
15.0 POLICE MARKSMAN/OBSERVER TEAM

15.01 PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish rules and regulations for the Department's Police Marksman/Observer Team for deployment, training, qualifications, and use of members.
- B. The Department policy is to ensure that the Department's Police Marksman Team adheres to the proper procedures in accordance with the use of force policy.

15.02 POLICY

- A. The Department has at its disposal members specially trained to be Police Marksman/Observers. The Department utilizes these members to preserve life during a response to high-risk situations that exceed those immediately available to the agencies first responders through special weapons and tactics, containment, de-escalation, and control. The utilization of the Police Marksman/Observer Team requires strict adherence to procedures that guide the Marksman in the use of force during response to a critical incident where force may be necessary. The use of force by the Marksman is only authorized when it is objectively reasonable and for a lawful purpose. The use of force by Department members is governed by Federal Law, Wyoming State Statute, the U.S. Constitution, Wyoming Constitution, and applicable case law.

15.03 DEFINITIONS

- A. Police Marksman/Observer (Marksman) - a sworn law enforcement officer who is trained and certified in the use of special weapons and tactics who is utilized in various capacities.
- B. Team Leader - The first line Supervisor who plans missions, training and standard achievements, team control, logistics, equipment recommendations, and liaison between the team members and command staff.
- C. After-Action Report - A written report detailing the results of the operation where Department Marksman are deployed.

15.04 PROCEDURES

- A. General
 - 1. The purpose of this policy is to establish for the role, responsibilities of and selection process for members of the Department Police Marksman/Observer Team.
 - a. The Department Marksman will use specialized training and sight enhanced equipment to observe and report real-time intelligence to the appropriate level of command when deployed on an incident.
 - b. The Department Marksman will provide protective over-watch to emergency personnel, civilians, and/or hostages during critical incidents by bringing precision rifle fire against designated human targets, with the intent to immediately neutralize or suppress the dangers and life-threatening actions of those designated targets.
- B. Rules of Engagement
 - 1. The Police Marksman will be authorized to use deadly force in the following circumstances:
 - a. To defend themselves or others from what they reasonably believe is the imminent threat of deadly force by a suspect.

- b. To prevent the escape of a suspect from a critical incident's containment perimeter, if the Marksman reasonably believes such suspect's escape would seriously endanger human life or subject the public to the risk of great bodily harm.
- C. Command Authority
 1. It is a fact that tactical situations are fluid and ever evolving and subject to rapid change. A command officer may be forced to order a Marksman to use deadly force when the Marksman does not have personal knowledge of the imminent use of deadly force by a suspect and that all other options to immediately neutralize or suppress the dangerous and life-threatening actions of a suspect have been precluded.
 2. The collective knowledge doctrine allows an officer to rely on information gathered by other officers. The command officer has the collective intelligence and makes the decision to employ deadly force against a suspect. The command officer issuing such an order will:
 - a. Issue the command in clear, plain language.
 - b. Will confirm with the Marksman that the target has been positively identified and the Marksman is in a position to engage the intended target.
 - c. Will include in his order a provision to abort the command to employ deadly force should the tactical situation warrant such a change.
- D. Tactical Disarmament
 1. Members of the Department Marksman Team will not engage in tactical disarmament or the intentional attempt to disarm suspects by shooting weapons from the hands of suspects.
- E. Target Identification
 1. When identifying pre-designated targets, Marksman will rely upon permanent facial features of a suspect when making any such identification.
- F. Call out and Deployment of Department Police Marksman
 1. Police Marksman should be called out by a Supervisor when there is any critical incident where there is protracted threat to human life where Marksman capabilities may have a positive outcome on the results.
 2. Whenever staffing and the critical incident allows, Operational Marksman will be deployed in two-man Marksman/Observer teams.
 3. In such situations, the role of Marksman and Observer will be interchangeable. When fatigue becomes a factor, the Marksman and Observer will alternate their respective roles.
- G. Selection of Personnel
 1. The selection and training of members is the single most important aspect in forming the Marksman team. The following are criteria that will be used as a basis in the selection process. The Chief of Police, Operations Lieutenant, or Police Marksman Team Leader may expand these standards.
 2. Police Marksman members must:
 - a. Be a Department member in good standing.
 - b. Volunteer for the team.
 - c. Be in good medical condition.
 - d. Be emotionally mature and stable.
 - e. Have demonstrated an above average proficiency with firearms and marksmanship.

- f. Have at least two (2) years minimum experience in a solo assignment post field training.
 - g. Do not have a record of excessive illness or tardiness.
 - h. Must agree to serve a minimum of three (3) years after selection unless removed from the team for cause.
 - 3. Selection Criteria
 - a. For those applicants who meet the above criteria, the Team Leader or his designee will:
 - (1) Review the applicant's personnel folder
 - (2) Interview the applicant
 - (3) Seek input from active Marksman Team members
 - b. Selected candidates will join the team in a probationary status.
 - c. Regular status will be achieved after the candidate has graduated from a formal police sniper school, has passed qualification, and has a minimum of six (6) documented cold bore shots.
- H. Equipment
 - 1. Weapons
 - a. Only weapons and rifle scopes issued by the Department will be used by Marksman members in the performance of their duties.
 - b. Marksman will be responsible for cleaning their rifles after use and maintaining their rifles and scopes in serviceable condition.
 - c. Only the authorized Marksman Team armorer will perform any service, repair, or make any modification to the weapons system that goes beyond basic field cleaning.
 - d. Any request for service, repair, or modification to any weapons system will be made in writing to the Team Leader. No service, repair, or modification will be allowed to a weapon system without the approval of the Department Marksman Team Leader. All service or repair records will be provided to the Team Leader and retained on file.
 - 2. Data Book
 - a. All Marksmen will maintain a data book in which is recorded data on previous engagements, commonly referred to as "dope" that is pertinent to the performance of the individual's weapon system at varying distances, under different climatic conditions, with different ammunition lots.
 - 3. Ammunition
 - a. Only .308 Winchester factory Federal Gold Medal match loaded with a Sierra 168 gr. Boat Tail Hollow Point is authorized to engage targets.
- I. Qualification
 - 1. All Marksmen shall meet qualification standards as set forth by the Team Leader.