86-028 Psychiatric Mobile Response Team and Mental Health Alert

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

Field Operations Support Services

PSYCHIATRIC MOBILE RESPONSE TEAM AND MENTAL HEALTH ALERT

The Department of Mental Health has available two services to assist law enforcement in dealing with mentally or emotionally disturbed individuals. They are the Mobile Response System and Mental Health Alert. Their field applications, however, are quite distinct.

The Emergency Response Team, in handling these types of individuals, becomes the lead agency, deals **directly** with a client/patient, and sometimes utilizes law enforcement as a backup for violent behavior. Their situations deal primarily with mental health problems - not law enforcement problems. The Emergency Response Team can be activated by all segments of the community including family members, concerned citizens and law enforcement.

There are various offices responsible for specific areas of Los Angeles County. A station area's appropriate Mental Health office number and schedule can be obtained through the Department of Mental Health.

Mental Health Alert also handles emotionally and mentally disturbed individuals. Yet, the team was designed specifically to provide on-site consultation to law enforcement personnel. Their personnel are utilized at the scene of an incident such as a barricaded individual displaying mental disorders. They perform primarily an advisory function to law enforcement. While Mental Health Alert Team members can evaluate suspects/clients in the field, the decision to do so is contingent upon a mutual agreement between mental health and law enforcement. Mental Health Alert is available as a consultative and advisory group for any police problem regardless of a crime or a tactical deployment.

Mental Health Alert can be activated only through this department's crisis negotiation team, which in turn is contacted through Special Enforcement Bureau.

In summary, key distinctions between the two services are that the Emergency Mobile Response Team is the lead agency, functions in a psychological setting and can be directly activated by each station. Mental Health Alert performs in a police setting, is advisory in nature and can be activated only through our Crisis Negotiation Team.

THEREFORE, STATION AND BUREAU PERSONNEL SHALL NOT REQUEST THE MOBILE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM FOR ANY POLICE SITUATION NECESSITATING THE DEPLOYMENT OF A SPECIAL WEAPONS AND/OR CRISIS NEGOTIATIONS TEAM. IN SUCH SITUATIONS THE CRISIS NEGOTIATIONS TEAM WILL ACTIVATE MENTAL HEALTH ALERT.