

Carlsbad Police Department

Policy Manual Special Order 2024-01

Pursuant to Carlsbad Police Department Policy 204, this Special Order becomes effective February 15, 2024.

Policy section 207 reads as follows:

207.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a uniform procedure for critical incident debriefing, define the roles and responsibilities for the debriefing, and to establish standards for the completion of an after-action report and the distribution of applicable training materials.

It shall be the policy of the Department to conduct a debriefing of any critical incident. An after-action report (AAR) will be prepared by the commanding officer in charge of the critical incident and forwarded to the Chief of Police for the purposes of developing a training needs assessment, and dissemination of lessons learned.

207.2 DEFINITIONS

- a) **After Action Report (AAR):** The report summarizing the chronology of the critical incident as well as an analysis of the tactics, equipment, communication, cooperation, and level of preparedness of the participants. The AAR is intended to identify strengths, deficiencies, recommended improvements, equipment needs, and relevant training for department personnel. The report should accurately define what occurred or did not occur regarding the incident. An AAR may not be completed following the application of Lethal Force including any Officer Involved Shooting.
- b) **Debriefing:** The after-action process of discussion and reconstruction of a critical incident with the goal of providing a record of lessons learned and encouraging continuous improvement in organizational and individual performance.
- c) **Deadly Force:** The term "lethal force" means force as defined in the Carlsbad Police Department Policy #300.4. Any application of force resulting in "very serious injury or death to another" shall result in the initiation of a Deadly Force Review consistent with Policy 302.
- d) **Critical Incident:** For the purposes of this section, critical incidents include but are not limited to:
 1. Any armed barricade or Hostage incident.
 2. Any planned or spontaneous protest that impact normal operations.
 3. Wildfires, floods, or natural disasters that result in potential evacuations.
 4. Structure fires that impact more than one building.
 5. Any aircraft crash that results in death or serious injury or other aircraft landings or crashes outside the McClellan-Palomar Airport property.
 6. Any criminal mass casualty incident.
 7. Any response to an 11-99 that resulted in CPD personnel arriving on scene and engaging in any related activity.

8. Any significant injury to a member of the department.
9. Any incident requiring a SWAT or CNT emergency response.
10. Any pre-planned incident involving SWAT/CNT that deviates significantly from the operational plan and requires the assistance/intervention of other department assets.
11. Any 5150 incident where a subject met criteria for a hold but was not taken into custody and resulted in a disengagement.
12. All pursuits that meet the elements of 2800.2 CVC.
13. Any other incident which requires the use of significant department assets, or which is deemed to be significant by the Chief of Police or Commanding Officer.
14. Pre-planned investigations operations and Special Events are subject to their own AAR and debriefing requirements and do not necessitate a debrief or report pursuant to this section. The Division or Bureau Commander may require a substantive debrief or report at their direction.
15. This is not an exhaustive list, as many other scenarios may necessitate a debrief and AAR for proper review. Supervisors and Division Commanders are encouraged to utilize this Debrief/AAR processes when they identify any incident that results in opportunity for development, training, or would benefit the department by receiving additional review.

207.3 PROCEDURE

- a) Immediately following the incident, the Watch Commander, or their designee, shall conduct an initial assessment or "hot wash" of the incident unless they determine the debriefing would be unreasonable due to other pressing needs. The initial assessment should minimally include the following:
 1. Confirm all objectives are identified and all personnel are accounted for.
 2. Overview of the event, nature of crime.
 3. Address immediate needs, investigative concerns, handoff procedures.
 4. Address any injuries to officers, victims, or suspects.
 5. Ensure proper notifications are complete and public order/displacement has been restored.
 6. Confirm documentation and ongoing responsibilities are established.
- b) A substantive debriefing of the incident shall be conducted in a timely manner (ideally within 48 hours) and shall include, to the extent possible, input from the following components of the incident.
 1. All personnel involved in the incident,
 2. Representatives from all components of the ICS, if activated.
 3. Representative(s) from any other City department(s) utilized and deemed appropriate by the Watch or Division Commander.
 4. Representative(s) from any other agencies utilized if deemed appropriate by the Watch or Division Commander.
 5. Others as deemed appropriate and relevant to the debriefing.

c) The purpose of the debriefing shall be to identify ways in which the Department's response to incidents may be improved and to identify potentially relevant training. The debriefing shall not supersede, or substitute for, any other investigation or report required by law or policy. Some discussion topics that should be included in the debriefing include, but are not limited to:

1. **Initial Response Factors (Pre-Engagement):**

- a) Continuity and availability of information from initial call for service through the conclusion of the incident.
- b) Existing staffing levels-City status at onset of the event.
- c) Initial assessment and response planning.
- d) Availability of discretionary time, resource, and staging considerations.

2. **Incident Management (Engagement):**

- a) Establishment of the Incident Command System and role designation.
- b) Call outs
- c) Press/Public Information
- d) Police services- Non incident related
- e) Notifications
- f) Relief
- g) Other agency resources
- h) Return to normal operations.

3. **Tactics:**

- a) Containment
- b) Special Equipment/Overwatch
- c) Contact/Crisis Entry team
- d) Evacuations
- e) Individual decisions

4. **Communications:**

- a) Quality, nature of dispatch communications.
- b) Clarity of Commander's intent and direction.
- c) Communications of observations and actions by field personnel.

5. **Equipment:**

- a) Operations, needs, failures.
- b) The Watch Commander or supervisor presiding over the debriefing of a critical incident must consider that personal liability and/or discipline may result from a criminal and/or administrative investigation of the incident and may excuse personnel from the debriefing on this basis. Critical incident debriefings may include discussions of department policy but should focus on knowledge and development rather than an examination pursuant to a misconduct evaluation.
- c) Within fifteen (15) calendar days, the Watch Commander, or their designee with responsibility for the incident, shall prepare and submit an after-action report, through the chain of command to the Office of the Chief of Police. This report shall summarize the information received in

the debriefing, identify relevant response, incident management, tactical, equipment, communications, policy needs or training issues and recommend improvements for response to future incidents.

- d) The AAR will be reviewed by the Bureau Commander for the purpose of evaluating the incident and identifying relevant training, equipment, or leadership development needs. If any needs are identified, Bureau Commander direction shall be relayed, along with the AAR to the Training Division within fifteen (15) calendar days of the receipt of the AAR. The Bureau Commander will be responsible for briefing the rest of command staff on incidents as appropriate.
- e) The AAR will remain in Draft status until approved by the Bureau Commander.
- f) The Training Sergeant shall, within thirty (30) calendar days, develop an appropriate training document and/or curriculum for distribution to all personnel.
- g) Any time limit described above may be extended at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

Williams # 521
Mickey Williams, Chief of Police

2.15.24
Date