



LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT
**USE OF FORCE
DIRECTIVE**

UOF Directive No. 14

February 2025

**CROWD CONTROL
KINETIC ENERGY PROJECTILES AND CHEMICAL AGENTS**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to familiarize officers with the different usage requirements for specific intermediate force options **during crowd control situations**. This Directive is specific to crowd control situations and does not cover the technical aspects of each device, nor as intermediate force options during non-crowd control duties.

PROTOCOL

The Department's guiding principle when using force shall be reverence for human life. Officers shall attempt to control an incident by using time, distance, cover, communications, and available resources in an effort to de-escalate the situation whenever it is safe, feasible, and reasonable to do so. When warranted, Department personnel may use objectively reasonable force to carry out their duties. Officers may only use a level of force that they reasonably believe is proportional to the seriousness of the suspected offense or the reasonably perceived level of actual or threatened resistance.

The usage protocols for the certain devices/munitions **during crowd control situations** are different than that of normal Department intermediate force option protocols. These devices/munitions include, but are not limited to:

- 40mm Less-Lethal Launcher,
- 37mm Less-Lethal Launcher,
- FN303 Less-Lethal Launcher, and
- Any chemical agents (e.g., Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Spray and Pelargonic Acid Vanillylamide (PAVA) munitions).

The specific protocols for deployment of these devices and any associated munitions are guided by the California Penal Code. These devices are classified by the State of California as kinetic energy projectiles (KEPs) or chemical agents. Kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents shall only be deployed during crowd control situations by a peace officer that has received training in their proper use as designated by the Department and the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

Additionally, they shall not be used solely due to an imposed curfew, verbal threat, or non-compliance with a Department directive.

Deployment

The individual usage criteria for specific devices during crowd control are as follows:

- The 37mm LLL requires Incident Commander (IC) approval.
- The FN303 can only be used by authorized Metropolitan Division personnel.
- The use of chemical agents, including OC spray, requires the approval of an officer at the rank of Commander or above.
- The Beanbag Shotgun is **not** authorized for use during crowd control situations.

Note: The 40mm LLL does not have additional individualized usage criteria during crowd control situations.

Kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents may only be deployed during crowd control situations under the following circumstances:

- To defend against a reasonably perceived threat to life or serious bodily injury to any individual, including a peace officer; or,
- To bring a reasonably perceived dangerous and unlawful situation safely and effectively under control; and, only in accordance with the following requirements:
 - 1) De-escalation techniques or other alternatives to force have been attempted when objectively reasonable, and have failed;
 - 2) Repeated audible announcements have been made stating the intent to use kinetic energy projectiles, when objectively reasonable to do so (in multiple languages and from various locations, if appropriate);
 - 3) Persons have been given an objectively reasonable opportunity to disperse and leave the scene;
 - 4) An objectively reasonable effort has been made to identify persons engaged in violent acts as opposed to those who are not. Kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents shall not be used indiscriminately on a crowd or group of persons, and shall instead be targeted toward those individuals reasonably believed to have engaged in violent acts;
 - 5) Kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents shall only be used when objectively reasonable, and only with the frequency, intensity and in a manner that is proportional to the threat;
 - 6) Officers shall attempt to minimize the possible incidental use of kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents on bystanders, medical personnel, journalists, or other unintended targets;
 - 7) An objectively reasonable effort has been made to extract individuals in distress;

- 8) Medical assistance is promptly requested and, if properly trained personnel are present, to provide such assistance to injured persons, when it is reasonable and safe to do so; and,
- 9) Kinetic energy projectiles shall not be aimed at the head, neck, or other vital organs.

Chemical Agents

The use of any Department approved chemical agent during a crowd control incident requires the approval of a Commander or above. Chemical agents include CS gas, CN gas, OC, and all tear gas canisters. Before using any chemical agent, tactical consideration should be given to wind direction, safety equipment for officers, and the potential non-effectiveness of the chemical agent.

Reporting a Non-Categorical Use of Force in Crowd Control Situations

In a crowd control situation, a Use of Force Report is not required when officer(s) become involved in an incident where force (either baton or hand) is used to push or move individuals who exhibit unlawful or hostile behavior and who do not respond to verbal directions by the police. This applies only to officers working in organized squad and platoon-sized units directly involved in a crowd control mission.

If the baton is used as an impact device and makes contact, it is a reportable use of force. It is also a reportable use of force if any KEPs/Chemical Agent are deployed, regardless of whether they make contact. Should force be utilized under these circumstances, officers shall notify their immediate supervisor of the use of force once the tactical situation has been resolved. The supervisor shall report the actions per Department policy, or as directed by the incident commander based on the individual situation.

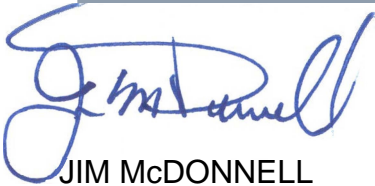
Note: A Use of Force Report is required when an officer(s) becomes involved in an isolated incident with an individual during a crowd control situation, which goes beyond the mission of the skirmish line.

CONCLUSION

Officers are reminded that the usage criteria for certain intermediate force options during crowd control situations is different than that of normal patrol duties. These devices have been termed kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents per California law. They require individually specific approvals and have deployment circumstances that are specific to crowd control.

Important Reminder

Deviation from these basic concepts sometimes occurs due to the fluid and rapidly evolving nature of law enforcement encounters and the environment in which they occur. Deviations may range from minor, typically procedural or technical, to substantial deviations from Department tactical training. Any deviations are to be explained by the involved officer(s), and justification for substantial deviation from Department tactical training shall be articulated and must meet the objectively reasonable standard of the Department's Use of Force Policy.



JIM McDONNELL
Chief of Police

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