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## Flash/Sound Diversionary Devices

### 417.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this order is to establish guidelines for the deployment and use of flash/sound diversionary devices.

Personnel of this Department are authorized to use flash/sound diversionary devices, sometimes referred to as "flash bangs", in situations when the use of a less-lethal diversion would facilitate entry, enable an arrest, restore order, and/or potentially reduce the risk of injury.

#### 417.1.1 JUSTIFICATION FOR USE

Circumstances justifying the use of flash/sound diversionary devices may include, but not be limited to: (a) Barricaded subject and/or hostage situations

(b) High-risk warrant services

(c) Discouraging dangerous animals from attacking

(d) Riotous situations

(e) Circumstances wherein distraction of violent and/or emotionally disturbed persons and/or those under the influence of alcohol/drugs is believed necessary to facilitate apprehension/custody

(f) Situations wherein the Incident Commander or on-scene Supervisor deems their use necessary to safely resolve the incident.

#### 417.1.2 PROCEDURES

##### PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO CARRY/DEPLOY DIVERSIONARY DEVICES

Only personnel who have successfully completed departmentally approved training in the proper use and deployment of flash/sound diversionary devices shall be certified/authorized to carry/deploy flash/sound diversionary devices during actual operations or training. Refresher training on their use should be provided to members of the SWAT Team every two years.

#### 417.1.3 AUTHORIZATION FOR USE

Except in extreme emergencies (i.e., life-threatening situations), flash/sound diversionary devices shall not be used without prior authorization of the Incident Commander/On-scene Supervisor.

#### 417.1.4 DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to deploying flash/sound diversionary devices, personnel shall consider available information and circumstances (i.e., presence of young children, elderly persons, flammable materials, small loose objects, etc). Circumstances may indicate that exterior deployment is preferable to deployment on the interior of a structure. Whenever possible, devices should be deployed to an area visible to the deploying officer. A flashbang pole may also be utilized to facilitate deployment.

# Azusa Police Department

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### 417.1.5 SAFETY EQUIPMENT

All personnel carrying flash/sound diversionary devices in an actual incident or situation shall wear fire-retardant gloves and eye protection. The previously mentioned equipment is mandatory for training.

Because flash/sound diversionary devices have the potential to ignite flammable materials, a portable fire extinguisher or the Fire Department shall be readily accessible whenever devices are carried and may be deployed.

### 417.1.6 DOCUMENTATION AND REVIEW

Whenever flash/sound diversionary devices are carried by personnel in an actual situation or incident, that fact shall be noted in the after-action report or tactical call-out memo. In the event devices are deployed, the circumstances surrounding their deployment shall be fully described. The Chief of Police or his or her designee shall be responsible for reviewing any deployment of flash/sound diversionary devices to ensure that policy is/was followed.

### 417.1.7 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Flash/sound diversionary devices are registered by serial number with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF). Typically, the Department's purchase of new devices is reported directly (by case-lot serial numbers) to ATF by the device manufacturer via ATF Form 5. The National Firearms Act requires the Department to notify ATF upon the use/expenditure of flash/sound diversionary devices. The SWAT Team Leader shall be responsible for submitting written notification to ATF when all devices listed on a single ATF form 5 have been used/expended.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms

National Firearms Branch

244 Neely Road

Martinsburg, WV 25405

(304)616-4500

### 417.1.8 INSPECTION AND STORAGE

The SWAT Team Leader is responsible for ensuring that all flash/sound diversion devices are inspected annually. This inspection shall ensure that the Department's devices are properly prepared and in good condition. Devices used beyond their recommended lifetimes shall be designated for use in training only.

Flash/sound diversionary devices should be stored in a cool, dry location within the armory, on a separate shelf from fixed ammunition. Devices may be temporarily issued to SWAT Team members, or other designated personnel, provided appropriate records are maintained. Devices should be carried securely in a pouch/carrier with a retention strap or flap. Loans of Departmentally owned equipment to other agencies must be pre-approved by the Chief or his/her designee.