

# Ponderosa Fire Department Operating Guideline

## Responses Involving Violence or Potential Violence

*Adopted May 18, 2015*

### **PURPOSE**

To provide for crew safety and protection to an active shooter or other response to an incident of violence that does not delay life saving measures to injured persons.

### **SCOPE**

First responder safety is paramount. Every active shooter or violent incident will have its own dynamic variables and considerations. Deviation from this guideline to protect the safety of first responders may be required. The Officer In Charge (OIC) will be the primary individual to make any necessary decisions regarding deviation from this guideline.

### **GUIDELINES**

#### **Response**

- A. When dispatched to any call in which a violent act has occurred or where there is a threat of violence, obtain as much relevant information as possible from the Commcenter before committing to the location. In such circumstance, as determined by the OIC retrieve and don tactical vests **prior to departure (preferred)** from the station prior to the entry of the scene.
- B. If dispatched while out of the station, retrieve and don tactical vests in staging **prior to move up**.
- C. If advised to stage for law enforcement stage well away from the scene out of the direct line-of-sight from the incident location.
- D. The OIC has the discretion to determine the use of tactical vests to any other type of incident.

#### **On-Scene Operational Considerations**

- A. Fire/EMS Command should be established in a safe area well away from the incident, until the incident threat has been neutralized. If conditions allow, consider a Unified Command with law enforcement and EMS and/or others as appropriate.
- B. Identify a stable and secure staging area for incoming fire/EMS units and communicate same via radio. A survey of the perimeter should be conducted prior to establishment of the staging area. Avoid stacking companies in close proximity. Avoid staging near parked vehicles if possible due to risk of explosive devices.
- C. Crews should continually assess/survey the scene noting hydrant locations, exit/evacuation routes, roadway/transportation access, areas of operation, medical triage locations, alternate staging areas, potential landing zones, and potential locations for an alternate Command Post.
- D. Coordinate with law enforcement to determine number of suspects, potential explosion or hazmat perimeters, damage areas. Crews should be cognizant of secondary devices and/or perpetrators, and keep companies on scene informed of changing conditions.
- E. Triage, assess, assist, and treat patients encountered outside the hazard area. Work with EMS to institute Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) operations if warranted. Ensure other agencies know where the medical triage areas are. Establish a Medical Division.
- F. When assigned with a protective law enforcement escort, triage, assess, assist, and treat patients encountered in the warm zone. The warm zone is defined as an area that has been covered by contact teams of law enforcement, but has not been fully cleared of danger. Warm zones are potentially dangerous areas that may be the subject of an active shooter's attention.

G. Reroute all traffic and citizen movement out of hot and warm zones if law enforcement is unavailable to do so.

### **Post-Incident**

**These types of incidents are generally law enforcement based.**

A. All media, family, or citizen inquiries should be directed to the individual designated by the IC. Primarily direct them to LE.

B. Perform a post-incident discussion with PFD personnel as soon as feasible upon return.

C. Consider notifying the Department Chaplain for CISD.

### **Additional Guidelines if Warranted**

Attempt to determine information such as:

1. Accurate location threat
2. Number of perpetrators believed to be involved
3. Number of victims believed to be involved
4. Type of structure
5. Whether the threat is indoors or outside of a structure
6. Other hazards present (firearms, knives, explosives, hazmat, etc.)
7. What other resources are on scene and/or enroute to respond to the incident
8. Company Officers should utilize pre-plans when available to assess the scene and potential hidden hazards.
9. The decision to stage or move-up is ultimately up to the OIC . Staging instructions will generally be given by the Commcenter when there is reason to believe a hazard exists. Deviation from that instruction can be made based on the information relayed and a risk analysis of the factors presented. When approaching the scene, approach slowly and stop prior to arrival at the actual location. The OIC is to complete a windshield scene survey, looking for suspicious activities, persons, or objects prior to exiting the apparatus. Communicate extensively with the crew.
10. Eye protection should also be worn at this time. If the presence of hazardous materials is suspected, bunker gear and SCBA should be donned.
11. If not already assigned, a Com channel should be requested from the Commcenter.

### **Maintenance of Tactical Vests**

- A. Body armor should NEVER be cleaned as a complete system. Each component should be cleaned separately.
- B. Remove the armor panels from the Carrier (vest).
- C. Remove Velcro patches from front and rear. (Fire) and (Ponderosa Fire)
- D. Detach front and back of carrier (vest)
- E. Remove all items from pouches.

### **Washing External Carrier (vest)**

1. Carrier can be machine washed with regular detergent.
2. Dry carrier on low heat
3. Make sure carrier is completely dry before placing armor back in the carrier.

**Cleaning Velcro Name Plates**

1. Use cold water and a damp sponge with mild soap
2. Wipe clean with cold water
3. Air dry only.

**Cleaning Ballistic Panels (armor inserts)**

1. Use cold water and a damp sponge with mild soap
2. Wipe clean with cold water
3. Air dry only.
4. Do not hang dry.

**Reassembly**

1. All Pieces of the carrier (vest) are numbered with the same number.
2. Identify front and rear armor on the tag. Tag faces the body.
3. Place armor in the carrier and attach the Velcro hangers on the inside near the shoulders.
4. Zip closed the bottom. Front and Back.
5. Place name plates on the carrier
  - A. Front name plate (Fire)
  - B. Rear name plate (Ponderosa Fire)
  - C. Attach front and rear carrier (vest) together.
  - D. Place all items back in the pouches