06-001 Radiation Pager

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

Field Operations Support Services

RADIATION PAGER

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Field Operations Directive is to provide policy, guidelines, and procedures to field personnel who will be trained and equipped with the radiation pager during normal patrol duties.

BACKGROUND

In a continual effort to prepare for terrorist incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons (CBRN), the Department has purchased radiation pagers for field personnel to provide early detection of unexpected potential-radiation involved situations.

The radiation pager is an x-ray and gamma radiation detector specifically designed for use in the detection and location of radiological materials. Radiation is not detectable by human senses. The source of radiation can come in liquid, powder, or solid forms but are generally metallic. They come in all shapes and sizes and are not recognizable unless marked as such.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Department provides standardized training for patrol personnel in the use of the radiation pager. This training includes a DVD video on the use and functions of the radiation pager. Each station has been provided with a DVD video and shall make it available to their personnel. Department personnel shall not use, operate, or deploy the radiation pager without having first viewed the DVD video.

Department personnel shall not change the alarm setting on the radiation pager. The radiation pager is already set to the highest possible alarm setting to avoid unnecessary alarms. The radiation pager is very sensitive and will detect extremely low levels of radiation long before it is harmful to a deputy.

Department personnel should avoid getting any closer to a radioactive source that triggers a radiation pager reading of “8" (radiation intensity of approximately 2 milli R/Hr), even though a sustained “8" is well below a harmful level.

Patrol Deputy’s Responsibility

Each patrol unit shall deploy one radiation pager as their routine daily equipment. Only one deputy per patrol unit shall deploy the radiation pager. The radiation pager may be worn on the belt, carried in a pocket,

or deployed in the passenger compartment of the radio car.

If the alarm sounds on the radiation pager, the deputy shall do the following:

- ☐ Determine if the source of the radiation is static or mobile. If the radiation level on the pager continues at a sustained level, the source is likely to be static. If the radiation level rapidly decreases, the source is likely to be mobile (e.g., source of radiation is in a passing vehicle).
- ☐ If the radiation pager reads a sustained “8”:
  - Establish a containment. The size of the containment will be dependent on the sustained radiation level. The perimeter of the containment should be at the point where the sustained radiation level changes from “8" to “7."
  - DO NOT TOUCH the source. The deputy shall utilize time, distance, and shielding to protect themselves and others until specialized resources arrive.
  - Contact Emergency Operations Bureau’s CBRN HAZMAT Detail and follow their instructions. This detail will send specialized personnel to the scene to assist in locating and identifying the source as well as coordinating its collection for evidentiary purposes.
- ☐ If the radiation pager reads a sustained number below “8”:
  - Attempt to find the specific area where the source is emitting from
  - Determine if a threat exists or if there is an innocent reason for the radiation pager reading (e.g., a person who has received nuclear medical treatment within the past couple of weeks may cause the alarm to activate - see Attachment A for possible sources)
  - If a deputy believes the source of the radiation is suspicious or illicit (i.e., terrorism), Emergency Operations Bureau’s CBRN HAZMAT Detail shall be notified.
  - Contain the scene and DO NOT TOUCH the source. The deputy shall utilize time, distance, and shielding to protect themselves and others until specialized resources arrive.
- ☐ If the radiation pager alarm sounds but the radiation level rapidly decreases (unsustained), the source is likely to be mobile:
  - Attempt to identify the source of the radiation (e.g., vehicle passed by)
  - Determine if a threat exists or if there is an innocent reason for the radiation pager reading
  - If a deputy believes the source of the radiation is suspicious or illicit (i.e., terrorism):
    - Each situation is unique and should be assessed based on the circumstances. Deputies shall consider officer safety, public safety, and other risk factors in determining whether to stop, follow, or conduct surveillance of the vehicle
    - Obtain as much identifying information as possible (e.g., license plate number, vehicle description, unique markings, or placards)
    - Notify Emergency Operations Bureau’s CBRN HAZMAT Detail
- ☐ If a deputy is at the scene of a traffic collision or any incident where life safety is an issue and the alarm on the radiation pager activates, the deputy shall request the fire department and specify that there is radiation present and the circumstances.

Field Sergeant’s Responsibility

The field sergeant shall ensure that a radiation pager is deployed with each unit and that personnel are familiar with the contents of this directive.

Unit's Responsibility

Each unit shall ensure that only trained personnel are deployed with radiation pagers. Units shall be responsible for supplying batteries for the pagers. Damaged radiation pagers shall be returned to Emergency Operations Bureau.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment "A" Operation of the Radiation Pager

AFFECTED DIRECTIVES/PUBLICATIONS

MPP §2-11/040.00 Emergency Operations Bureau (added responsibility to EOB)

CITES/REFERENCES

MPP §4-26/011.50 Weapons of Mass Destruction MPP §5-06/070.15 Weapons of Mass Destruction

MPP §5-06/070.20 Weapons of Mass Destruction, Definitions MPP §5-06/070.25 CBRN Evacuation Considerations

MPP §5-06/070.30 CBRN Coordination Requirements MPP §5-06/080.15 CBRN Hazmat Detail

EOP §4-3, Weapons of Mass Destruction