



**SOUTH COAST BRITISH COLUMBIA  
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
POLICE SERVICE**

# **DISASTERS & CIVIL DISTURBANCES**

Effective Date: May 9, 2005  
Revised, May 7, 2007

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## **POLICY**

### **Disasters and Civil Disturbances Function**

1. The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service (SCBCTAPS) will provide an emergency planning, preparedness and response function that will:
  1. provide an emergency operations manual,
  2. be described and maintained in writing,
  3. be administered under the authority of the Chief Officer and the responsibility of the Deputy Chief Officer, and
  4. be evaluated regularly and revised if necessary.

### **Disasters and Civil Disturbances Plans**

2. The disasters and civil disturbances planning, preparedness and response function will provide a current, written plan including:
  1. availability for command (order of precedence),
  2. communications,
  3. field command posts,
  4. casualty information,
  5. court and Crown Counsel liaisons,
  6. community relations, public information and media briefings,
  7. general liaison with other departments,
  8. legal considerations,
  9. other police support,
  10. military support,
  11. public facility security,
  12. traffic control,
  13. young offenders,
  14. equipment requirements,
  15. de-escalation procedures,
  16. arrest and confinement procedures,
  17. transportation,
  18. debriefing and documentation,
  19. medical and fire services,
  20. provisions for carrying out mass arrests including:
    - a. processing,
    - b. transportation,
    - c. detention,

- d. evidence collection,
  - e. security,
  - f. identification,
  - g. inter-departmental agreements,
  - h. defence counsel visits,
  - i. court and prosecutorial liaison,
  - j. media relations, public information,
  - k. food, water and sanitation, and
  - l. medical treatment.
3. The disasters and civil disturbances planning, preparedness and response function within the SCBCTAPS will provide current, written contingency plan concerning an emergency situation at any detention facility within the SCBCTAPS service area.
  4. The disasters and civil disturbances planning, preparedness and response function within the SCBCTAPS will provide a current, written contingency plan for responding to industrial relations disputes and acts of civil disobedience.
  5. The disasters and civil disturbances planning, preparedness and response function within the SCBCTAPS will provide a current, written emergency mobilization plan, including:
    1. communications,
    2. alert stages,
    3. primary and alternative assembly areas,
    4. equipment distribution,
    5. special task force activation,
    6. key personnel designations,
    7. transportation requirements,
    8. management control measures, and
    9. rehearsals.

### **Liaison with Other Agencies**

6. The SCBCTAPS will maintain liaison with emergency program authorities.

### **Civil Disobedience**

7. SCBCTAPS procedures regarding response to civil disobedience should be considered as a guideline. Members, in consultation with a Supervisor, may deviate from written procedure, if changes in circumstances arise where in the Members judgment an alternative approach may be required.
8. SCBCTAPS will respond to civil disobedience that occurs on transit property, and the Watch Commander or their designate will advise the Jurisdictional Police Department (JPD) of the civil disobedience.
9. SCBCTAPS will respond to JPD requests for assistance with civil disobedience situations occurring on and off transit property.

10. SCBCTAPS will maintain an impartial position in labour disputes. In the event police involvement is necessary, the basic obligation to keep the peace, and protect life and property will be fulfilled.

## REASON FOR POLICY

11. Effective emergency response is a product of good planning, preparedness and response.
12. To comply with provincial emergency preparedness programs.
13. To provide for and facilitate an effective resolution to the civil disobedience, taking into consideration the safety of the general public, transit employees (including SCBCTAPS Members), and the individuals involved in the disobedience.
14. To ensure a neutral position is maintained by SCBCTAPS in labour management disputes.

## PROCEDURES

### CIVIL DISTURBANCES/DISOBEDIENCE ON TRANSIT PROPERTY

[See also: OD080 – Arrest, OD180 – Young Persons]

#### Definition

15. **Civil Disobedience:** Civil disobedience can be a peaceful violation of particular laws or government policies by a single person or group who believe the actions taken by the government or its subsidiaries are immoral or unjust.

#### General

16. The police are usually involved in crowd control under a variety of different circumstances, which may vary from sporting events, concerts, to demonstration. Through civil disobedience, an individual or group's objective is to disrupt the rightful use of the facility while promoting their particular cause. In the event police involvement is necessary, the basic obligation is to keep the peace and protect life and property.
17. A majority of civil disobedience or protests will be spontaneous in nature, however groups may advise SCBCTAPS through normal channels of upcoming civil disobedience or protests, which may involve transit property or transit operations. Information of upcoming civil disobedience may be received from other JPDs or other sources such as posters, news media or individuals.
18. At this time, SCBCTAPS will not establish or maintain a Quick Response Team, Crowd Control Unit or Tactical Team and the SCBCTAPS will request the assistance from the JPD (or integrated police teams) when such resources are required to response to a civil disturbance/disobedience.

## Intervention

19. Member intervention in a civil disturbance/disobedience should only be considered if:

1. there is a safety issue involving the general public, transit employees or the participants involved in the civil disturbance/disobedience,
2. there is violence against persons or willful damage against property,
3. the rights of the general public are being restricted,
4. there are elements of an unlawful assembly, or
5. adequate police resources are available to ensure there is a safe resolution to the incident.

## Civil Disturbance/Disobedience - Emergency Situation

20. In event of a spontaneous civil disturbance/disobedience incident, the following police action will be taken:

1. Members will advise the Watch Commander or their designate of the incident,
2. the Watch Commander or their designate will:
  - a. inform the Inspector Operations or designate,
    - i. as necessary, the Inspector Operations will advise the executive of the affected transit operating components of the incident,
  - b. contact the relevant transit operation control centres (e.g., SkyTrain-OMC and Coast Mountain Bus Company-TCOMM) to advise them of the incident and liaise as appropriate,
  - c. ensure an General Occurrence file is created,
  - d. dispatch the Patrol Supervisor to meet with the SCBCTAPS Member(s) responsible for the area,
  - e. contact the SCBCTAPS Operations Communication Centre (OCC) so they can take appropriate action concerning radio channels and operators,
  - f. in consultation with the Patrol Supervisor (who will consult with Members at the scene), determine if additional SCBCTAPS Members and/or police resources are required to attend the location of the incident,
  - g. if deemed necessary, in conjunction with consultation with transit operation control centers, suspend trains, buses or ferries to prevent injury to any parties involved in the incident, and/or damage to property,
  - h. notify and liaise with the JPD Watch Commander,
3. no additional Members should automatically be dispatched or attend the location, unless specifically requested by the Members at the scene for the preservation of public and employee safety and protection of property,
4. Members and the Patrol Supervisor at the scene will, using their discretion, ensure the civil disobedience, protest or demonstration is not endangering the

general public, transit employees or themselves through the actions of the participants of the incident,

5. if possible, Members will secure transit property by means of physical barriers to prevent other individuals from joining the incident,
6. if the incident is in an area where there is no immediate danger to the general public, transit employees or the participants of the incident, SCBCTAPS Members will take up observations posts where the Members can observe and prevent any possible breaches of the peace,
7. Members should establish a rapport with the participants of the incident in attempt to identify who the leaders are and what objectives they are attempting to achieve,
8. Members will maintain a fair and impartial position during response to a civil disobedience.

### **Planned Civil Disobedience or Demonstration**

21. Once a confirmed civil disobedience or protest is established, the Members will advise the Patrol Supervisor, who will then notify the Watch Commander.
22. The Watch Commander will liaise with the JPD whose area the planned civil disobedience will take place, and review with the JPD the required role of SCBCTAPS regarding police response to the event.
23. Where SCBCTAPS is asked to assist the JPD or handle the planned civil disobedience event, the Watch Commander will ensure creation of an operation file and, if required, an operational plan for the event. The event will be assigned to the responsibility of the Watch Commander for the day of the civil disobedience, unless otherwise determined by the Inspector Operations.
24. The designated Watch Commander will establish a liaison with the JPD to deal with logistical arrangements, if required (e.g., availability of additional resources, safety of personnel, transportation of prisoners, holding areas for prisoners, photographers and forensic video units, emergency services standby, and procedures for carrying out mass arrests).
25. Where SCBCTAPS is responsible for handling the event, the Watch Commander will assume the role of Incident Commander and will be responsible for the overseeing of the event, unless command is assumed by the Inspector Operations or otherwise assigned.
  1. The Watch Commander or designate will:
    - a. relay the information to the Inspector Operations,
    - b. as necessary, the Inspector Operations will advise the executive of the affected transit operating components of the planned event,
    - c. contact the operations control centres for the relevant components of the transit system (e.g., SkyTrain, Coast Mountain Bus Company, SeaBus, West Coast Express) to advise them of the planned civil disobedience,

- d. consult with the Inspector Operations to ensure the appropriate number of resources are available during the event, and if it appears there will be insufficient resources available, the redeployment or call out procedure (in conjunction with the current collective agreement) will be utilized,
- e. require the Patrol Supervisor along with SCBCTAPS Members responsible for the area examine the site of the planned civil disobedience in terms of possible police problems, and have any non-secure items removed the day prior to the event,
- f. contact with the spokesperson of the group to ascertain the numbers of people who will be in attendance and what the plan of action will entail (e.g., media attention, service disruption, symbolic arrests),
- g. ensure adequate police vehicles for transportation of personnel, if required,
- h. place some SCBCTAPS Members, if possible, into plainclothes to infiltrate the crowd at the incident,
- i. liaise with SCBCTAPS Media Relations Officer (MRO) on handling of media enquiries and liaison with other media officers for the transit system and JPD, and possible MRO attendance at the incident, and
- j. assign personnel to ensure a major event box is ready for transfer to the location, in case it is required (e.g., adequate number of portable radios and tactical handcuffs, video camera, camera, prisoner booking sheets, evidence bags, and money envelopes).

## Command

26. A command center (police vehicle) should be established near the site of the event.
27. The deployment of resources should be left to the discretion of the Watch Commander in consultation with the Inspector Operations and Patrol Supervisor or their designates. The discretionary authority of the police dictates the type of police action that needs to be taken.
  1. Observation – maintain minimal number of Members in area; establish observation posts and record activities.
  2. Escorting – prevent clients from using transit system by having their access blocked.
  3. Containment – consider closing physical barriers to the SkyTrain stations to prevent others from joining the incident, facilitate movement of groups and individuals who wish to leave the area.
  4. Selective Enforcement Action – consider selective enforcement (fare checks in fare paid zone against ringleaders, use Appearance notices, Summons and Arrest) against ringleaders and parties committing offences against persons and/or property.
  5. Police Dispersal – unless violence has developed, police dispersal action will not normally be taken without authority by the Deputy Chief Officer or an Inspector. When determining possible dispersal of crowd, the Officer in Charge will:

- a. consider existing circumstances and possible consequences of police actions, and be able to justify the decision (minor breaches of law are not necessarily sufficient cause for intervention),
  - b. realize that physical contact from police intervention could escalate into violence, and
  - c. discuss the situation with a senior officer.
28. When a decision has been made that circumstances demand police intervention, the Watch Commander will:
1. determine the initial objective,
  2. designate the specific area to be cleared and dispersal routes,
  3. ensure there is sufficient personnel and equipment to accomplish the objective,
  4. brief all personnel on their responsibilities and the objective to be achieved,
  5. emphasize that dispersal of the crowd is the primary objective, not arrest action,
  6. notify the OCC of the intended action,
  7. inform the crowd of the decision. A prepared message to be repeated,
  8. allow reasonable time for the crowd to voluntarily disperse.

### **Labour Management Disputes/Protests**

29. In all potential/actual labour disputes requiring police attendance or action, the Patrol Supervisor, and/or the Watch Commander, will be notified.
30. The Watch Commander will consult with the JPD Watch Commander where the labour management dispute is occurring, or planned to take place, regarding the required role of SCBCTAPS.
31. An operational plan will be prepared when SCBCTAPS is designated responsible for handling police response to a labour management dispute and where there is potential for significant breach of peace.
32. A labour/management dispute is a civil matter confined to the parties involved. The police are often called to such disputes because of the potential for a breach of the peace.
33. If during a labour dispute, a Member is in doubt as to what action should be taken, a Supervisor will be consulted for direction. In all instances, the Supervisor will attend the scene, if practicable.
34. Because of the possibility for adverse consequences from inappropriate actions by police in a labour dispute, Members will remain impartial in all dealings and are cautioned to use utmost discretion with persons from either side. It is important that Members be seen to act fairly on such occasions.
35. If a crime is committed, the police are responsible to investigate, report and, after consultation with Crown Counsel, lay appropriate charges. The responsibility is to some degree, discretionary and the SCBCTAPS must act in a way that avoids confrontation, while maintaining a completely impartial position.

36. If picketing takes place, the SCBCTAPS will take not action unless there is evidence of unlawful activity. In the event of illegal picketing, the responsibility rests with the effected party to seek civil remedies. The SCBCTAPS should only act with an enforcement order from the courts, and only after direction from the Watch Commander.

### **Detention Facilities**

37. In the event of an emergency situation at a detention facility within the SCBCTAPS service area, the JPD has primary authority and their contingency plan applies. The SCBCTAPS will provide assistance, upon request from the JPD.

**[See also: OB310 – Request for Assistance]**

### ***Emergency Preparedness and Plans***

*Procedures to be developed.*