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- As an operational contingency in a specific operation based on threat and risk assessment.
- For the destruction of animals that are dangerous or suffering unnecessarily.

ACPO APP Armed Policing 2012

- 5.5 The use of the words 'reason to suppose' sets the level of knowledge required about the existence of a threat justifying the deployment of AFOs at a far lower level than that which would actually justify their use.

### **Spontaneous or Authorised**

- 5.6 Spontaneous incidents are those incidents that take place without warning, the circumstances of which demand that armed support to the initial police response must be considered. This includes armed protection duties. Additional Guidance is available within the ACPO APP Armed Policing 2012.
- 5.7 Authorised operations are all other operations not falling within that (Spontaneous) definition. This includes armed surveillance duties.
- 5.8 When a spontaneous firearms incident occurs, the Firearms POD at CCC must be informed on [Sensitive] without delay and the appropriately selected, trained and accredited Tactical Firearms Commander will immediately take command of the incident and where appropriate, liaise with the BOCU Duty Officer who will take on the role of Bx community and resources.
- 5.9 A note of the time and date the TFC is informed along with their call sign must be entered on the CAD message created for the incident. In all cases advice should be sought from an authorised SC&O19 Tactical Adviser through the SC&O19 CCC Pod [Sensitive]
- 5.10 The officer taking the role of Tactical Firearms Commander in this first instance is responsible for reviewing the available information and deciding if the incident is to be declared a "firearms incident", and authorising the deployment of armed officers. A note that the TFC is authorising the deployment of firearms officers should be made on the CAD.
- 5.11 If the armed officers have self-deployed, then the TFC must review this decision and either approve their deployment or withdraw them.
- 5.12 Should the incident subsequently become protracted, there may be a need to establish a dedicated command facility to manage the operation. The TFC will contact an SC&O19 SFC through the co-ordinating office in order for them to assess the incident and where necessary provide a TFC and SFC. This ensures

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that operations do not impinge on day to day policing activity. The SFC will review and then either ratify or revoke the authority to deploy armed officers.

- 5.13 Before contacting the SFC, the TFC should ask themselves three questions:
- Is the TFC satisfied that the information/intelligence is reliable as far as can be reasonably ascertained?
  - Having used the NDM does it meet the criteria for firearms deployment?
  - Is there sufficient pause in the incident in order to have time to properly brief the SFC
- 5.14 If all three are met, then the TFC should make contact with the SFC. It is important to remember that the SFC and the TFC should carefully time manage the contact. One of the first questions a SFC should consider asking the TFC is, *"What is the immediacy of the incident and how much time do we have to discuss it?"*
- 5.15 Once contacted, the SFC is responsible for ensuring that the local borough SMT are informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.16 In the event of a spontaneous incident which may require the assistance of an SFC, the TFC may brief them via the telephone from their log of events form FA2. However command of the incident rests with the initial TFC until such time as command is transferred.

### **Self Deployment**

- 5.17 Where AFOs encounter a situation where they believe that the criteria for deployment of AFOs has been met, and delay in seeking authority to deploy would be detrimental to public or officer safety, officers should deploy and take the necessary and proportionate action in accordance with their training. **ACPO APP Armed Policing 2012.**
- 5.18 Where this occurs, the AFOs should inform CCC as soon as practicable so that a Tactical Firearms Commander can be informed. The Tactical Firearms Commander should assess and review the actions of the AFOs in line with the National Decision Model (NDM) and determine whether continued deployment is appropriate. The Tactical Firearms Commander should also consider what further resources may be required and inform a Strategic Firearms Commander as soon as practicable.

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- 6.5 In an operation where the sole purpose is to use armed officers to carry out a specific action at a single location, the Gold Commander will also be performing the role of SFC, the Silver Commander the role of TFC and the Bronze Commander the role of OFC.
- 6.6 In a complex multi-seated or cross boundary operation, where the Gold and Silver Commander for the entire operation are coordinating and directing the deployment of different police disciplines or other agencies, it may be appropriate for the firearms element of the operation to be commanded by a commander who is working to the Gold and Silver Commanders for the overall operation.
- 6.7 The command structure offers flexibility in response to a varied and developing range of circumstances and is functional and not based on rank. The structure must be clearly articulated to all those involved in the operation. Where time permits and it is appropriate to do so, briefing notes or flow charts showing the structure can greatly aid people's understanding of it.
- 6.8 Any change in command structure should, where time permits, be discussed before it is undertaken and must then be documented. If an officer outside the command structure gives advice or a directive relating to the operational plan to a commander, then this must be recorded and this officer will be accountable for the advice or direction they have given.
- 6.9 Where AFOs are being deployed the provisions of Article 2 ECHR and the positive obligation to protect life must take precedent over any other imperative.
- 6.10 In operations involving the deployment of AFOs, it is essential that objectivity and oversight are clearly demonstrated in the decision making process. Separation of roles and clarity of responsibility is essential to the provision of effective command and tactical advice. Where tactical advice is required by a Commander, this advice should be independent. The tactical advisor should be independent of the command structure and not part of the operational deployment. The function of the Strategic or Tactical Firearms Commander must not be undertaken by the Senior Investigating Officer responsible for the investigation of offences for which the firearms operation is being conducted. It is the responsibility of the Strategic Firearms Commander to satisfy themselves that the tactical plan is capable of meeting the strategic aims of the operation, and that the provisions of Article 2 ECHR (positive obligation to protect life) take precedence.
- 6.11 Commander Armed Policing has agreed that in certain time critical circumstances surrounding kidnap operations, an SFC/TFC and SIO can be the same person, until time permits the separation of these roles.

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### **Occupational/Operational Competency**

- 6.12 When an officer has attended and satisfactorily completed a course of instruction based on a command module within the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum, they will be assessed to be “occupationally competent” to perform that role.
- 6.13 To become “operationally competent” officers will undertake a period of auditable shadowing/mentoring and command performance review. Following this, a commander must regularly perform the roles for which they have been trained to remain operationally competent.

### **Re-accreditation and Refresher Training**

- 6.14 Officers in command roles and tactical advisor roles must be formally re-accredited every five years. (ACPO give guidance for re-accreditation between 3 - 5 yrs. Currently in the MPS this is every 5yrs). **NOTE** MPS Commander Armed Policing previously gave authority for those officers whose accreditation was due to expire on or after the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012 an extension for the full five years from their accreditation date. This does not apply to officers whose accreditation had expired and not been re-accredited prior to this date.
- 6.15 All commanders must undergo annual command refresher training. This package should consist of the CoP approved annual command refresher package supplemented by additional local training which supports Force and regional issues identified in the force strategic threat and risk assessment.
- 6.16 A commander’s operational competence will be formally approved on an annual basis by the Commander Armed Policing on completion of these packages.

### **SC&O19 Firearms Command Unit (Formerly SC&O23 and CO5)**

- 6.17 The Firearms Command Unit was set up in November 2009 following the implementation of recommendations from the Stockwell shooting report. SC&O19 MPS Firearms Command Unit has Pan London responsibility for providing specialist command capability for planned firearms operations and support to OCUs in managing 'spontaneous' operations. The unit also provides corporate oversight of MPS firearms resources and supports the tasking of these assets to corporate priorities.
- 6.18 Officers from any business group working outside the line command of the identified SC&O19, SC&O7 and SC&O8 Firearms Commands wishing to commission an armed operation should direct their requests for armed resources

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via the SC&O19 co-ordinating office. This includes all external forces and agencies wishing to conduct firearms operations in the MPS.

- 6.19 SC&O19 Firearms Command Unit co-ordination office can be contacted on **Sensitive** Monday to Friday 8am-10pm (exc bank holidays). Outside of these hours, contact should be made via mobile number **Sensitive** which will divert to the on call TFC. TFCs and SFCs are on duty 24/7. In non-urgent cases, SC&O19 can be contactable via their mail box.
- 6.20 Formal requests to conduct armed operations must be submitted on the appropriate form (FA1/FA4).
- 6.21 In 2011, SC&O19 took on responsibility for the command of all spontaneous firearms incidents within the MPS.
- 6.22 The SC&O19 TFC Cadre will take primary responsibility for all firearms calls. However, another SC&O TFC may take command of a firearms call in circumstances where:
- They are accredited and operationally competent, and a TFC from the SC&O19 Cadre of ARV Duty Officer are all committed to other deployments and are unavailable.
  - They are accredited (and operationally competent) and already dealing with a non firearms incident that develops into a firearms incident.
  - They are accredited (and operationally competent) and in the best position to deal with the incident, in terms of location of knowledge of circumstances.
  - In all cases where there is no agreement as to which TFC will command the incident, the on duty SC&O19 SFC must be consulted immediately in order to resolve the issue and to ensure tactical command is appointed.
- 6.23 The initial command of firearms incidents will comply with ACPO APP Armed Policing 2012. Initial command will sit with the control room TFC, having ready access to information, communications and resources.
- 6.24 Metro Alpha TFC units will command all spontaneous firearms incidents until the SFC has been briefed and has ensured the resilience and effectiveness of the command structure and the effectiveness of the TFC.
- 6.25 C/I MetCC retain responsibility for armed pursuits.
- 6.26 The TFC will be responsible for conducting a threat assessment, developing a working strategy, which may include the setting of tactical parameters and is responsible for ensuring that all officers are sufficiently briefed.
- 6.27 Tactical advice will be immediately available from the SC&O19 Pod.