5-09/465.30 - Operations Plan Preparation

The Department's Operations Plan format is designed to accommodate a broad range of anticipated situations, while at the same time maintaining a systems approach to planning and documentation. Use of this format will ensure consistency and uniformity in the planning and documenting of information pertaining to search operations.

An operations plan shall precede any search operation, absent exigent circumstances. For “Moderate” or “Lower” risk operations this requirement may be waived by the incident commander. The operations plan shall be reviewed for completeness and accuracy by the incident commander. The incident commander shall oversee a pre-operation briefing and personally supervise the execution of the plan. The operations plan shall be approved by a watch commander/team lieutenant or above.

The operations plan shall contain the following points:

- All searches shall be conducted in teams of two (2) deputies per room; and
- A scribe shall be appointed to author a report describing the execution of the plan and any subsequent search. The report shall include the following information:
    - All deputies present during the search of the location; and
    - A listing of each item of evidence seized, specifically describing the location where it was recovered and the name of the deputy who recovered it.

An operations plan template (SH-R-470) is available online at the following address: Microsoft Outlook / Public Folders / All Public Folders / All Forms / Category: Complaint / Force / Investigation. The original operations plan shall be maintained at the unit as part of the “Search Documentation Package.”

To the extent possible, all operations plans shall be computer generated to simplify editing, correcting, and storage of materials, including the back-up files/disk(s).

Pre-Briefings

In complex, multi-unit, multi-agency operations, a pre-briefing shall be conducted with each team leader present to discuss tactics, logistics, individual agency's policies, documentation of events, etc. This shall be noted on the check-off sheet. A pre-briefing allows for points of concern to be addressed and changes made to the search operations plan prior to briefing all personnel. All changes made as a result of the pre-briefing shall be reflected in the operations plan.

Briefing

All personnel involved in a search operation shall attend the operation briefing prior to execution of the plan unless excused by the incident commander. Personnel who do not attend a briefing shall not participate in any field related aspects of the operation without the approval of the incident commander.

Primary reasons for having a search operations briefing are to:

- Account for all personnel involved in the operation;
- Identify and introduce all personnel to one another. This is particularly important when:

  - Undercover or non-uniformed personnel are involved; and
  - When different agencies are involved and/or when personnel who are unknown to one another are involved;

- Ensure that the required materials and equipment are distributed to the proper personnel;
- Ensure the dissemination of the same information to all concerned personnel;
- Ensure the same level of understanding, by all personnel, of the information which is briefed and which is contained in the search operations plan;
- Provide an opportunity for any necessary clarifications or questions;
- Provide an opportunity to raise concerns not included in the search operations plan;
- Ensure that all personnel are properly equipped with required safety equipment, as well as appropriate equipment for communications, during the search operation; and
- Ensure uniformity in the commencement of the operation.