TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	330.05	12/17/2017	12/17/2017
SUBJECT TITLE		**PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES**	
Mounted Command		5/2/2017; 4/11/2014	
REFERENCE		**RE-EVALUATION DATE**	
CALEA 41.1.4		12/17/2020	
SUBJECT AREA		**DISTRIBUTION**	
Law Enforcement Operations		All Sworn Personnel; Selected Civilians	

PURPOSE:
The purpose of this policy is to outline responsibilities and procedures pertaining to the Mounted Command.

POLICY:
It is the policy of the Providence Police Department to operate a Mounted Command utilizing nationally recognized standards of training and established operational procedures.

DISCUSSION:
The Providence Police Department Mounted Command is comprised of specially trained equines and officers that can be utilized to supplement the activities of the various Department Divisions. Mounted Command equines and officers have been trained in criminal apprehension, riot and crowd control situations, and routine patrol-related activities.

For the purpose of this General Order, the following definitions shall apply:

Mounted Command Officer (MCO): A specially-trained, sworn Department member who is assigned to the Mounted Command.

Mounted Command Equine (MCE): A specially-trained horse utilized by the Providence Police Department in the furtherance of lawful Department objectives.

Mounted Command Stable Supervisor (MCSS): A specially-trained civilian employee who is primarily responsible for the care of the MCEs and who also provides basic equitation training to MCOs upon their appointment to the Mounted Command.

PROCEDURE:

I. GENERAL OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

A. A Mounted Command Officer's use of a Mounted Command Equine shall be objectively reasonable based upon the totality of the facts and circumstances confronting the officer. The MCO must evaluate the following factors, taking into consideration the safety of officers, citizens, and suspects, prior to initiating action with an MCE:

1. The severity of the offense(s) at issue.

2. Whether or not the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others.

3. Whether or not the suspect is actively resisting arrest and/or attempting to evade arrest by flight.

B. Operational Control/Conflict of Orders – If present, the Mounted Command Commanding Officer shall assume operational control of situations requiring the use of MCEs.

1. If the Mounted Command Commanding Officer is not present, the MCO shall follow all supervisory commands in accordance with Department Rules and Regulations.

2. Officers assigned to the Mounted Command may augment Special Response Unit (SRU) officers, as needed. Under these circumstances, they will adhere to the SRU team operations plans and act in accordance with the directions of the SRU Team Leader.

3. If an MCO is requested by a supervisor to use an MCE in a manner that the MCO deems inadvisable, the MCO will inform the supervisor of this and state the reason. If the supervisor allows the order to stand, the MCO shall do his/her best to comply with the order. The supervisor issuing the order shall assume complete responsibility for the execution of the order.

4. Under no circumstances shall an MCO comply with an order that is illegal, including those that violate the civil rights of any individual, including but not limited to undertaking any actions that would constitute an excessive use of force.

C. MCEs are trained to disregard normal noises, activities, and contact. However, the MCE cannot always distinguish between a real threat and a

threat that it perceives to be real. If a threat is perceived to be real by an MCE it may instinctively strike or kick out, but it will generally engage its "flight" response. MCOs must instruct civilians and other law enforcement officers to refrain from making any aggressive or predatory type movements around the MCE.

D. The MCO has the authority to direct an MCE to defend or protect any other person that the MCO determines is in need of protection.

E. It is common for MCOs to be requested for special details or presentations. In order to maintain command coordination and scheduling integrity, all such requests shall be forwarded to the Mounted Command Commanding Officer for denial or approval and MCO/MCE allocation. Approval must be rendered prior to special detail deployment.

II. GENERAL RULES OF THE MOUNTED COMMAND

A. MCOs are accountable for the actions of their MCEs.

B. MCOs will not discipline their MCEs in public view.

C. The integrity and unimpugnable reputation of the Mounted Command is of paramount importance. An MCE is a high visibility tool and attracts many civilians. MCOs need to constantly keep this in mind and use care to act accordingly at all times.

D. Any injuries to persons caused by an MCO/MCE will be reported to the appropriate on-duty supervisor and to the Mounted Command Commanding Officer without delay.

E. When an MCO is away from the horse trailer and the MCE is loaded inside, the MCO shall ensure that the MCE has proper ventilation for the given weather conditions, and that the horse trailer is properly secured.

F. If the MCE is tied, the MCO shall remain close enough to intervene if the MCE becomes entangled, harassed by other animals, or approached by citizens.

G. The uniform/gear worn by the MCO will be in accordance with Department policy.

H. MCOs serve in the Mounted Command at the discretion of the Chief of Police and must be willing to withdraw, without prejudice, when so asked.

III. CROWD CONTROL

A. Prior to utilizing an MCO/MCE, it should be determined that conventional crowd control methods would not produce the desired effect.

B. MCO/MCE teams may be used to surround and control groups in nonviolent demonstrations as appropriate. They shall not be used against passively resistant demonstrators who are sitting or lying down.

C. MCO/MCE teams shall not be utilized when the use of chemical agents is anticipated or deployed, nor shall they be used in icy or snow conditions or when similar lack of footing may jeopardize the animal, rider, or others.

D. MCOs should work in teams of two (2) and clear one (1) area at a time, whenever practicable.

E. In all crowd control situations, uniformed officers will follow in formation at a reasonable distance behind the MCO/MCE. This will help to ensure the protection of the MCO/MCE from any person(s) who slip past them.

F. MCOs will continue to verbally warn crowd participants to leave the area as the MCEs continue to advance.

G. The crowd must always be given an escape route, and MCOs will move the crowd in that direction. If no exit exists or if the escape route becomes closed, the MCEs will stop advancing.

H. MCEs may be used as a defensive tool to protect citizens or officers whenever either or both are in danger.

IV. EQUIPMENT

A. MCOs are responsible for maintaining all equipment issued to them and their MCE. Any equipment that is in disrepair or unaccounted for will be reported to the Mounted Command Commanding Officer.

B. Specialized equipment is used by the members of the Mounted Command in order to assist those officers in their missions and to protect them and the MCE. This equipment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Protective riding boots.

2. Saddle (stirrup leathers, irons with reflector pads).

3. Saddle pad.

4. Girth.

5. Girth cover.

6. Two (2) dress housings.

7. Breast plate.

8. Military-style bridle.

9. Two (2) Leads (rope dress and cotton with chain).

10. Halter.

11. Spurs.

12. Saddle length rain slicker.

13. Potable water provided in horse trailers.

14. Leg reflectors.

15. Riot gear.

C. First Aid boxes shall be maintained in the tack room of each trailer.

V. TRAINING

A. All training shall be conducted in accordance with the guidelines, training practices and measures as instituted by the Mounted Command Commanding Officer with the assistance of the Mounted Command Stable Supervisor (MCSS).

B. The Mounted Command Commanding Officer, with the assistance of the MCSS, will be responsible for ensuring that proper training is provided to each MCO and MCE; that all MCOs and MCEs meet the standards of training as set forth; and that the training is properly documented.

a. MCO and MCE records and documentation shall be maintained by the MCSS. These records shall include the MCEs official papers, medical records (including but not limited to vaccinations and Coggins tests results), farrier records, and training records. These records shall not be removed without the permission of the Mounted Command Commanding Officer.

C. By the end of each year, training sessions for the following year will be scheduled into the Mounted Command calendar, as determined by the Mounted Command Commanding Officer with the assistance of the MCSS. Failure to participate in scheduled training shall result in the loss of the MCOs ability to deploy or use an MCE until such time when the training is completed. Training may include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Desensitization training.

2. Standard gaits.

3. Side-pass, backing and flexion.

4. Retention.

5. Crowd control.

6. Obstacles.

7. Drill and tactical formations.

D. Each MCE is an individual, and as such has certain characteristics that are unique to it. Thus, it is incumbent upon each MCO to create a high level of mutual confidence and trust with each MCE during training, and to sustain that high level whenever interacting with and/or working with the MCEs in the field.

VI. MAINTENANCE OF THE MOUNTED COMMAND EQUINES

A. The final hour of each eight (8) hour shift is set aside for the MCO to ensure that the MCE is properly put away (i.e., saddle marks are cleaned from the MCE; the MCE is hosed-down in warm weather, etc.), and that all of the MCOs/MCEs assigned equipment is properly maintained.

B. The MCSS shall ensure that the MCE stalls are cleaned daily.

C. The Mounted Command and all MCOs, MCEs, personnel, records, equipment and facilities are subject to unannounced inspections.

D. The MCSS shall ensure that MCEs are brushed and groomed, and that their general health is checked, on a daily basis.

E. MCEs will be consistently tested and monitored for any problematic behavioral activity. When issues are noted, particularly those which are contrary to the safe use of that animal, the Mounted Command Commanding Officer and the MCSS shall evaluate the deficiency and determine if the MCE should remain in service until the problem is corrected. The Mounted Command Commanding Officer and the MCSS will have the responsibility and authority to remove the MCE from service until such time as the deficiency is corrected, if deemed necessary.

a. If an MCE is removed from service for any reason, the Mounted Command Commanding Officer shall notify the Uniformed Division Commanding Officer in writing. A copy of the notification document will also be placed in the affected MCEs file.

F. If an MCE shows signs of illness or injury, the MCSS shall be notified immediately, who shall in turn contact the Mounted Command Veterinarian and/or transport the MCE to the veterinarian or an emergency animal clinic as soon as possible.

a. The Mounted Command Commanding Officer shall be notified by the MCSS whenever such circumstances arise.

G. The Mounted Command Veterinarian will conduct bi-annual examinations of the MCEs and ensure that all required immunizations are administered during said examinations.

H. Feed will be purchased by the Department and stored appropriately in the Mounted Command stables. All MCEs shall be fed and given clean water daily.

VII. WORKING HOURS

A. Working hours will normally be comprised of an eight (8) hour shift. The Mounted Command Commanding Officer shall determine hours and regular days off according to the Department's Group A, B, and C shift scheduling method.

B. MCOs will adjust their schedules as necessary to accomplish a planned operation or to participate in an emergency situation. MCOs may be subject to call-outs for searches, crowd/riot issues, or surveillance purposes. The needs of the Department will dictate the need for deployments and will have priority over scheduled days off and vacation/holiday leave.

APPROVED:

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