

State of Utah DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	REF. NR-95-C-10	PAGE 1 of 7
	EFFECTIVE DATE 5/30/95	
	REVISION DATE	
SUBJECT: Post Shooting Incident Report		
Ted Stewart, Executive Director		

I. PURPOSE

To define the policy of the Department of Natural Resources concerning post-shooting incident procedures. Law enforcement duties can often expose officers and support personnel to mentally painful and highly stressful situations that cannot be resolved through normal stress coping mechanisms. Unless adequately treated, these situations can cause disabling emotional and physical problems. It has been found that officer-involved shootings resulting in death or serious bodily injury to a citizen or a fellow officer may precipitate such stress disorders.

II. POLICY

It is the responsibility of the department to provide personnel with information on stress disorders and to guide and assist in their deterrence. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the department to take immediate action after such incidents to safeguard the continued good mental health of all involved personnel.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Post-traumatic stress disorder: An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to short-term severe stress, or the long-term buildup of repetitive and prolonged milder stress.
- B. Officer-involved shooting incident: An in the line-of-duty incident where shooting causes death or serious bodily injury to an officer or other person.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Handling of an officer involved in a shooting incident.
 - 1. Upon notification, the immediate supervisor or next level supervisor shall make contact with the dispatch center that is in contact with the officer at the scene and, if practical, remain in contact with the center and the officer to provide:
 - a. Direction in respect to the post-shooting incident procedures,

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- b. Dispatch of additional officers to the scene, if needed,
 - c. Notification to any other appropriate supervisor, division director and department executive director providing an update on the situation,
 - d. Personal notification to the officer's immediate family if the officer is unable to do so, and arrange for their transportation to the hospital, if necessary,
 - e. General coordination of the incident and
 - f. A brief initial response to any news media inquiries within the following guidelines:
 - (1) The officer's name will not be given until proper notification is made,
 - (2) Provide as much factual information about the incident as possible, keeping in mind:
 - [A] Such statements should take the interest of the officer into consideration.
 - [B] Statements should not be prematurely judgmental or compromise the legal and personal standing of the officer.
 - (3) Designate a media spokesman for updated information.
2. An on-scene supervisor shall be designated and dispatched to the scene of the incident by the appropriate supervisor and shall assume primary responsibility in caring for involved personnel; however, if quick response by a supervisor is unlikely due to distance or remoteness and if there is a department officer nearby that can arrive at the scene quicker or is already at the scene, but was not a participant in the incident, a supervisor

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may verbally authorize that officer to function as the on-scene supervisor until relieved. In such a circumstance, it is the assigning supervisor's responsibility to provide the on-scene acting supervisor with the procedures, as outlined in this policy, that he is to use to handle the incident and the involved officer.

3. The on-scene supervisor shall make appropriate arrangements for all necessary medical treatment, and arrange for a blood test for officer(s) involved if this has not been done.
4. Where possible, the on-scene supervisor shall briefly meet with the involved officer and assure that:
 - a. No caffeine or other stimulants or depressants are given to the officer unless administered by qualified medical authority.
 - b. Only minimal, preliminary questions, such as those needed to determine injury, numbers involved or situation status are asked about the incident.
 - c. The officer is advised that a detailed debriefing and investigation will follow.
 - d. The officer is advised that he may seek legal counsel.
 - e. The officer is advised not to discuss the incident with anyone except county attorney, a personal or department attorney, an investigating law enforcement officer or department investigator until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.
 - f. Take custody of the officer's firearm in a discrete manner without altering its evidentiary value. Replace it with another firearm or advise the officer that it will be returned or replaced at a later time, as appropriate.

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g. See that the officer involved in the incident is removed from the scene, accompanied by a peer counselor, personal friend or fellow officer instructed to:

- (1) Show concern and compassion,
- (2) Take the officer to a quiet and secure location away from the scene,
- (3) See that the officer is given physical space and
- (4) See that the officer does not discuss the incident with anyone, except a county attorney, personal or department attorney and investigating law enforcement officer, or a department investigator until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.

5. The on-scene supervisor should handle the officer and all involved personnel in a manner that acknowledges the stress caused by the incident.

B. Post-incident procedures.

1. All directly involved personnel who may suffer from a post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of their contact with the incident shall be removed from field duties pending evaluation, but shall remain available for light duty assignments or for any necessary investigation.

2. The officer directly involved in the shooting incident shall be required to contact a department designated specialist for counseling and evaluation within 72 hours, or as soon as practical, after the incident. After the counseling sessions, the specialist shall advise the department:

a. Whether it would be in the officer's best interest to remain on administrative leave or be placed on light duty, and for how long.

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- b. At what point should the officer be allowed to carry a weapon,
 - c. Of the best continued course of counseling.
 - 3. The department should advise the officer's family of, and strongly encourage them to take advantage of, available counseling services.
 - 4. Any department investigation of an incident shall be conducted as soon and as quickly as possible.
 - 5. The department should brief other employees concerning the incident so that rumors are kept to a minimum. Department officers are encouraged to show the involved officer their concern.
 - 6. In order to protect against crank or abusive calls, the officer should be advised to have phone calls answered by another person for several days if his name is released to the public.
 - 7. An officer directly involved in a shooting incident shall be required to re-qualify as soon as practical after being reinstated.
- C. Daily stress recognition.
- 1. As post-traumatic stress disorders may not arise immediately, or the officer may attempt to hide the problem, each supervisor is responsible for monitoring the behavior of his employee for unusual behavior that may be symptomatic of this disorder. When in doubt, assistance should be sought from the Human Resource office in sending the employee for evaluation.
- D. Training.
- 1. The department shall offer employees with training pertaining to post-traumatic stress disorders and the uniform procedures contained in this policy.

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2. Supervisors are responsible for making information available about the department's mental health services.

CHECKLIST - OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTINGS

This checklist is intended to provide basic reminders to a supervisor at the scene of an officer-involved shooting.

OFFICER OR OTHERS INJURED

Immediate considerations:

- Secure scene
- Request ambulance/life flight
- Crime broadcast
- Request additional personnel
- Locate and identify witnesses
- Remove involved officer(s) from scene

Notifications:

- Executive director
- Director
- Regional supervisor/Parks regional manager
- Supervisor of employee involved
- Law enforcement coordinator/operations coordinator
- Internal affairs investigators
- Agency of jurisdiction
- Coroner

Establish Command Post (CP) if necessary:

- Appoint CP staff as required
- Record action taken
- Brief personnel
- Establish perimeter security
- Press relations

NOTE: Only information authorized by executive director shall be released.

Specialized Units and Equipment:

- Air support
- Boats/ATVs
- Horses
- Generator/lights
- Light truck

DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS - NO INJURY

- Incident occurred while on duty
- Incident occurred while officer was off duty

Conduct complete investigation of the circumstances of the shooting incident; obtain the following information for the purposes of preparing a detailed chronological narrative.

Chronological narrative:

- ___ Date and time call received
- ___ Names of officers involved
- ___ Current assignment and detail
- ___ Uniform or plain clothes
- ___ Types of vehicles
- ___ Description of scene including background

Weapons:

- ___ Officer's serial number, make, model, caliber, type of action

Type of ammunition/holster:

- ___ Officer's - type, manufacturer, number of rounds fired, type holster
- ___ Supervisor's - type, manufacturer, number of rounds fired, type holster

Personnel at scene:

- ___ Identify all police personnel at scene
- ___ Name, rank, current assignment
- ___ Name of first supervisor at scene
- ___ Other related persons, e.g., ambulance

Suspects:

- ___ Include all known information
- ___ Description
- ___ Prior record
- ___ Parole/probation information

Vehicles and evidence:

- ___ Include all known information
- ___ Description
- ___ Disposition - impound, hold, etc.
- ___ Evidence booked

Witnesses:

- ___ Location and observations

Communications:

- ___ Taped/recorded

Diagram scene:

- ___ Position of officer, suspect and witness and path of bullet
- ___ Supplement with photos if necessary