The nature of law enforcement tactical operations has changed. Originally, police tactical teams were conceived for dealing with barricaded and or heavily armed violent individuals that exceeding the capabilities of the patrol division of a police department. Now, police tactical teams are expected and tasked to deal with any number of crises, including active shooters, compromised environments, and dignitary protection. Additionally, there has been a desire for tactical teams to conduct non-traditional low visibility operations. Unfortunately, police departments have not adjusted to the new requirements placed on tactical teams. Preceding operations have dictated training and tactics for future ones. Tactical training and solutions have been oriented to the past and good fortune and luck has been incorrectly mistaken for tactical acumen. There has been no emphasis placed on clearly defining the tactical mission, success or failure of each mission, and there also has been no emphasis on providing clear and unmistakable supervisory guidance or "command intent" of these missions. Additionally, there has been no effort placed on a performance based training plan, with individual and collective tasks, for each mission.

Police tactical operations occupy a very small percentage of the overall efforts of a police department. A perception exists that since these operations take up so little of a police department's overall operation that the total time and effort allocated for tactical training and preparation should also be minimal. Nothing could be further from the truth. True sophistication and mastery of tactical skills and principles require an organized and concentrated effort. Additionally, even though police tactical operations consists of a relatively small percentage of overall agency operations, police tactical operations are the most high profile, often have the most potential for massive loss of or preservation of human life and present the highest risk of negative liability to a police department. Without a clear mission definition, no statement of specific command intent, no definition of success or failure, and no performance based training plan, officers are placed in a difficult and often no win situation that can result in catastrophic mission failure. Using a Mission Essential Task List, or METL, model can prevent catastrophic mission failure by tactical teams providing a clear definition of the mission, by providing a commanders intent or guidance, by clearly defining success or failure, and by providing a performance based training plan that prepares a unit for missions by clearly outlining distinct individual and unit responsibilities.

A METL is a concise statement of the possible doctrinal or directed missions that a unit can receive, and the tasks that a unit MUST perform in order to successfully complete those missions. Contained within the each mission, is the following: (1) a clear and concise statement of the mission, (2) a clear and concise Commander's Intent of the mission, (3) a definition of success or failure of the mission, (4) and a list of the collective and individual tasks required of the mission. Community related functions, ceremonies and any formal or mandated training requirements or other activities should not be part of a METL. Only those missions that place the tactical team in harms way or involve activities that exceed the capabilities of patrol should be included in the METL.

The list of missions in a METL should be as short as possible. This short list of missions is then broken down into separate types of subtasks for that particular overall mission. For example, "High Risk Search and Secure" will be broken down into sub-tasks such as "Warrant Service," "Active Shooter," "Area Searches." Each of these sub-tasks will contain collective tasks and individual tasks. Collective tasks are those that the unit MUST accomplish as a whole, while individual tasks are those that single members MUST accomplish for mission success. All collective and individual tasks are equally important. The METL is also elastic. The number of missions can be expanded or reduced, based on the mission profiles and demands placed on the tactical unit.

A METL is an end state and it is not unconstrained by resources. It does not acknowledge limited training resources. The accompanying METL training plan will acknowledge limited training resources (budgetary, access to facilities etc.).

A METL is not a regurgitation of training standards or departmental policy. Departmental General Orders, federal, state and local laws, and law enforcement governing bodies (DCJS/IACP policies etc..) established training curriculums will inherently be contained in the "Command Intent" portion.

A METL defines specific missions and tasks, and does not list or define generic capabilities. A generic platform, environment, condition, or equipment may apply to a specific task or sub-task, but these in and of

themselves are not a specific task. “Operate in a comprised (Nuclear, Chemical, Biological etc.) environment,” “Conduct CQB,” are examples that may apply to a specific task, but are not standalone tasks.

Additionally, a METL will have a performance based training plan that has the goal of everyone on the team achieving a predetermined standard. This training plan will be based on the following training principles: (1) supervisors are responsible for training, (2) first line leaders are responsible for the technical and tactical proficiency of their team, (3) train for excellence, (4) train to a standard using appropriate tactical doctrine, (4) train to adapt, (5) train to maintain and sustain, (6) train using multi-echelon techniques, and (7) train to develop leaders. A performance based training plan will allow for documentation of unit training accomplishments and allow a unit to achieve levels of proficiency for all of the tasks that are deemed mission essential. This training plan will include the Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs), necessary for mission success.

A METL performance based training plan will stress the following descending list of priorities: (1) the mission, (2) team needs, and (3) individual needs. The first priority that will be stressed in training is mission success. Everything else is subservient and secondary. The second priority that will be stressed is team needs. Maintenance of team gear, ensuring team vehicles are full of gas and operating properly, equipment accountability and other miscellaneous duties or logistical responsibilities come before individual needs. Additionally, the needs of other individual team members come before individual needs. The final priority that will be stressed is individual needs. Individual needs are important but are subservient to mission success and team needs. Individual discomforts, opinions, jealousies, rumors, gossip, personality differences or conflicts do not contribute to mission success, are not a team need, and therefore should not be considered during a mission tasking or training.

A METL performance based training plan will also serve as a training log that will allow supervisors, team leaders and individual members to have a record of which mission specific training has been conducted, and to fill in any training gaps that exist.

Law enforcement tactical teams should adopt a Mission Essential Task List, or METL, model to achieve a verified and measurable Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Level I capability, according to the guidelines set forth in the FEMA Typed Resource Definitions Initiative (7/30/2007). The following missions and sub-missions would be stated in the METL:

1). High Risk Search and Secure

- a). Warrant Service
- b). Active Shooter
- c). Area Searches

2). Barricade

- a). Emotionally Disturbed Person (EDP)
- b). Criminal

3). Hostage Rescue

- a). Barricaded hostage
- b). Hijacking hostage

4). Protective Service Detail

a). Dignitary

b). Prisoner

c). Venue

5). High Risk Apprehension

a). Vehicle

b). Building

****Team capabilities should include ability to conduct above operations in day/nighttime and in all weather conditions**

<u>Mission Essential Task Listing METL</u>

1). HIGH RISK SEARCH AND SECURE

Subtask: Search Warrant

Mission: Secure a residence, business or other structure to establish and confirm a safe environment for detectives or other appropriate law enforcement officers to conduct a search pursuant to a search or arrest warrant.

Command Intent: (To be determined by Command Staff)

Success criteria:

1). Zero fratricide

2). Zero non-threat civilian casualties

3). Minimal application of necessary force

4). 100% round accountability

5). Follow command intent

6). Preservation of evidence pursuant to search warrant, if reasonable and poses no additional danger to officer(s)

Collective tasks: Using a minimum of 6 operators conduct the following activities:

(1) gather pre-mission intelligence, (2) conduct pre-mission surveillance, (3) team brief, prepare equipment and gear, (4) depart, (5) arrive, (6) search and secure objective, (7) depart, and (8) debrief.

ACTIONS BEFORE OBJECTIVE

(1) Gather pre-mission intelligence

(2) Conduct pre-mission surveillance

(3) Conduct Team briefing

a). brief on Situation, Mission, Execution Administration, Logistics, and C3

b). conduct dry run/walk through

c). team brief back

d). every team member highly familiar with items listed above: ***ESPECIALLY CONTINGENCY PLANS***

(4) Prepare equipment/gear

a). vehicles

b). weapons

c). communications

d). mission enhancement

e). personal

(5) prepare for movement

(6) depart departure rally point

(7) arrive objective

(8) establish 360 degree security

a). using KOCOA establish a perimeter around objective

b). coordinate with supporting units

ACTIONS ON OBJECTIVE

(9) using appropriate tactic, technic, or procedure, secure residence, business or structure

a). dismount and using traveling or bounding overwatch move to breach point

b). assemble at breach point

c). knock and announce and or breach door

d). using 2 and 4 man clearing tactics search and secure objective

1). as a team move effectively and clear rooms, hallways, intersections, stairwells, danger areas

2). use combat clear and or dynamic as appropriate

3). neutralize threats

4). control, detain and search any non-threat occupants

5). search danger areas

e). TL in coordination with on scene Command declares objective secure

(10) depart objective

a). assemble at objective departure rally point

b). personnel accountability

c). equipment accountability

d). depart

(11) debrief

a). upon return to HQ, each individual member will complete an after action report, or as requested an appropriate supplement

b). team discussion

1). Positives

2). Negatives

3). Future

Purpose of debrief is not to criticize, but to improve

Team Members will be BRUTUALLY honest with each other and themselves

The final team brief will not contain members of Command Staff

Individual Tasks: Be highly familiar with, and recognize each individual's team member's role in each collective subtask 1-11 listed under above. In addition, successfully perform the below listed individual tasks:

1). ALWAYS abide by the following five safety rules:

a). NEVER intentionally point a weapon at someone that you not willing to kill

b). NEVER move with a weapon off of safe unless moving and shooting

c). KEEP your finger off of the trigger and outside the trigger guard until you have recognized a target and have a clear sight picture

d). ALWAYS know the condition of your weapon

e). ALWAYS identify your target and what is around it

2). Always be performing one of the following four functions:

a). moving

b). shooting

c). communicating

d). holding a sector

The following is a Training and Evaluation Outline that encompasses the necessary skills required for mission success in Search and Secure/Warrant Service.

Mission Essential Tasking 1: Search and Secure

Subtask: Warrant Service

1. Training and Evaluation Outline

Mission: *Search and Secure*

Subtask: *Warrant Service*

Conditions: Team receives search warrant mission tasking, at the discretion of Command and or TL, designated operators conduct surveillance and intelligence gathering prior to mission. ***The below GO or NO GO exercises are conducted in a training environment.***

Objective: Successfully conduct related surveillance and intelligence gathering activities covertly and overtly of a location in preparation Search Warrant

ACTIONS PRIOR TO OBJECTIVE

1). Develop pre-mission intelligence

a). obtain CAD, LERMs, LINXs etc…reports

b). obtain satellite imagery/diagrams/sketches

c). case briefing from detective

d). determine best surveillance location(s)

e). suspect(s) photo/information

f). best surveillance profile

- vehicle
- foot
- member of general public
- special (delivery/maintenance etc.. worker).

2). Conduct provide pre-mission surveillance

a). Approach target/set up surveillance w/o detection

b). confirm target location as listed in warrant

c). determine type of doors

- location

- type, function (in/out)
- knob/lock/hinge information, and

d). determine presence of storm or secondary door

e). determine breaching requirements

f). primary and secondary entry locations

g). windows: location, field of view (compromise potential)

h). likely interior layout (informant/agency intelligence)

i). signs of children

j). vehicles involved

k). available cover/concealment/obstacles

l). determine the best approach route to the target

m). final assault point (FAP)

m). determine last point of cover concealment

n). determine the relationship of the target location to

neighboring/bordering buildings, streets, neighborhoods etc..

o). 360 degree security methods and locations

p). determine level of street or ambient lighting

q). points or areas of cover/concealment

r). provide and relay pertinent team

s). determine best assault platform or method

- team vehicle
- Low visibility vehicle
- Foot

t). using KOCOA determine:

- key terrain,
- observation fields of fire,
- cover and concealment,
- obstacles, avenues of approach

u). determine location for rally points

- Primary
- Secondary
- Departure

v). develop locations/response to contingencies

w). develop mission profile, low vis, etc…

x). command post location/staging areas

z). number of occupants at location

3). Conduct Team Briefing

a). Situation

- List 5 Ws of who, what, when, where, why
- Intelligence/surveillance information
- Include Command Intent

b). Mission

- State clear and concise Team Mission Tasking

c). Execution

- Weather
- Terrain using KOCOA
- Points of cover and concealment
- Number/type of occupants
- Occupant history
- Location history
- Supporting units and location
- Maneuver
- Vehicle
- Route to target
- Movement techniques/formations at objective
- Coordinating instructions
- Actions on objective
- Rally points arrival/departure
- Actions on contact
- Reorganization/consolidation procedures
- Time schedules
- Breach requirements
- Breach location
- Failed Breach protocols
- Perimeter security personnel/locations
- Execution Checklist
- Deviation Codeword
- Contingency plans
- Quick cards
- GRGs
- Less lethal
- Weapons assignments
- Review diagrams/maps/sketches
- Establish 12’oclock position
- Establish structure side call signs

- Administration/Logistics
- Vehicle operational capabilities
- Interdepartmental documentation/notifications
- Interdepartmental coordination
- External agency coordination
- C3
- Incident/Tactical Commander
- Callsigns
- Deviation Codeword
- Conduct Dry Run/Brief Back
- unit and individual tasks
- Actions on Objective

(4) Prepare/pack equipment and gear

- vehicles
- vehicle is operational PRIOR to departure
- weapons
- primary weapon operational
- 120 rounds .223 ammunition
- 2 magazines handgun ammunition
- less lethal options
- communications
- radios are operational and on proper channel
- individual, unit communication checks
- review call signs C3 checklist
- mission enhancement
    - robot
    - distraction devices
    - breaching equipment
    - rescue phone
    - breach equipment
- personal
- kit w/markings
- mission appropriate uniform
- TEMS equipment
- helmet
- eye protection
- NVG
- vis and IR IFF

(5) Prepare for movement

- final equipment check
    - all equipment listed above
- final communication check
    - team communication
    - departmental communication
    - Incident Command communication
    - coordinating unit(s) communication
- final personnel check