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080072



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 18, 2008  
**TO:** Command Staff  
**FROM:** David M. Rohrer, Colonel *DMR*  
Chief of Police  
**SUBJECT:** Policy Revision  
**REF:** Use of Force - General Order 540.1

Effective immediately, the following policy revision is enacted concerning General Order 540.1, Use of Force:

### VII. TRAINING

All sworn officers shall receive training and demonstrate proficiency in the use of all authorized weapons before carrying them. The Director of the Criminal Justice Academy shall maintain an authorized list of weapons approved by the Chief of Police to be used for deadly and non-lethal force. Officers shall qualify with all issued firearms on an annual basis to comply with the mandates established by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. Additionally, all officers shall undergo refresher training and qualification (if applicable) at least biennially for any authorized weapons other than firearms.

This new training section will be incorporated in the April 2009 revisions of the General Orders, as part of the entire comprehensive modification to the Use of Force Policy. This specific section is needed for the Department to be in compliance with the VLESPC 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Accreditation Standards.

Any questions or comments should be referred to the Chief's Office of Research and Support at 703-246-4292.

DMR/eg





# County of Fairfax, Virginia

080048

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** July 21, 2008  
**TO:** Command Staff  
**FROM:** David M. Rohrer, Colonel *DMR*  
Chief of Police  
**FILE:** 08-142  
**SUBJECT:** New SOP  
**REF:** Police Rifle Program

In 2002, the Patrol Rifle Program was created to provide qualified and trained field operational personnel with an additional force option when responding to specific critical incidents on an immediate basis. The deployment of patrol rifles has enhanced the safety of our officers in the field and serves our ability to provide a higher level of protection to the citizens of Fairfax County.

Since the initiation of this program, the deployment of rifles has become more widespread to include operational personnel outside of the Patrol Bureau. Additionally, the Department has expanded the program to include the new pump action rifle. As a result, an SOP was created renaming the program, which eliminates the sole reference to patrol officers, and provides guidelines governing the selection of rifle operators, training, operational procedures, and the storage of Police rifles.

The Police Rifle Program SOP, which goes into effect August 1, 2008, governs all Police rifles deployed throughout the Department. The only exceptions to this SOP are rifles utilized by the SWAT Team and the Animal Services Division, which are governed by their own specific policies.

DMR/mad

Fairfax County Police Department  
4100 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030



**TITLE:** Police Rifle Program

**SOP NUMBER:** New SOP

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 1, 2008

**REPLACES/RESCINDS:**

fcpsd sop

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish guidelines regarding departmental use of the police rifle.

## II. POLICY

It is the policy of this agency to use only the level of force reasonably necessary to control or otherwise subdue violent or potentially violent individuals. The police rifle has been proven effective in furtherance of this policy, and the rifle is authorized for use in appropriate circumstances by trained personnel.

Only officers who are trained by the Fairfax County Police Firearms Training Unit shall use police rifles issued by the Fairfax County Police Department. In order to maintain their certification with the police rifle, semi-automatic (AR-15 type) trained personnel must attend quarterly qualification and training. Pump action trained personnel must attend bi-annual qualification and training.

The Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) within the Operations Support Bureau (OSB) and officers within the Animal Services Division shall not be governed by this policy. Decisions involving police rifle selection and operation for SWAT (including Supplemental SWAT officers) fall under the authority of the OSB Commander and Standard Operating Procedures within the Special Operations Division. Animal Control Division Officers are issued specific rifles for euthanasia purposes and other mission essential tasks that are governed by SOPs within the Animal Services Division. Any other exceptions to this policy shall be approved by the Director of the Criminal Justice Academy, who will consult with the Police Rifle Coordinator and the Firearms Training Unit (FTU) Supervisor.

## III. DEFINITION

**Semi-automatic:** The semi-automatic is based on the Military Specification AR-15 and will be configured in for semi-automatic only.

**Pump action:** The Remington model 7615 pump action rifle operates similar to the Remington model 870 shotgun.

Both systems utilize the .223 caliber (5.56 mm.) round. The police rifle is intended to provide enhanced ballistic performance over the pistol and shotgun. These rifles and the ammunition are more accurate at greater distances than pistols and shotguns and are capable of penetrating body armor rated Level IIIA or less (i.e. light body armor).

**Police Rifle Coordinator:** A Major from the Patrol Bureau designated with responsibility for overseeing the program. The Police Rifle Coordinator will work closely with the Director of the Criminal Justice Academy and the Supervisor of the FTU regarding equipment, storage and deployment issues. The Police Rifle Coordinator will ensure equitable distribution of rifles throughout the Patrol Bureau, as well as other bureaus throughout the Department where police rifles are needed.

#### **IV. AUTHORIZED USERS**

Only sworn personnel trained and certified by the FTU shall use the police rifle. Operators must maintain the appropriate qualifications and training for their particular weapon system.

Only Fairfax County Police Department approved magazines and ammunition shall be loaded into police issued rifles.

#### **V. SEMI-AUTOMATIC RIFLE OPERATOR SELECTION CRITERIA**

Candidates for the semi-automatic rifle program shall be:

- Police Officer First Class or higher
- Routinely post expert scores on the Tactical Qualification Course
- Possess and have demonstrated professional competence and mature judgment
- Recommendation from first-line supervisor thru station commander
- Able to attend mandatory quarterly qualifications and training

The Police Rifle Coordinator, with input from the FTU staff, will then select candidates for training who will best provide a balance of availability throughout the Department. The Patrol Bureau will retain the largest number of police rifles to ensure effective and efficient community response across all operational shifts on a 24-hour basis.

Once chosen, candidates must successfully complete the Fairfax County fifty (50) hour Police Rifle School conducted by the FTU. Officers may miss one (1) qualification/training session per year while maintaining their status as rifle operators. Officers may not miss more than one (1) qualification/training session in a calendar year; nor may they miss two (2) consecutive sessions that fall on separate calendar years. If, due to unforeseen and extenuating circumstances, an officer must miss more

than one mandatory training/qualification session in a given year, their absence must be approved by the Police Rifle Coordinator.

Police rifle operators must meet qualification standards as set by the Firearms Training Unit. Officers who fail to meet qualification standards will lose the authority to carry and operate their police rifle until qualification standards are met.

When police rifle officers transfer to operational duty assignments within their assigned bureaus, their rifles will transfer with them. Officers transferred outside of their bureau must promptly return their rifle and all issued equipment to the FTU. This equipment will be re-issued to other police rifle operators within the bureau where the rifle was assigned. Exceptions to this policy may be approved by the Police Rifle Coordinator when in the best interest of the Department.

## **VI. PUMP RIFLE OPERATOR CRITERIA**

Candidates for the pump action rifle program shall:

- Possess and have demonstrated professional competence and mature judgment
- Receive recommendation from first-line supervisor thru Station/Division Commander
- Be able to attend mandatory bi-annual qualifications and training

Once chosen, candidates must successfully complete the Fairfax County Police Pump Action Rifle School conducted by the FTU. Officers may miss one (1) qualification/training session per year while maintaining their status as rifle operators. Officers may not miss more than one (1) qualification/training session in a calendar year; nor may they miss two (2) consecutive sessions that fall on separate calendar years. If, due to unforeseen and extenuating circumstances, an officer must miss more than one mandatory training/qualification session in a given year, their absence must be approved by the Police Rifle Coordinator.

Police rifle operators must meet qualification standards as set by the Firearms Training Unit. Officers who fail to meet qualification standards will lose the authority to carry or operate a police rifle until qualification standards can be met.

## **VII. POLICE RIFLE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

Supervisors and qualified police rifle operators shall consider the deployment and use of the rifle based upon specific circumstances of the event or operational situation to include, but not limited to:

- An evaluation of the specific event
- Known or expected threat level
- Incident in which a firearm is being used or implied
- Containment and or stand off weapon for Hostage/Barricade incidents
- Active shooter(s) or critical incident

In the event of an active critical incident where the immediate deployment of a rifle is prudent, a qualified rifle operator is authorized to deploy and use the rifle without supervisory authorization.

A supervisor may override an officer's decision to deploy the rifle on a given situation. This should only be done after careful consideration of the known facts and circumstances surrounding the situation, taking into account all safety concerns.

Requests for the assistance of a police rifle operator may be made by any sworn police officer through the Department of Public Safety Communications.

For preplanned operational situations, deployment of the rifle shall require a supervisor's approval (i.e., planned arrests, warrant services, stakeouts).

The police rifle operator shall at all times follow the guidelines pertaining to the use of deadly force as outlined in General Order 540.1, Use of Force.

## **VIII. WEAPON READINESS**

### **Cruiser Ready**

Semi-Automatic rifle operators shall keep their rifles locked in the issued protective hard case and secured to a fixed object in the trunk of a police vehicle. In police vehicles equipped with a rifle rack or weapon trunk vault, these security features may be utilized in lieu of the rifle case.

Pump action rifles shall be kept locked in the police vehicle rifle rack.

The rifle shall have an empty chamber with the bolt closed, safety engaged and magazine inserted.

### **Deployment**

Operators shall ensure the rifle is loaded with a round in the chamber and the safety on.

**Unnecessary public display of rifles should be avoided.**

## **IX. STORAGE**

Affirmative steps shall be taken at all times to secure these weapons from unauthorized access and/or theft.

At the end of a shift, the rifle operator shall ensure the rifle is unloaded and removed from the police vehicle. The rifle shall be properly stored and secured as follows.

### **Semi-Automatic rifle**

While the rifle operator is off-duty, the rifle shall be:

1. Placed in the locked rifle case and stored in the police station armory
2. Stored in the locked rifle case within a secured area of the operator's home
3. Stored in a firearms safe within the operator's home
4. Assigned cruiser vault

### **Pump action rifle**

The pump action rifle will be a shared weapon; therefore these rifles shall be kept in their respective gun safe, vault or station armory unloaded with the action open and safety on.

When a pump action rifle is assigned to an officer, the off duty semi-automatic rifle storage procedure shall be followed.

## **X. MAINTENANCE**

Routine maintenance, as prescribed by the FTU, shall be performed after qualification/training, deployment during inclement weather, and at least every thirty (30) days to ensure the rifle is properly cleaned and lubricated.

Only certified armorers of the FTU are permitted to alter, repair, modify, or detail strip (beyond field stripping) these rifles.

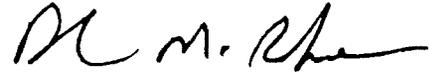
## XI. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCE

### VLEPSC

ADM	TRN
05.01	02.01
05.02	02.02
05.03	
06.01	

This SOP becomes effective August 1, 2008, and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

Issued by:



Chief of Police