
Operational Plan/Risk Assessment

616.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form is to evaluate risk factors associated with people, locations and specific circumstances relating to pre-planned tactical operations. The completed Operational Plan/Risk Assessment information can then be used to help determine the appropriate service methods for accomplishing the objective while attempting to mitigate, eliminate or avoid the associated risk.

616.2 POLICY

The risk assessment process outlined in this policy is intended to ensure consistency in the completion and use of the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form.

616.3 DEFINITIONS

Non-Administrative Warrant: A warrant or warrant/probable cause apprehension that is operationally serviced in the field. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Locations that may be occupied, and
- Locations where forced entry is possible, and
- It is unknown if persons present are armed

Though higher risk than an administrative warrant, a non-administrative warrant does not rise to the level of a high-risk warrant.

High-Risk Warrant: A non-administrative warrant or warrant/probable cause apprehension that is characterized by known or suspected hazards and risks (i.e. armed or potentially armed suspect(s) where there is a likelihood of resistance) to such a degree that the service of which poses a significant threat to the safety of others, or there are articulable facts which indicate service is outside the training and/or capabilities of the involved officers.

Pre-planned: Any event planned in advance of its occurrence. This does not include incidents that rapidly evolve with a very short timeline between notification of the incident and the need to respond.

Undercover Officer (UC): An undercover officer is any law enforcement officer dressed in civilian clothing who is being inserted into the criminal sub-culture and is presenting themselves as part of the criminal element with the purpose of actively interacting with the suspect as part of a surreptitious police operation. A UC is not to be confused with a plain clothes officer acting in strictly surveillance capacity.

616.4 OPERATIONAL PLAN/RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

The Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form contains a compilation of risk factors which either individually or combined indicate a heightened potential for violence, danger or harm as part of

Operational Plan/Risk Assessment

a lawful police action. In addition to the specific criminal history or history of violence by offenders and associates, consideration of police service type, location characteristics and terrain are also considered. The Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form offers a method of identifying the risk associated with planned police operations and allows the Department the opportunity to eliminate, to mitigate or to avoid those risks through proper planning.

The Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form is listed on the VPD Intra-net.

616.5 USE OF OPERATIONAL PLAN/RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

A basic police function is to complete criminal investigations. Many investigations require the service of search warrants and/or the apprehension of wanted subjects. With the understanding that executing search warrants and arresting wanted subjects is potentially dangerous, the Department requires an Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form be completed during the pre-planning phase of all search warrants involving a potential threat to members or community members. Therefore, the form will be completed on:

- All non-administrative warrants; and
- All high-risk warrants; and
- Pre-planned events where police resources will be deployed; or
- At the direction of a supervisor.

It is understood that officers attempt contact with wanted subjects known to have warrants on a daily basis. Wanted/fugitive information is derived from WACIC/NCIC name checks, distributed warrant lists and other street-level sources. Not every contact requires an Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form to be completed. However, it is expected that initiating officers complete due diligence with regard to assessing potential risks associated with such contacts.

General rules of thumb for when an Operational Plan/Risk Assessment should be completed are:

- The wanted subject's criminal history shows crimes of violence or weapons charges; or
- Occupied location where a search warrant is to be served; or
- The operation requires dynamic tactics (forced breaching with a dynamic entry technique) or advanced team tactics such as a vehicle intervention (vehicle pin); or
- Any high-risk warrant service; or
- An undercover officer is being inserted into a location; or,
- Pre-planned apprehensions of subjects based on probable cause for felony crimes.

616.6 PROCESSING OF OPERATIONAL PLAN/RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

The investigator, or another officer with knowledge of the investigation, will complete the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form. A criminal history of the subject, previous police reports and other investigative information may be used to complete the form. Officers should initially complete the cover page and risk assessment portion of the form.

Operational Plan/Risk Assessment

If initial risk factors indicate the need for a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) service, the investigative unit can defer operational planning to SWAT.

If the completed Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form has been processed within the division and risk factors do not warrant a service by SWAT, the investigating unit will retain the signed Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form and proceed with planning and executing the operational plan for that mission.

If the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form indicates the need for a SWAT consultation, the form should be forwarded to the SWAT Commander or Team Leader for review. A consultation between the investigating unit supervisor and SWAT designee shall take place using the completed Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form.

Based on the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment and the information obtained during the consultation, the SWAT Commander or designee will then make a service recommendation to the investigating division lieutenant for the operation regarding the service type and whether SWAT should be utilized during the operation. The recommendation will be documented on the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form.

The decision to utilize SWAT for service will be a consensus between SWAT team leadership and the requesting unit's command. The decision will be documented on the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form.

The investigative unit supervisor will ensure the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form is completed in its entirety. If it is determined that SWAT will serve the warrant, SWAT Leadership will work with the investigative unit supervisor to ensure the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form is completed.

Once the Operational Plan/Risk Assessment form has been completed, it will be reviewed and signed by the investigator's immediate supervisor or designee. The form will then be forwarded to the division lieutenant for review and signature.

A copy of all completed Operational Plan/Risk Assessment forms will be stored in a designated Department shared computer drive for data collection and retention.

An operational briefing will occur prior to the event involving all members assigned. This may consist of a single briefing, or multiple briefings.

616.7 COMMUNICATION PLAN

All operational plan forms shall include a communication plan that delivers clear and concise language to avoid conflicting commands. Recognizing each operational plan may be different, there is not one standardized tactic to deliver compliance instructions. During the service of a search warrant, officers will provide their identity, their authority, and commands for compliance. Only one person should be giving compliance instructions at a time and ideally one member should be assigned as communicator in the plan with one alternate. Communication plans may change based on the evolving nature of an operation.

Operational Plan/Risk Assessment

616.8 DECONFLICTION

The day before the planned warrant service, the detective or sergeant in charge of a search warrant must check the target location for simultaneous warrants or investigations by other law enforcement agencies.

Before conducting a pre-planned, Non-Administrative Warrant, the investigator, or another officer with knowledge of the investigation shall contact WSIN for deconfliction.

For a warrant to be served outside the City of Vancouver, the unit supervisor shall contact the local agency having jurisdiction and VPD chain of command.

616.9 AFTER ACTION

- A. Operations Plan After Action Report should be completed after the operation and filed with the plan.
- B. For non-administrative and high-risk warrants, the sergeant or above who was in charge of the warrant service will complete the After Action Report section of the operation plan.
- C. For all other operations, the Incident Commander or designee will be responsible for completing the After Action Report.
- D. The completed Operations Plan After Action Report will be stored in a designated Department shared computer drive for data collection and retention.