

Train Searches

463.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To establish standardized guidelines for the search of revenue trains when required due to known or suspected criminal activity.

463.1.1 POLICY

It is the policy of the BART Police Department to minimize the risk to BART patrons and police officers when it is necessary to search a revenue train in the furtherance of protecting life, property and apprehending suspects.

Nothing in this policy precludes officers from responding directly to the location of a suspect or a disturbance on a train when that suspect or disturbance can be located without searching the entire train. Nothing in this policy precludes officers from employing different tactics to meet the unique needs of a rapidly evolving incident when such tactics would likely result in greater safety for patrons and officers.

463.1.2 DEFINITIONS

Hazardous Train Search: Searches which are conducted in response to reports of armed or violent criminal suspects on a train and situations where suspects have just used, or are threatening to use, a deadly weapon in a threatening manner to commit an act of violence. The major concern in such circumstances is to prevent a hostage-type situation.

Non-Hazardous Train Search: Searches which are conducted in response to reports of unarmed or non-violent criminal suspects on a train.

Robbery Apprehension Tracking System (RATS): An electronic tracking system utilized by the San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, and Hayward police departments to track tagged bait money surrendered in bank robberies, kidnappings, and other crimes where it is necessary to track the stolen money or property to apprehend the suspect(s). The system uses pocket detectors, hand-held and vehicle-mounted tracking units, and fixed-location remote receivers. Personnel shall note that all of the information regarding the RAT system is highly confidential, and is not to be discussed with the general public or the media.

Tag or Rat: An electronic transmitting device hidden in currency bundles or other trackable items, such as vehicles, jewelry, or briefcases.

Trap: Tag/rat deactivation device.

Pocket Detector: Close-range (up to 70 feet) tracking device.

Area-Wide Monitor: Monitor and grid map located at RAT-equipped police department communications centers which highlights the area of the tag's location.

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463.2 HAZARDOUS TRAIN SEARCH

Officers dispatched to reported incidents involving armed or violent suspects on board a revenue train shall be provided with all available information by dispatch, including the number of cars on the train, the arrival time of the incident train, and the description and location of the suspect(s) on the train.

The zone sergeant-in-charge or watch commander has the responsibility for determining whether or not the incident warrants a hazardous train search.

Dispatch shall advise the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District Central supervisor of the situation and request that the incident train be held at the platform with the doors open.

At least three (3) officers should be dispatched to the scene whenever possible. Officers from outside agencies will be called when needed and should report to San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District officers on the scene to be briefed on the search method to be used. Shotguns should not be taken to the platform when a large number of patrons is present.

Officers shall approach the platform using areas of cover and concealment whenever possible. If possible, responding officers may allow disembarking patrons to clear the train and platform area. If possible, platforms may be evacuated prior to initiation of the search. Evacuations are not mandatory, and officers may elect not to conduct evacuations in situations involving large crowds and limited resources for crowd control, or when there is an urgent need to locate suspects immediately or when tactics dictate a low-key approach without announcing the fact that police are present and searching for a suspect(s). Officers not directly involved in searching the train should maintain a station perimeter to prevent the escape of suspects with exiting passengers. In most cases, the perimeter should be maintained by allied agencies with San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District officers searching the train.

Officers should take the following positions before beginning the search:

- (a) Three officers inside the train who work together and are responsible for searching the interior of the train for suspects and evidence.
- (b) One officer (when available) on the outside of the train who maintains long-cover for the exterior of the train in case the suspects exit the train while the search is in progress. This officer may utilize train doorways for concealment and should follow the officers searching the interior of the train.
- (c) When available, additional officers may be deployed as a rear-guard element for the interior train search team or for the officer maintaining exterior security on the train. When a fifth officer is available, he/she should join the officer searching the exterior of the train. Officers shall advise dispatch when the incident train can be released for service.

The search may be started from whatever location on the train provides for the greatest tactical advantage in searching the train. When a search is started from the middle of a train, the search may either be divided between four teams moving in opposite directions or searched by one team

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that moves in one direction and then returns to search the remaining section of the train. In cases where one team performs a split-search of the train, consideration should be given to posting an officer to observe the portion of the train that has yet to be searched while the search team completes searching the first portion of the train.

In situations involving trains that are loaded to a capacity that prevents officers from moving along the interior of the train, officers may opt to search the train from the exterior using the windows to view the interior of the train. If a suspect is located, at least one officer should be posted to cover the suspect while additional officers move to apprehend the suspect inside the train.

Officers shall advise dispatch when the incident train can be released to resume service.

463.3 NON-HAZARDOUS TRAIN SEARCH

Officers dispatched to reported incidents involving unarmed and non-violent suspects on board a revenue train shall be provided with all available information by dispatch including the arrival time of the incident train, the number of cars in the train, and the description and location of the suspects on the train.

Dispatch shall advise the Operations Control Center (OCC) supervisor of the situation and request that the incident train be held at the platform with the doors closed.

The search may be started from whatever location on the train provides for the greatest tactical advantage in searching the train. When a search is started from the middle of a train, the search may either be divided between two teams moving in opposite directions or searched by one team that moves in one direction and then returns to search the remaining section of the train. In cases where one team performs a split-search of the train, consideration should be given to posting an officer to observe the portion of the train that has yet to be searched while the search team completes searching the first portion of the train.

In situations involving trains that are loaded to a capacity that prevents officers from moving along the interior of the train, officers may opt to search the train from the exterior using the windows to view the interior of the train. If a suspect is located, at least one officer should be posted to cover the suspect while additional officers move to apprehend the suspect inside the train.

Officers not directly involved in searching the train should maintain a station perimeter. In most cases, the perimeter should be maintained by officers from allied agencies with BART officers searching the train.

Officers shall advise dispatch when the incident train can be released to resume service.

Depending on the circumstances, non-hazardous train searches may be conducted on a moving train.

This procedure does not preclude having one officer search a train in a non-hazardous train search.