

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DIVISIONAL ORDER #08-02

April 20, 2008

TO: Metropolitan Division Personnel

FROM: Commanding Officer, Metropolitan Division

SUBJECT: SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS PINNING POLE AND HOOK SYSTEM

The purpose of this divisional order is to codify Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) protocols for the Pinning Pole and Hook deployment and its use of force reporting. The Pinning Pole and Hook System have been in SWAT less-lethal munitions inventory since late 2001. The concept and development of the Pinning Pole and Hook System was designed and built by team members. The system was patented and the City of Los Angeles now holds all rights to the design.

The Pinning Pole and Hook System is comprised of two poles. Both poles are manufactured from one and a half (1½) inch diameter tubular aluminum that is approximately ten feet in length. The primary Pinning Pole has two palm-grips with a 12-inch pinning pad attached at the end of the pole which controls the suspect's upper body. The composition of the pad consists of a quarter-inch circular metal base that has three inches of foam glued to the base and wrapped with a vinyl cover. The pinning pad has two fork-like extensions made of the same tubular material, which is designed to restrict any movement away from the pad. The base Hook Pole (leg-sweep or secondary pole) has two palm-grips and a curved hook-like feature at the end of the pole. In addition, there is an ankle-locking feature at the base of the Hook Pole that can be activated to trap the suspect's ankle/leg. The Pinning Pole and Hook System is maintained by Metropolitan Division Armory personnel and inspected quarterly to ensure proper function. The system is stored on the SWAT truck.

The Pinning Pole and Hook System is a viable less-lethal tactical option utilized only by SWAT. The Pinning Pole and Hook has been used on numerous operations that involved engaging non-compliant suspects who were aggressive, combative, armed with an edged weapon or blunt object, and were unsafe to approach. The Pinning Pole and Hook is also used when other less lethal options are not appropriate or would likely be ineffective. Deployment of the Pinning Pole and Hook System falls under the "Aggressive Combative" category on the Department's Situational Use of Force Options Chart. The decision to deploy the Pinning Pole System during SWAT operations is driven by the unique and tactically complex circumstances faced by the team at a given incident.

The Pinning Pole and Hook System is used to maintain a safe distance when disarming or disabling a non-compliant aggressive combative suspect armed with edged weapon or blunt object. The Pinning Pole and Hook System is used to disarm suspects from a safe distance then take them to the ground.

The Pinning Pole pins a suspect's body to a solid surface such as a wall or a vehicle. Once pinned, the device restricts the movement of the suspect. Simultaneously, the Hook Pole makes contact with suspect's leg and the suspect's leg is swept from underneath thus taking them to the ground. This maneuver keeps the officers at a safer distance and stops the suspect from aggressively advancing and attacking. The Pinning Pole controls the suspect's upper body while the base of the Hook Pole limits the movement of the suspect's trapped ankle/leg. The system can also be used to transition a suspect from a standing position to a seated or supine position.

The Pinning Pole can be deployed with a ballistic shield or in conjunction with other less lethal options. Due to the unique missions faced by SWAT, the application of the pinning poles, at times, is a more appropriate and practicable force option when other less-lethal munitions would be clearly excessive. For example, the use of other less-lethal options could result in severe injury with suspects who are elderly or very young. A suspect's mental capacity or known medical condition may prohibit the use of other forms of less-lethal munitions.

The deployment of the Pinning Pole and Hook should be a pre-planned event. Prior to the deployment of the Pinning Pole and Hook System on a suspect, the SWAT Officer-in-Charge (OIC) shall notify the on-scene Incident Commander (I/C) and inform him/her of the deployment. If time permits, element members should conduct a rehearsal with the system before deployment. A SWAT supervisor and a team leader will be responsible for the development of the tactical plan and provide oversight when the Pinning Pole and Hook System are deployed. A primary cover officer, an officer equipped with other less-lethal options, and a dedicated arrest team should be in place, if feasible. Required "Doerle" warnings and continued verbalization with the suspect to stop resistance shall be given when appropriate.

TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE

Only SWAT officers who have completed the approved Pinning Pole and Hook System training may use the system. Training on the Pinning Pole System shall be taught to all new SWAT personnel during Basic SWAT School. The training includes deployment protocols as well as a review of the Use of Force Policy surrounding its use. Additional training with the system to maintain proficiency shall occur during the year on SWAT Defensive Tactics training days.

The operation of the Pinning Pole and Hook System requires one to two team members: one to two officers are assigned to the Pole and one officer to the Hook. Team members hold the Pinning Pole toward the end that is equipped with the adjustable handles. The contact pad faces the suspect. The Hook Pole is deployed by one team member who stands adjacent to the officers controlling the Pinning Pole. The hook end of the pole should face the direction of the suspect.

When the command is made to engage, the officers using the Pinning Pole move forward in a thrusting movement and make contact with the suspect's lower torso. This movement pins the suspect to a wall and causes a distraction. Contact is made with the suspect's lower torso rather than the upper body to keep the tines of the Pinning Pole out of the suspect's power zone. This prevents the suspect from pushing the Pinning Pole away.

The officer controlling the Hook Pole makes contact and hooks the suspect's ankle. The officer pulls the suspect's ankle/leg forward. At this point, the officers controlling the Pinning Pole will then retract the Pinning Pole away from the suspect's body by several inches, thereby creating space for the suspect to slide down the wall during the tripping/sweeping action of the Hook Pole. Once the suspect is under control and safe to approach, the command for the arrest team to move forward will be given.

USE OF FORCE AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

The deployment of the Pinning Pole and Hook System during a use of force incident shall be documented in accordance with established Department Use of Force policies and reporting procedures. If the suspect is injured, a supervisor shall ensure the injured suspect receives medical treatment prior to booking. The supervisor shall obtain photographs of all visible as well as complained injuries, even when visible evidence is not present. The deployment of the Pinning Pole and Hook System shall also be documented in the SWAT After Action Report.

Exception to a Use of Force Report: When the Primary Pinning Pole is used as a controlling agent only and the suspect is unresponsive and not resisting, a Use of Force report is not necessary. However, if the suspect begins to resist and/or is subsequently injured, or complains of injury as a result of the Pinning Pole deployment, a use of force investigation shall be completed.

CONCLUSION

The Pinning Pole and Hook System continues to be a valuable tool in SWAT less-lethal equipment inventory. The system allows SWAT officers to gain control of non-compliant, aggressive, combative suspects armed with edged weapons or blunt objects who are unsafe to approach. The use of the Pinning Pole and Hook System is a viable option when other less-lethal options are not appropriate or would likely be ineffective. With this system, SWAT remains committed to resolving all uniquely challenging and highly dangerous situations using the minimal amount of force necessary.



JEFFREY L. GREER, Captain
Commanding Officer
Metropolitan Division

SWAT PINNING POLE AND HOOK SYSTEM



SWAT Pinning Pole and Hook System applied to a suspect armed with an edged weapon.



Suspect's aggressive and combative actions are now controlled allowing the Arrest Team to take the suspect into custody.































