to maintain SORT equipment.

4. For SORT training, refer to Policy 103.410 "In-Service Training."

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. All training records are retained in the agency's training management system.

B. All medical certification forms are retained in the employee's human resources file.

ACA STANDARDS: 4-4048, 4-4224, 3-JTS-3B-14, 2-CO-1C-01

REFERENCES: Minn. Stat. §§ 241.01, 243.52, and 609.06
Policy 301.081, "Use of Force and Restraints - Adult"
Policy 103.410, "In-Service Training"
Policy 105.113, "Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)"
Policy 105.115, "Respiratory Protection Program"
Division Directive 300.036, "Emergency Assistance Non-State Systems"
Division Directive 301.081, "Use of Force and Restraints – Adult"
Policy 301.100, "Weapons Control"
Division Directive 301.107, "FN 303 Less Lethal Launcher System"
Division Directive 301.120, "Canine Units"
Policy 301.140, "Incident Command System (ICS)"
Policy 301.160, "Emergency Plans – Facilities and Central Office"
Division Directive 500.012, "Offender Emergency Health Care"
29 C.F.R. subp. 1910.134 (2008), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards
29 C.F.R. subp. 1910.139 (2003), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards

REPLACES: Division Directive 301.156, "Emergency Response Team/Special Response Team – Training Requirements," 5/16/17.
All facility policies, memos, or other communications, whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means, regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: SORT/ERT Physical Fitness Certification (301.156A)
SORT/ERT Physical Standards Test (301.156B)

APPROVALS:
Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services
Deputy Commissioner, Community Services

Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services
Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support