

WEST PALM BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

IV-1 SPECIALIZED INVESTIGATIVE OPERATIONS

EFFECTIVE: 11/15/2005

CALEA Standards: 43.1.1, 43.1.4, 43.1.5, 43.1.6

CFA Standards: 18.16

I. POLICY: The West Palm Beach Police Department has established guidelines for conducting surveillance, undercover, decoy, and raid operations. Specialized investigative operations can be very effective in determining criminal activities of individuals or groups. At times, specialized investigative operations may provide the only technique available to identify principals and co-conspirators involved in criminal activity. Specialized investigative operations may be conducted against organized crime, narcotics, burglars, vice suspects, and other individuals or groups who commit criminal acts.

II. DEFINITION:

A. Undercover Operations - Employed or engaged in secret investigations; the use of a pretext to gain the confidence of persons involved in criminal activities; implies anyone engaged in this type of activity must have the ability to establish a relationship with the suspect in order to determine the nature of his or her activities. An undercover operation may encompass several types of assignments which may include, but are not limited to:

1. Single Operation Assignment - an undercover operation in a gambling house, a house of prostitution, an illegal liquor establishment, or a person who deals in stolen property.
2. Multiple Operation Assignment - an investigation of a gambling operation encompassing several locations such as bookmaking, bolita, para-mutual betting operations, call-girl activity, or a burglary ring.
3. Long-Range Penetration Assignment - an operation directed toward the upper-echelon leaders of an illegal activity.
4. Intelligence Gathering Assignment - a type of undercover operation which is not directed toward any specific type of illegal activity. The operation may be used as a listening post for general information in a general geographic location where illegal activities are believed to be occurring.

B. Decoy Operations - Any one of a various number of techniques for simulating real life scenarios with surveillance maintained by officers in a position to make arrests.

C. Raid - A large scale invasion of a building or area for a lawful purpose, i.e., search warrant, arrest of an armed or violent offender.

D. Surveillance - The overt and/or covert, continuous or periodic watching of persons, vehicles, locations, or objects to obtain information concerning the activity and/or identity of an individual or group. Surveillance of people involved in a criminal investigation will be conducted in compliance with SOP and in such a manner that bystanders will not be endangered as a result of surveillance operations and the suspects are unaware of the surveillance.

III. SPECIALIZED INVESTIGATIVE OPERATIONS:

A. The Special Investigative Division (SID) will receive and process all complaints for drug and organized crime.

1. SID will maintain a database of each complaint received by the West Palm Beach Police Department and:
2. SID will maintain a record of information received from outside agencies.

B. The objective of a specialized investigative operation is to:

1. Determine the nature of the criminal activity.
2. Identify all of the persons involved in the criminal activity.
3. Legally obtain evidence for a search warrant or for prosecution.
4. Obtain evidence of a crime.
5. Locate contraband, recover evidence.
6. Protect the undercover officer and corroborate his or her testimony.
7. Prevent the commission of, or to apprehend a subject in the act of committing a crime.
8. Determine the location of an individual or group.
9. Develop leads based on information from other sources.

IV. PREPARING FOR A SPECIALIZED OPERATION:

A. Prior to determining if a specialized investigative operation is necessary or useful, the designated supervisor or investigator in charge will conduct an analysis of all available information, which may include victim information, review of F.I. cards from the area, criminal intelligence data, confidential informant information, and information from police officers or police reports from the neighborhood or target area where officers will work.

B. The supervisor or investigator in charge of the specialized investigative operation will:

1. Closely supervise the operation.
 - a. The Division Commander of the initiating division must be notified and give authorization prior to the execution of any large scale operations along with the Chief of Police.
 - b. A Supervisor will be present on-scene during any large scale decoy operation.
 - c. A Supervisor with the rank of Sergeant or above has the authority to conduct a small scale operation which encompasses his or her squad with the approval of the Shift or Division Commander.
2. Supply equipment and vehicles from the inventory of the police department or other available resources. The equipment may include:
 - a. A listening device.
 - b. Undercover vehicles, rental or confiscated.
 - c. Photographic equipment.
 - d. Any other equipment the supervisor determines to be necessary.
3. Establish means for routine and emergency communications, including:
 - a. Providing the officers radios, "body bugs", etc.
 - b. Arrange take down/arrest signals prior to the start of the operation
4. Develop strategies and tactics for approaching, entering, securing, and leaving the target area.
5. Determine operational procedures and guidelines for arrest, if applicable, including:
 - a. Where the operation will start from.
 - b. What is expected of each officer.
 - c. When and where the arrest will take place.

- d. Any other information which is necessary to successfully complete the operation.
- 6. Ensure the identity of the undercover officer remains confidential.
 - a. The participating members will be identified to the officers participating in a raid, decoy operation etc., for their safety and protection.
- 7. Supply false identities and credentials when necessary.
 - a. Officers will request false identification through Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles or other providers with the approval of the Narcotics Division Commander and the Chief of Police.
- 8. Determine what funds need to be made available and provide funds to the undercover personnel.
 - a. Request for investigative funds will be handled as described in SOP # IV-8.
- 9. Provide for backup and security when needed prior to the start of the operation.
 - a. Depending on the size of the operation, make sure there is a sufficient number of officers available.
 - b. Designate specific officers as back-ups and explain their areas of responsibility.
- 10. Provide for relief of investigators or teams for prolonged operations.
- 11. Determine what primary and backup equipment and/or vehicles are needed.
- 12. Determine what legal problems may be encountered and what action is necessary to resolve them.
 - a. Search warrants will be reviewed for legal sufficiency by the States Attorney's office.
 - b. Cases involving interpretation of state statute, sensitive or technical issues may be reviewed by the Attorney General's office.
- C. The supervisor may require the investigator in charge of a large scale specialized investigative operation to complete a plan of the operation, which is not part of the case file, containing what is currently known about the suspect(s) and target areas. This may be accomplished through an analysis of the available information and should include, but is not limited to, the:
 - 1. Suspect(s) activities, habits, vices, occupation, hobbies, and crimes.
 - 2. Suspect(s) work and residential address, including the neighborhood environment using maps, aerial photos, and/or driving in the area, if possible.
 - 3. Known vehicle(s).
 - 4. Family, associates and friends.
 - 5. Review of F.I. cards of persons who have had contact with the police.
- D. The plan of operation and all applicable information will be provided to all members participating in a large scale specialized operation.
 - 1. Information of a sensitive nature may be withheld or distributed in a limited manner at the discretion of the supervisor or investigator in charge, as long as it does not compromise the safety of any involved member.
- E. Assure the investigator is properly prepared for the assignment.

1. Disguising of members involved in the operation:
 - a. The member best suited for each particular operation will be selected.
 - b. The member will adapt his or her appearance and demeanor as that of the target citizen/victim.

V. EXECUTION OF THE SPECIALIZED INVESTIGATIVE OPERATION:

A. The supervisor or investigator in charge of any specialized large scale operation will complete the West Palm Beach Police Department Operational Format and conduct a briefing of all involved parties prior to executing a large scale specialized investigative operation.

B. The supervisor or investigator in charge of any specialized operation will notify the appropriate Shift Commander, Dispatch Operations and/or other appropriate agency, if needed, of the nature of the assignment and the personnel and vehicle(s) involved.

1. The supervisor or investigator in charge may withhold notification if the safety of any involved member or the public may be compromised by the notification.

C. Reconnaissance of the area confirming the target location and suspect presence will occur prior to execution of the operation if it can be done without alerting the suspects.

1. The member(s) conducting the reconnaissance will brief the participants of the raid regarding any information which may affect the raid.

D. A plan will be developed detailing methods to make contact with the suspect. Contact may be accomplished through:

1. The use of a confidential informant.
2. An undercover officer.
3. An arrest warrant.
4. Any other legal method.

E. Safety of the undercover officer is the primary concern of any operation.

1. A sufficient number of surveillance and back up officers is mandatory to minimize the danger to the undercover officer.

F. The use of primary radio frequencies will be avoided. A prearranged secure system of communication with headquarters and the involved parties must be established. Emergency signals are incorporated for the safety of the undercover officer.

G. Manpower:

1. The number of officers required for an operation is contingent on:
 - a. Anticipated size of the crowd.
 - b. The number of suspect(s) sought.
 - c. The number of associates known to be in the building or target area.
 - d. Other suspect information.

H. Medical assistance will be summoned or treatment given to anyone injured in the execution of the operation.

I. The arrest should be planned to occur in an area where the suspect's escape routes are limited and citizen involvement is minimal.

J. The supervisor or lead investigator, prior to arriving at the scene, should determine:

1. Who will search for evidence and contraband, and
2. Who will document and seize the evidence and contraband.

K. The supervisor on the scene will ensure the execution of the raid, search warrant, etc. is fully and completely documented in original and supplemental reports by the members involved, when necessary.

VI. INVESTIGATIVE TASK FORCES:

A. The West Palm Beach Police Department will assume an active role in various Federal, State, and local Task Forces formed as a mutual effort among agencies having concurrent or adjoining jurisdiction. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) shall be executed between the West Palm Beach Police Department and participating agencies prior to participation in the task force. The MOU shall describe:

1. Purpose of the Task Force
2. Participating agency authority and responsibilities
3. Establish accountability and supervision guidelines for personnel and resources assigned to the task force
4. Identify resources to be contributed to the Task Force by each participant in the MOU.

B. Task force participation shall be based upon a specific purpose and an identified need as determined by the Chief of Police or designee.

C. Bureau Commanders with direct supervisory authority over personnel assigned to a Task Force shall provide the Chief of Police with a report evaluating the results and the need for continued participation in the Task Force. This report shall be provided to the Chief of Police prior to the renewal of the MOU.

VII. REFERENCE:

- FSS 934 Security of Communications.
- SOP # IV-7 Search Warrants.
- SOP # IV-25 Special Weapons and Tactics.

Delsa R. Bush, Chief of Police

Original issue: 03/10/1989
Revised: 11/15/2005
I.D. # 1350

History: SOP # changed to IV-1 on 01/01/2005, SOP #18.03 changed on 06/01/1999
Old SOP # 6.630.004 Decoy Operations, 6.630.005 Undercover Operations, 6.630.006 Planning a Raid, Surveillance Equipment 6.630.009,
Revision Dates: 06/01/1999, 12/15/1999, 01/01/2005, 11/15/05

Job Title Task Files: Supervisors