

# San Diego Sheriff's Department



## Crisis Negotiation Team Operations Manual

# CRISIS NEGOTIATIONS OPERATIONS MANUAL

## 1) POLICY

- a) Membership on the San Diego County Sheriff's Department Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT) is voluntary. It is a collateral duty and functions in an on-call basis only. Members will adhere to the organizational structure of the team when functioning as a negotiator.

## 2) ORGANIZATION

- a) CNT is under the command of the Law Enforcement Support Bureau. Regardless of their normal duty assignments, CNT members are under the direct control of this bureau during training sessions and assigned missions. CNT is generally organized under the following structural format:
  - i) Captain, Emergency Services Division
  - ii) CNT Unit Commander
  - iii) CNT Assistant Unit Commander
  - iv) Team One Team Leader
    - (1) Team One Team Members
  - v) Team Two Team Leader
    - (1) Team Two Team Members

## 3) UNIT POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a) CNT Unit Commander:
  - i) The CNT Unit Commander is responsible for the overall management of the unit to include personnel, budget, evaluating requests for callouts, and training.
  - ii) The CNT Commander shall respond to all call-outs except when he/she has designated the CNT Assistant Commander or a Team Leader to fulfill his/her role at the incident. The CNT Commander will report to the Incident Commander and receive a complete briefing as soon as possible. He/she will also serve as a resource to the Incident Commander and the Team Leaders. It will be the CNT Commander's responsibility to brief ranking personnel who arrive at the scene of a critical incident regarding the status of negotiations
  - iii) The general responsibilities of the CNT Commander include:
    - (1) Ensure the unit is at a high state of readiness with properly trained personnel and state of the art equipment.
    - (2) Maintain high morale and motivation in the unit.
    - (3) Prepare and administer the CNT budget.

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- b) CNT Assistant Unit Commander:
  - i) The CNT Assistant Unit Commander assists the CNT Unit Commander in the overall management of the team, and acts as the Unit Commander in their absence.
  
- c) CNT Team Leader:
  - i) There are two team leader positions. Team Leaders are responsible for the overall management of their team. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:
    - (1) The Team Leader will direct, supervise, and evaluate all of the personnel on their team.
    - (2) At an incident, the Team Leader shall activate a CNT call-out, designate team assignments, along with the Incident Commander select a negotiating command post, supervise the negotiating effort and method, and serve as a liaison to the CNT Commander.
    - (3) Following a call out, Team Leaders
      - (a) Facilitate a debriefing and address training points.
      - (b) Ensure all equipment is returned, and any damage or faulty equipment is repaired and returned.
      - (c) Ensure all deputy reports and the after action report is completed in a timely manner and submitted to the Unit Commander within established time periods.
      - (d) Approve all overtime for team members who responded in an off-duty status.
    - (4) In general, Team Leaders are responsible for monitoring the responsiveness and performance of team members. They are expected to recognize extraordinary performance by team members as well as deficient performance by team members. Both are expected to be addressed appropriately and in a timely manner.
    - (5) Team Leaders monitor their team's attendance of training and team meetings. They encourage, acknowledge participation, and address repeated absences.
  
- d) Team Members are on call every other month, based on their team assignments. Team One is on call during all odd months, and Team Two is on call during all even months.
  - i) While on call, team members are expected to respond to all requests for service in a timely manner and with all necessary equipment. Requests for service include call outs, requests for assistance and high risk warrants. Failure to respond can result in removal from the team.
  - ii) Team members are expected to complete all required reports in a timely manner as designated by the Team Leader.
  - iii) Team members are expected to maintain their assigned equipment and ensure their Team Leader is notified of any changes in contact information and/or work assignment.

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- iv) Team members are expected to attend CNT meetings, training and other functions.
- v) Team members are expected to maintain current CNT individual training records.
- vi) If a team member, of any assignment, is unable to work a portion of their on call month, they are responsible for finding their own replacement and notifying their team supervisor of the substitution and duration of substitution.

### **4) CRISIS NEGOTIATIONS TEAM SELECTIONS:**

- a) The Crisis Negotiations Team Commander (Sheriff's Lieutenant) will be selected by the Emergency Services Captain and approved through the Commander of the Law Enforcement Services Bureau. Although CNT experience is beneficial, it is not required.
- b) The Assistant Unit Commander and Team Leaders are chosen from within the unit by the Unit Commander and ESD Captain. These positions are typically filled by Sheriff's Supervisors, however due to the unique nature of CNT, these assignments may be based on experience/expertise as a negotiator, rather than Department rank.
- c) Team members are selected by the Captain of Emergency Services Division from the eligibility list generated following the interview process.
  - i) Minimum qualifications for a CNT team member are:
    - (1) Two years patrol, one must be with SDSO
    - (2) Successful completion of probation
    - (3) Available for 24 hour call-out and training as required
  - ii) Desirable skills include:
    - (1) Strong oral communication skills
    - (2) Bilingual
    - (3) Calm under stress
    - (4) Investigative experience
    - (5) Computer skills
    - (6) Demonstrated good judgment under stress
- d) The interview process for selecting new members will be comprised a scenario portion and a question and answer portion. The skills and knowledge being assessed include:
  - (1) Communication Skills
  - (2) Ability to remain calm under pressure
  - (3) Active Listening Skills
  - (4) Judgment and Problem Solving
  - (5) Knowledge of department policy and procedure
  - (6) Experience and motivation related to CNT.

## 5) EQUIPMENT

- a) CNT Issued equipment
  - i) Team members will be issued the following equipment:
    - (1) Radio, earpiece, digital recorder, cell phone or Ipad if not already issued through department.
- b) Required equipment:
  - i) Ballistic Vest, gas mask, ballistic helmet, paper, pens/pencils, extra batteries for radio and recorder.
- c) Suggested equipment:
  - i) Personal supplies needed to sustain team member for one operational period including, but not limited to:
    - (1) Clothing for various types of weather, medication, food, water, phone charger, sunscreen.
- d) Vehicles
  - i) Team members are not assigned vehicles through CNT.
  - ii) Personal Vehicles:
    - (1) Team Members may submit claims for mileage to and from call outs if using a personal vehicle.
  - iii) Department assigned vehicles:
    - (1) Team members who are assigned a department vehicle in their full time assignment are encouraged to include the following notation on the SO-92 Authorization for Home Garage or Off Duty Use of County Vehicle.
      - (a) *As a member of CNT, I am on call 24/7 during (specify odd or even) months and subject to county wide response to critical incidents involving SED activations, suicidal subjects, hostage situations and armed barricaded subjects.*
      - (b) Appropriate use of the vehicle will be determined by the team member's command and ESD command at the time of the request.

## 6) TRAINING

- a) It is mandatory that CNT members maintain their communications skills and keep up to date on all training issues. There is an elevated liability associated with crisis negotiations so it is imperative that all CNT members attend on-going training. The National Council of Negotiations Associations guidelines recommend a minimum of 40 hours of training annually in order to stay proficient.
- b) Minimum Training Requirements:
  - i) Within one year of appointment, team members must attend a 40 hour Basic Negotiators Course.
  - ii) Within three years of appointment, or upon availability of a course, team members must attend the following:
    - (1) Advanced Negotiations, 40 hours
    - (2) Domestic Violence for Negotiators, 24 hours

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- c) Additional recommended training:
  - i) Interview and Interrogation
  - ii) Suicide Prevention
  - iii) Emotional Survival
  - iv) Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
  - v) Communication Skills
  - vi) CAHN Training
  - vii) State and National Negotiator Conferences
  - viii) Negotiation Team Leader Course

### **7) PARTICIPATION**

- a) CNT members are expected to attend all team functions to include calls for service, training, and team meetings.
- b) Lack of response and/or participation regardless of reason, can be cause for removal from the unit.

### **8) COLLATERAL DUTIES WITHIN CNT**

- a) CNT is a collateral duty for all team members. In furtherance of effective and efficient team management, CNT members are be expected to assume collateral duties on the team. These duties may include, but are not limited to:
  - i) Training Officer/Assistant Training Officer:
    - (1) One assigned to each team and is responsible for the on-going training needs assessment of the team and individual team members, research, development and coordination of team training, maintenance of team training records, establishing and maintaining relationships with other CNT teams in the region and with other Sheriff's units for collaborative training opportunities.
  - ii) Equipment Officers:
    - (1) One is assigned to each team and are jointly responsible for inventory, maintenance, and operation of all CNT equipment, coordination of repairs, replacement of all CNT equipment, providing on-going team training related to all CNT equipment, research, and requests for new equipment.
  - iii) Webmaster:
    - (1) This position is responsible for the maintenance of the CNT intranet website.

### **9) CALL OUT ASSIGNMENTS**

- a) At an incident scene, members of CNT will be assigned to the following functions:

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- i) Primary Negotiator:
  - (1) Establishes and maintains contact based on missions from the Incident Commander.
  
- ii) Secondary Negotiator/Coach:
  - (1) Works directly in support of the primary negotiator and offers assistance or suggestions when appropriate.
  - (2) Monitors all conversations between the primary negotiator and the subject.
  - (3) In the event the Team Leader is unable to monitor negotiations, provides updates and reports tactically sensitive information to the Team Leader.
  
- iii) Scribe:
  - (1) Assigned at Negotiations Operations Center (NOC) to document all notable information including but not limited to:
    - (a) Incident details
    - (b) Response times
    - (c) Team assignments
    - (d) Timelines associated with missions and other critical information
    - (e) Team information to include equipment use and overtime tracking
  
- iv) Intelligence Officer(s):
  - (1) Works with Tactical Operations Center (TOC) and analysts to gather intelligence on the suspect and/or hostages, and provides updates to Team Leader and team.
  - (2) Develops Third Party Intermediary (TPI) recordings when appropriate.
  - (3) Assists in removing and keeping unauthorized personnel from NOC and/or immediate negotiating area.
  - (4) Participates/monitors the debriefing released/escaped hostages or witnesses.
  
- v) SED Liaison Officer (if needed):
  - (1) Works directly with the tactical unit liaison officer to ensure efficient exchange of information.
  
- vi) All other CNT personnel at the incident scene will provide support and assistance where needed or directed.