Armored Rescue Vehicle (The Sentinel)

501.1 PURPOSE

This policy is to set guidelines for the proper use, training, care and storage of the Sentinel Ballistic Armored Rescue Vehicle which will be referred to as The Sentinel in this policy document.

501.2 SCOPE

The Sentinel is a commercially made armored rescue vehicle manufactured by International Armored Group (IAG) which was designed specifically for tactical response teams, with added interior space and overall functionality in the event of a rapid deployment. Safety is a critical concern in responding to high risk tactical incidents. The proper use of The Sentinel can greatly enhance officer/citizen safety and improve the ability to resolve a high risk/dangerous incident by minimizing the possibility of death or great bodily harm to all individuals involved.

The Sentinel is not an offensive use of force vehicle as it is not equipped with any weapon system of any kind. Instead it is designed to be used as a mobile ballistic shield for protection from deadly force munitions or other launched projectiles hazards. The vehicle is designed as a defensive operational vehicle to provide protection and security to both law enforcement personnel and citizens of the city of San Mateo. The armoring system on The Sentinel protects the entire cabin with blast protection underneath the vehicle. The engine bay and fuel tank are also armored to prevent the vehicle from being disabled from ballistic threats or shrapnel.

501.3 SPECIFICATIONS

(a) The Sentinel Facts

(a) The vehicle is based on a 2017 Ford F-550 Super duty

(b) Dash board is the same as a Ford Pick-up truck

(c) 6.7L V-8 Diesel (330hp/750lb-ft (off website for Sentinel ARV)

(d) Vehicle weight is approximately 19,000 Pounds

(e) High payload wheels

(f) An integrated run-flat and bead lock system to prevent the tires from dismounting from the wheel

- These tires enable the vehicle to continue operating in the event of tire punctures

(g) NIJ IV / CEN B7 ballistic armor

(h) Ballistic protection is rated to stop up to 50 cal. Projectiles (one shot) and multiple hits from 7.62x51 (.308) armor piercing rounds

(i) 3” ballistic glass

(a) Features

1. Intercom System - inside to outside

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2. 360 Degree surveillance system
    - Includes thermal and night vision capability
3. Front Mounted Receiver with Ram Post and Plate
    - Can attach a non-lethal chemical agent Injector Unit to the front
4. Hydraulic Ram
5. Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD)
6. 16,500 pound capacity Warn winch with synthetic rope
7. Twelve 7" Vertical Gun Port Upgrade
8. Two Roof Mounted Remote Control Spot Lights
9. Turret with gun port
10. Large rear benches designed to accommodate 4 passengers per bench with storage underneath for breaching tools and other equipment
11. Rear facing folding jump seats
12. Dual rear doors are designed to lock into place at both 45° and 90° while built-in steps provide access to the no-slip roof.

501.4 THE SENTINEL TRAINING

(a) Members of the SWAT Team will be trained on operating procedures for The Sentinel.

(b) The training will include knowledge of the rules of the road and the use of the electronic/mechanical mechanisms on the vehicle.

(c) The SWAT Team Leader or his/her designee are responsible to ensure team members receive proper training in The Sentinel's:

(a) Operating procedures,

(b) Mounting and dismounting techniques,

(c) Firearms deployment procedures,

(d) Vehicle road operations, and

(e) Ensuring the vehicle is properly serviced and maintained

501.5 DEPLOYMENT OF THE SENTINEL

The use of The Sentinel will greatly enhance officer/citizen safety in critical incident circumstances and should be deployed in those situations where its use would enhance the tactical advantage of officers based upon threat assessment of operational circumstances and conditions.

The Sentinel is primarily used by the SWAT Team for SWAT related incidents and any other incident approved by the SWAT Team Leader, SWAT Commander, or the Chief of police.

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501.5.1 DEPLOYMENT USES

(a) Mobile protective extraction and recovery vehicle for civilians and police personnel who are injured or exposed to dangerous circumstances or locations.

(b) Mobile protective shield for insertion of police personnel into operational positions/ locations.

(c) Mobile protective shield for deploying lethal and less-lethal munitions against individuals who pose immediate or imminent threat of life endangering or great bodily harm toward officer's or other persons at risk.

(d) Mobile blocking vehicle barrier at public streets and passage ways to prevent motorized vehicle assaults against large/concentrated groups of people.

(e) Mobile protective shield for extraction of police personnel out of operational positions/ locations.

(f) Mobile protective vehicle for insertion of non-lethal chemical agents to dislodge dangerous individuals from barricaded locations.

(g) Mobile protective vehicle for delivery of remote telephone communication devices to dangerous individuals who are in barricaded locations.

(h) Mobile protective shield for removal and or dislodging of obstacles/barriers restricting movement of police personnel into barricaded locations

(i) Mobile protective shield against ballistic projectiles from firearm munitions and other launched or thrown hazards in urban or rural locations

(j) Mobile protective shield for use of Public Address Systems to verbally communicate with individuals and/or crowds for de-escalation of volatile situations.

(k) Mobile protective shield for use by Crisis Negotiation Team officers for communication with individuals to safely de-escalate volatile situations.

(l) Mobile protective vehicle for delivery of tactical canine team into operational positions/ locations.

(m) Any other specifications made by the SWAT Team Leader, Commander, or the Chief.

(n) During any type of natural disaster

501.5.2 DEPLOYMENT INCIDENTS

(a) High Risk Warrant Service

(b) Armed / Barricaded Suspect

(c) Hostage Rescue Operations

(d) Active Shooter

(e) Suspect Vehicle Blocking

(f) Static Displays (eg. recruiting)

(g) Public demonstrations

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(h) The Sentinel shouldnot be deployed during non-violent demonstrations for crowd control and crowd management unless there are justifiable facts and circumstances demonstrating the possible risk of injury or death to law enforcement officers and/or the public, or unless authorized by the SWAT Team Leader, Commander, or the Chief.

(i) The Sentinel may be staged at pre-designated locations away from demonstration/ protest sites to allow for timely response as appropriate depending on event circumstances.

(j) The Sentinel may be used in cases of a declared unlawful assembly, and after a lawful dispersal order, where persons are engaged in criminal behavior that presents a clear and present threat of injury or death.

(k) The Sentinel's deployment is limited to roadways and passageways that are accessible by normal vehicular traffic as well as off road vehicles, except for exigent circumstances.

(l) The Sentinel is not a pursuit rated vehicle and shall not be involved in any vehicle pursuit unless exigent circumstances that require the vehicle presence as a support vehicle to authorized pursuit vehicles.

(m) Any other specifications made by the SWAT Team Leader, Commander, or the Chief.

501.5.3 SWAT OPERATIONS AND DEPLOYMENTS

(a) The Sentinel will only be deployed in a manner consistent with the guidelines in this policy. Approval to deploy The Sentinel will be the responsibility of the SWAT Team Commander or his/her designee.

(b) A valid California class "C" driver's license is required to drive The Sentinel.

(c) Nothing in this policy is meant to preclude the immediate deployment of The Sentinel to perform an officer or citizen rescue or to save lives that are in immediate danger of great bodily injury or death.

501.5.4 NON-SWAT PLANNED OPERATIONS

1. Any sworn member of the San Mateo Police Department may request to deploy The Sentinel in a planned operation by making the request to the SWAT Team Commander or his/her designee.
2. The request should include, but is not limited to:
   (a) The day, date and time frame of the operation
   (b) The reason why The Sentinel is necessary for the success of the operation.
   (c) The location(s) of the operation
3. The SWAT Team Commander or his/her designee will be responsible for approving or denying the request.

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501.5.5 NON-ENFORCEMENT USE

(a) The Sentinel may be deployed for public relations purposes, such as demonstrations, displays and special events, with the approval of the SWAT Team Commander or his/her designee, the Commander, or the Chief.

(b) If approval is granted, a trained SWAT Team Member will be assigned to deliver, drive, and provide security for the vehicle.

501.6 USE OF THE LESS LETHAL CHEMICAL AGENT INJECTOR UNIT

(a) When operated and maintained properly, The Sentinel Gas Injector Unit is an effective chemical dispersion tool.

(b) SWAT Team members that are certified in the deployment of chemical agents are the only persons authorized to load, operate and maintain the gas injector.

(c) Approval to deploy chemical agents via the gas injector will be the responsibility of the SWAT Team Commander or his/her designee.

(d) The deployment of the gas injector will be in a manner consistent with the guidelines in the SWAT Team's Chemical Agent policy.

(e) Designated members of the SWAT Team and SWAT Team members that are certified in the deployment of chemical agents will provide training on the operating procedures of the gas injector.

(f) Training requirements will be set by the SWAT Team Leader or his/her designee and will include practical application procedures for deployment of the gas injector unit.

501.7 ALLIED AGENCY REQUEST

(a) Requests for deployment of The Sentinel by an allied agency will be made through the SWAT Team Leader or his/her designee for authorization. If he/she is not available, then it can be made through Commander or the Chief.

(b) Upon approving the request, at least one SWAT Team member will be assigned to deliver The Sentinel to the requesting agency.

(c) The SWAT Team member will respond to the incident and deploy The Sentinel per the orders of the Incident Commander of the allied agency.

(d) San Mateo Police Department SWAT Team members will not deploy The Sentinel if the deployment conflicts with San Mateo Police Department policies, procedures or practices.

(e) The SWAT Team member arriving on scene with The Sentinel will act as an operator of the vehicle and security for the vehicle.

(f) The SWAT Team member should not be directly involved in the tactical operations of the allied agency unless specifically requested to do so by the requesting agency.

(g) If the SWAT Team member is asked to participate in any part of the operation other than the operation of The Sentinel, the SWAT Team member shall contact the SWAT Team Leader as soon as practical and brief the SWAT Team Leader on their intended actions.

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(h) This policy is not intended to restrict SWAT Team members from taking action they believe will prevent loss of life or great bodily injury.

(i) If the allied agency request for The Sentinel develops into an extended operation, the SWAT Team member deploying The Sentinel will contact the SWAT Team Leader and advise him/her of the situation. The SWAT Team Leader will be responsible for ensuring relief SWAT Team members are deployed if necessary.

(j) If multiple simultaneous requests are made for The Sentinel, the SWAT Team Leader will evaluate the situation and determine which situation takes priority based on the nature of the incidents.

501.8 OPERATING/STORAGE/MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

(a) Backing-Up

  (a) When reversing The Sentinel, a ground guide should be used while the armored vehicle is moving.

    (a) This is to assist the driver of the armored vehicle in avoiding collisions with any unseen objects.

    (b) This procedure does not apply if the use of a guide jeopardizes officer safety.

(b) Vehicle should not be driven over 70 mph while on the main highways

(c) The maximum speed for the vehicle while Team Members are on the exterior of the vehicle shall not exceed 25 MPH

(d) Vehicle should not be driven long distances with turret hatch open

501.8.1 INVENTORY

(a) The designated operator of The Sentinel should ensure that all the vehicle's equipment has been returned to its proper storage location after use of its mission/training.

(b) Bi-annually inventories/inspections should be done and a list of equipment will be stored inside of The Sentinel.

501.8.2 FUELING

(a) Prior to securing The Sentinel after deployment, the designated operator shall ensure that the vehicle has been re-fueled and is ready for deployment.

(b) The Sentinel will be re-fueled with diesel fuel only.

501.8.3 STORAGE

(a) The Sentinel will be stored in a designated parking location in the underground parking garage at the San Mateo Police Station.

(b) Authorization for an alternative storage location can be granted by the SWAT Team Leader, the Commander, or the Chief.

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501.8.4 DAMAGE

(a) If The Sentinel is damaged, the designated operator shall document and report the damage to the SWAT Team Leader as soon as possible.

(b) The circumstances regarding the damage will be included in the incident post operation report.

501.8.5 SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

1. The SWAT Team will conduct rapid deployment and rescue operations with the armored vehicle using the following guidelines and procedures.

   (a) Rapid deployment is a tactic used to deploy the SWAT Team in a safe, quick, and efficient manner.

   (b) Rescue operation is an operation used to remove a subject or officer who can't help themselves from a dangerous situation.

   (c) All Team Members on the exterior of the vehicle must have both hands and feet firmly placed on the handrails and running boards during vehicle operation.

2. SWAT Team members should have rifles on safe when on the skids.

3. Team Members on the exterior will remain on the vehicle with both hands and feet firmly in place until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.

4. The driver of the vehicle will ensure the safety of SWAT team members on the exterior of the vehicle. The driver is also responsible for the security of the vehicle after SWAT team members have deployed from the vehicle.

5. The vehicle's acceleration, braking, and cornering capabilities are limited and must be considered when operating the vehicle.

6. The operator is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is operated within its limitations and constraints and with due regard for the safety of passengers.

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