Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU)

435.1 I. PURPOSE

This policy establishes standard operating policies and procedures for the Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU).

435.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office to maintain a highly trained and mobile CDU that is able to react quickly and handle civil unrest and/or civil disturbance situations.

435.3 DEPLOYMENT

435.3.1 GENERAL DEPLOYMENT

When the CDU is deployed, the Special Operations Division (SOD) Commander or designee, if on scene, shall be the Incident Commander. Requests for deployment of the CDU should be directed to the SOD Commander, who if approved, will coordinate CDU member notification and deployment.

435.3.2 OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENT

(a) CDU is a collateral duty assignment. CDU assets may be deployed partially or in their entirety. This decision will be based on information and discussion between the Incident Commander and the SOD Commander

(b) The CDU participates in a variety of activities which require a written directive designating personnel requirements, equipment, staging areas, responsibilities, uniforms, etc.

(c) Types of Incidents assisted by CDU include:

1. Demonstrations
2. Labor disputes
3. Protests
4. Funeral Details
5. Civil Disturbances
6. Disasters

(d) CDU will adhere to a strict military hierarchy structure. The SOD Commander or designee will act as the Team Commander. Members will be broken down into Squads which will be supervised by a Sergeant or designee.

(e) Incident briefings will be conducted at a designated location prior to deployment. Personnel will be given specific assignments and administrative procedures and documents will be distributed. Personnel will report to the designated location.

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435.4 CDU MEMBER CHARACTERISTICS

(a) Be able to function as a member of a team

(b) Remain calm in tense situations

(c) Be prepared to work long flex hours as needed

(d) Willingness to be on call

(e) Be highly self-motivated

435.5 UNIFORMS/EQUIPMENT

(a) The primary uniform is the blue Class D Dress Uniform. An Agency-issued ballistic vest must be worn while on assignments. Members of CDU will always present a professional appearance. All agency grooming standards are applicable.

(b) Each member of CDU will be issued the following equipment:

1. Baton and holder
2. Shin guards
3. Helmet with shield
4. Chest protector
5. Forearm and groin protector
6. Equipment bag

435.6 CIVIL DISTURBANCE/UNREST

The primary mission of CDU is to deal with civil disturbance, domestic unrest, and riot situations. CDU will deploy members as the command sees fit to deal with the situation at hand. All members must maintain the highest degree of professionalism during these situations.

435.7 USE OF CHEMICAL AGENTS/LESS LETHAL MUNITIONS

(a) The decision to use chemical agents and/or less lethal munitions will rest with the Incident Commander. The Emergency Services Team will be the unit primarily responsible for the deployment of these items. All expended chemical agents canisters should be recovered by the chemical agent officer.

(b) Only personnel who have successfully completed an Agency approved course in the proper use and deployment of less lethal munitions shall be authorized to deploy them during operations.

(c) As an alternative to the use of deadly force, the use of less lethal munitions will be considered whenever possible in order to conserve human life. Less lethal munitions should be authorized whenever such deployment will not unduly jeopardize innocent civilians, or the officers involved.

(d) Circumstances justifying the use of less lethal munitions shall include, but not be limited to the following:

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1. Circumstances involving mentally deranged person(s) or those under the influence of alcohol/drugs.
2. Riot control situations
3. Situations where the authorizing person deems their use necessary to safely resolve the incident.

(e) Prior to deploying less lethal munitions, personnel shall consider all available intelligence information and circumstances. Less lethal munitions can cause lethal injuries if not properly deployed. Ensuring appropriate stand-off distance to minimize the possibility of a lethal injury is a primary consideration for deploying officer and those planning for their use.

(f) It is recommended that all instances where chemical agents or less lethal munitions are used be video recorded whenever practicable.

435.8 TRAINING

Initial CDU training will consist of a 24-hour course. CDU members shall re-train a minimum of eight hours annually. Training will consist of topics which the SOD Commander deems appropriate. All members must remain proficient in civil disturbance formations and strategies, batons, and shields

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