
GENERAL ORDER

FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT



SUBJECT: LANGUAGE SKILLS SUPPORT UNIT	NUMBER: 530.10
CANCELS ORDER DATED: 10-1-04	DATE: 7-1-11

I. PURPOSE

This general order is issued to establish guidelines and procedures for the Language Skills Support Unit (LSSU) of the Fairfax County Police Department. The unit's mission is to provide support to all entities of the Department investigating a serious crime that requires translation, interpretation, or communication assistance in a language other than English.

II. POLICY

The Language Skills Support Unit operates as a decentralized non-standing unit under the authority of the Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB) commander. The LSSU is responsible for providing enforcement and investigative support, assistance and mediation to all entities of the Department dealing with persons of limited English proficiency which require translation, interpretation and communication assistance in major crimes cases. The LSSU augments the Department's community policing efforts by delivering more efficient service, better understanding of community cultural barriers, and enhancing criminal case closure and prosecution.

For specific information on deaf and hard of hearing refer to SOP 11-044.

III. DEFINITIONS

Assigned Commanders: Commanders within the Department who direct the day-to-day activities of the assigned LSSU detective.

Language Skills Support Unit Supervisor: The designated first-line supervisor who administers the overall direction and activities of the LSSU.

Language Skills Support Unit Detective: A sworn police officer who has successfully demonstrated the skill and ability to translate and interpret in a qualified foreign language.

Call Out List: A roster maintained by the unit supervisor who will coordinate the deployment of LSSU detectives.

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Qualified Foreign Language: Those foreign languages identified as most frequently utilized by persons of limited English proficiency necessitating police service. Such languages include, but are not limited to:

- Spanish
- Korean
- Vietnamese
- Arabic

IV. PROCEDURES

The Language Skills Support Unit will be assigned organizationally within the Major Crimes Division, Criminal Investigations Bureau. The unit shall be comprised of sworn officers who possess a qualified foreign language skill with the ability to translate and interpret at an established proficiency level.

LSSU detectives will be under the guidance of the unit supervisor as it pertains to the overall operational oversight and administrative supervision of the unit to include assignments, training, and investigation coordination. Administrative control, general supervision, and the direction of the day-to-day activities of LSSU detectives are the responsibility of the permanent duty station commanders. Occasionally it may be necessary for a LSSU detective to be temporarily assigned to work with the entity responsible for an investigation. In these cases, the LSSU supervisor shall seek approval for the temporary assignment through the appropriate division or station commander.

A. Call Outs

The LSSU supervisor will ensure that sufficient qualified detectives are kept on a rotating call out schedule 24 hours a day – 365 days a year which will be provided to the on-call CIB supervisor and the Department of Public Safety Communications (DPSC) supervisor.

While the LSSU detective is on call, a take home vehicle will be provided by the assigned commander for efficient response to scenes.

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A LSSU detective may be called out when deemed necessary by the on scene supervisor and authorized by the proper command staff authority. All call-out requests shall be made through DPSC. At a minimum, a LSSU detective shall be called out when a language barrier exists, which causes hindrance to an investigation in the following types of cases:

- Homicide
- Abduction
- Suicide
- Fatal or Serious Injury Accidents
- Malicious Wounding
- Rape
- Sexual Assault
- Hostage/Barricade
- Stolen Auto with Apprehension
- Robbery with Apprehension
- High Risk Warrant Service

In cases where the preliminary officer makes an arrest and the LSSU detective will likely be required for court, the arresting officer shall make this fact known so field notes taken by the LSSU detective are kept on file and appropriate supplements submitted for court purposes.

B. Telephone Assistance

Officers encountering a language barrier during the preliminary investigation of a major crime may request telephone assistance from the on-call LSSU detective, providing no person at the scene, or other bi-lingual officer is

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available to assist. This telephone assistance enables the on-scene supervisor to determine if a call out is necessary.

C. Outside Jurisdiction Requests

All call-out requests for a LSSU detective by an outside jurisdiction shall first be authorized by the CIB commander or the duty officer.

1. All requests for assistance from outside jurisdictions shall be made through DPSC.
2. DPSC will notify the Major Crimes Division commander during regular working hours or the duty officer after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends.
3. The outside jurisdiction shall be notified via telephone or mutual aid radio by DPSC regarding the status of their request.

V. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCE

VLEPSC
OPR.
01.08

This General Order becomes effective July 1, 2011 and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

ISSUED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Chief of Police

County Executive