

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF ENFORCEMENT

DIRECTIVE

DIRECTIVE NUMBER: O-27-24

SUBJECT: DIRECTED SPECIAL RESPONSE

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/20/2024

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: None

APPENDIX: None

REFERENCE: Directive O-1

DISTRIBUTION: All Conservation Officers

NUMBER OF PAGES: 04

This directive is for division use only and does not modify or supersede any law and should not apply to any criminal or civil proceeding except for civil proceedings related to departmental administrative actions. This directive should not be viewed as creating a higher standard of safety or care in any evidentiary sense. Violations of this directive may form the basis for departmental administrative action.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for officers when directed to respond to and manage demonstrations and other crowd situations in a safe manner, while ensuring constitutional and civil rights of those involved are upheld.

II. POLICY

Officers will strive to effectively manage individuals and crowds during demonstrations or civil disturbances to prevent loss of life, injury, or property damage. Officers encountering such events shall adhere to this policy to protect life, property, and the exercise of constitutional rights of those involved.

The division, in coordination with other DNR divisions, may impose reasonable restrictions on the time, place and manner in which persons engage in First Amendment activity. The division shall place only those limitations and restrictions on First Amendment activity which include all of the following:

1. content-neutral
2. narrowly tailored to serve a significant government interest
3. leave open ample alternative channels for communication of the information

III. ACTIVATION OF DIRECTED SPECIAL RESPONSE

The Director may activate a notification process for Directed Special Response (DSR) to officers when an event is anticipated, developing or has developed on department owned or managed property. The Director may also activate a DSR notification process when mutual-aid is requested.

Individual officers may not participate on another agency's Mobile Field Force deployment without express permission from a division supervisor. An officer may assist in traffic control or other ancillary law enforcement duties without division supervisory permission.

IV. TRAINING

Officers will be trained to use group de-escalation, negotiation, and Mobile Field Force best practices to facilitate safe environments for exercising First Amendment rights.

Training will include the use of layered responses to demonstrations or civil disturbances based on observed behavior and continual safety assessments. Some officers may be trained in specialty areas which support the overall operational response of a DSR.

V. EQUIPMENT

Officers will be issued equipment to ensure their personal safety when responding to a DSR. Equipment issued to an officer must be maintained in working order and accessible when an officer is directed to respond to a DSR. Some issued equipment will require annual inspection. Inspections of designated equipment will coincide with in-service training or as needed.

When a DSR is active, specialty trained officers will be issued related equipment for the duration of the event. At the conclusion of a DSR, related specialized equipment will be stored at a secure location determined by the Director.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Each DSR will have its own characteristics and dynamics. Organizational structure of each DSR will be tailored to the individual event as it develops.

- A. Each DSR will have an Incident Commander (IC) identified by the Director. The IC will be responsible for on-scene operations. An operational plan will be developed prior to deployment in consultation with the Director, to include, but not limited to:
 1. Identify the scope & nature of the event.
 - a. Location of the event
 - b. Who, or what groups/persons are involved
 - c. Estimated number of persons involved
 - d. Risk to DNR staff
 - e. Risk to non-involved persons
 - f. Risk to public property
 2. Identify the leader(s) of the event and open communication channels to understand intent of those involved in the event.
 3. Communicate with local law enforcement and emergency medical agencies about the event. Request mutual-aid when warranted.
 4. Identify the type of deployment warranted depending on the anticipated, current, and changing circumstances of the event and the number of officers needed to effectively and safely address the event as it develops.
 5. The team may consist of:
 - a. Commanding officer(s)
 - b. Platoon leader(s)
 - c. Squad leader(s)
 - d. Line officers
 - e. Over-watch officer (when warranted)
 - f. CART (Chemical Agent Response Team) team lead & members (when warranted)
 - g. Extraction team lead & members (when warranted)
 - h. Other teams as need arises

6. Determine level of deployment of officers, with continuing monitoring of on-scene circumstances to ensure safety of officers and those involved. Level of deployment includes the assigned safety equipment used by officers during the DSR.
- B. If warranted, a Commanding Officer(s) may be designated by the IC. The Commanding Officer(s) will:
 1. Brief responding officers to the event operational plan
 2. Organize and lead event operations as directed by the IC
 - C. The DSR operational plan will dictate if additional groups (as identified in A. 4. above) are required for the event. Officers acting in those capacities will operate as they have been trained, and report through the event established chain of command.

VII. SPECIALTY MUNITIONS

Specialty munitions may be used subject to the same conditions provided in Division Directive O-29-24 (Public Assembly and First Amendment Activity).

VIII. REPORTING

After the event is cleared, the IC shall complete an after-action report and submit it to the Director. Time and expense report direction will be sent to responding officers and their supervisors.

IX. By Authority of:

COL. Rodmen Smith
Division Director
Division of Enforcement