

VERMONT STATE POLICE

Head Quarters



Memo

To: Commissioner Keith Flynn
From: Captain Robert P. Cushing
Date: 12/02/2015
Re: Special team Review

On 09/24/2015 Major Walter Goodell asked that I conduct a review of all Vermont State Police special teams.

On 09/25/2015 I sent a detailed email to all Vermont Special Team leaders asking for specific, information relating to their respective team. (Email sent is below).

Gentlemen,

I have been assigned to conduct an investigation/review of the selection and testing process for ALL Vermont State Police special teams.

Over the next ten (10) days please prepare the following for this review;

- Compile all rules and regulations relative to your team, contractual language, and administrative messages to these team members or prospective team applicants in the form of memo's or directives, or emails over the last twelve (12) months.
- Candidate process for each team, including eligibility requirements.
- Candidate Notification process and Candidate instruction for interview/testing instructions prior to test.

- A complete summary of all facets of the actual test, the purpose of each portion of the test, and the origin of the basis for those components eg. (National Standard, NESPAC training model, etc....)
- What safeguards are implemented for the test; human monitoring, first aid, EMS, etc?
- Summary of the selection process for the candidates that are successful. (If multiple members are successful in all phases, how is it determined which Troopers will be selected, and which ones will have to reapply when there are future openings)
- Process/Training Model to sustain certification, and/or eligibility to continue on, the respective team.
- Process to suspend participation on a respective special team, (voluntary request to no longer participate, lack of certification, or via C.O.C as a result of performance issues, etc.)

Once compiled, I will be meeting with each team leader and assistant team leader to jointly interview you, in person in order to cover all of these points in a thorough manner.

I understand that some of these items may have more relevance to one particular team than another, but all will be addressed in my review for each team.

Please send me an email once you have compiled the above and we will work out a date to sit down and ensure we have covered all.

Over the next several months Vermont State Police, team leaders compiled all of the information that I asked for in my request. All of the information supplied by the team leaders' has been incorporated in this overview. After reviewing what each team leader submitted I found that each was detailed in how they select their candidates. Furthermore, I felt that they accomplished the goal of giving a detailed overview of each of their teams.

Some recommendations that came up when talking to different team leaders were as follows:

- An (AED) device should be part of each special team equipment.
- Crime Scene Search Team should look at areas in which they could possibly become accredited or receive some sort of certification.
- More training days for Tactical Support unit. Our team lags behind all of the New England states as far as annual training dates. Currently our team has twenty-one, training days a year and three additional "sniper" days. Our team still remains, behind New Hampshire who has a total of twenty-seven days of training a year.

- Continue to maintain all of our National or NESPAC certifications for each team.
- Additionally, Vermont State Police senior staff will be implementing additional safeguards during the physical testing process. A copy of these procedures has been incorporated in this review.

The Vermont State Police has eleven voluntary special teams. (Crash Reconstruction team, Canine Team, Member Assistance Program, Clandestine Lab Team, Crisis Negotiation Unit, Explosive Ordinance team, Scuba Team, Tactical Support Unit, Search and Rescue team, Honor Guard, and Crime Scene Search team.

Each team is lead (generally) by a Vermont State Police Lieutenant. (I say generally because there have been times when a senior ranking Sergeant is placed in charge, due to a vacancy in leadership of a Lieutenant that is promoted). During this review the Explosive Ordinance team is currently being commanded by Detective Sergeant David Petersen and the Honor Guard is commanded by Sergeant Thomas Mozzer. All other special teams have active Lieutenants leading them.

Each team commander has detailed all that is required of a potential candidate in this review. They were not only detailed to the requirements for getting on a particular team, but also specific requirements in training, if selected. (See each team section in this review).

Vermont State Police

Implementation of Additional Safeguards during Physical Testing Procedures

- Training of all members in heatstroke and heat related injuries to be incorporated into annual first aid training requirement.
- Training of all special teams leaders and local barracks fitness coordinators in the safeguard components listed below

Special Teams physical testing sites;

- Questionnaire form to be completed by applicants on date of test. Medical screening tool (Form to be Developed)
- Athletic Trainer on site for duration of testing
- Hydration schedule
- WBGT (Wet bulb globe temperature) monitoring prior to and during any scheduled physical testing components
- Safety Officer Designee
- Emergency Action Plan for each venue
 - Table Top Exercises (Medical event) incorporated into training model
 - Local EMS notified of event face/face with local responders by Team Leader
 - Heat stroke treatment resources on scene, eg. Large Rubbermaid style tub or other similar container with ample supply of water and ice
 - Pop-up tent or similar unit to afford protection from the sun if a permanent structure is not available
 - Documentation (Form) to ensure all directives are addressed

Routine biannual Physical Fitness Testing and Employment Entrance Testing;

- WBGT (Wet bulb globe temperature) monitoring prior to and during any scheduled testing date
- Safety Officer Designee
- Hydration schedule
- Emergency Action Plan for each venue
 - Local EMS notified of event
 - Heat stroke treatment resources on scene, e.g. Large Rubbermaid style tub or other similar container with ample supply of water and ice
 - Documentation (Form) to ensure all directives are addressed