

**BOLIVAR COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**  
**Law Enforcement**  
**Policies and Procedures**

<b>Subject:</b> Special Munitions – Distraction Devices	<b>Policy Number:</b> 5.03
<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>Revision Date:</b>
<b>Approval Authority</b> <b>Title and Signature:</b>	

**POLICY:**

The Bolivar County Sheriff's Office may employ *special munitions - distraction devices* when the application of such devices aid in the accomplishment of the mission, without unreasonable risk to human life.

**PROCEDURE:**

**Distraction Devices:**

Distraction devices are usually considered *less-than-lethal*, and are employed to distract or attract attention. Both hand-thrown and shoulder fire weapon delivery systems are applicable within this policy. Shoulder fired weapons include service shotguns, fog generators, and 37mm gun rounds, which produce a sudden loud noise or a flash of light. These devices, whether fired from a weapon or hand thrown may also be referred to as *flash-bang* systems. These tools are generally to be used to provide diversion or to mask law enforcement personnel movement activities.

**Safety Precaution:**

All munitions, including special munitions, are employed within the guidelines of the departmental *use of force* policy. Such devices are not designed to produce shrapnel or expelled particles. However, these munitions are capable of causing bodily injury, serious bodily injury, or death in some circumstances, especially if not employed properly. Manufacturer's recommendations may require larger clearance or safety zones. If so, these recommendations replace the following. Flash-bang devices are:

1. Deployed in a manner that are calculated to not injure human life;
2. Not to be used within a 20-foot radius of any individual, unless a substantial wall or safety barrier protects persons within this radius;
3. Not to be used in enclosed structures when individuals inside the structure are at risk from shrapnel, expelled particles, fire, or burns caused by the devices; &
4. Not to be used in the proximity of highly flammable materials.

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**Deployment:**

1. During normal operations, distraction devices are secured in munitions lockers at the department, or transported in a secured container by supervisory personnel with the rank of sergeant or above.
2. Distraction devices are used consistent with department training and manufacturers' instructions.
3. Distraction devices may be used in emergencies that require deployment of personnel in dangerous situations, or as an alternative to the use of more lethal force.
4. Distraction devices are normally used in planned assaults, which require the temporary disorienting or confusion of individuals without risk or injury to human life.
5. Only personnel trained in the use of distraction munitions, and under direct supervision, may employ these devices.
6. When practical, staff assigned to deliver distraction devices should be backed up by other staff armed with conventional weapons to provide protection to human life.
7. When practical, medically trained officers [first aid] or medical personnel are present during the deployment of distraction devices to provide *emergency first aid*.
8. Regardless of the level of support available, officers must render first aid to any injured person as soon as practical after the situation is stabilized.

**Reporting:**

After employment of special munitions in a tactical incident, a report must be completed that includes:

1. The supervisor authorizing the use of special munitions;
2. Supervisor's perception for the need to deploy special munitions;
3. Identification of officers deploying munitions;
4. Number and types of rounds expended;
5. Effects on targeted person(s) and any injuries;
6. Collateral or unintended injury or damage; &
7. Attachment of any associated medical or damage reports.

This data may be described in the incident or investigative report, and does not have to be reported by means of a special document.

Incident reports, where special munitions have been used, are reviewed on a yearly basis to determine the effectiveness, of the munition, and to aid in developing additional training.

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**BOLIVAR COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**  
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**Policies and Procedures**

<b>Subject:</b> Special Munitions – Less Lethal	<b>Policy Number:</b> 5.04
<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>Revision Date:</b>
<b>Approval Authority Title and Signature:</b>	

**POLICY:**

*Less-lethal special munitions* may be used by the Bolivar County Sheriff's Office in situations when employment helps accomplish mission objectives and/or is calculated to reduce the risk to human life.

**Special Munitions Devices:**

This policy addresses the use of munitions usually considered *less-than-lethal*, including hand thrown [grenade] devices, and shoulder fired weapons such as service shotguns, fog generators, or 37mm rounds loaded with *rubber sabots, rubber pellets, beanbags, gas, stains, oleoresin capsicum, or similar* projectiles.

**Precaution:**

All special munitions are employed within the guidelines of the department's *use of force* policy. These weapons can cause serious bodily injury or death under some circumstances. Special munition rounds must not be deliberately fired or thrown at the face, chest, neck, or spine of any individual. Special munitions usually come with manufacturer recommendations and guidelines. Officers designated to use these devices must be familiar with, and trained in the application of these recommendations and guidelines before deployment.

**Deployment:**

1. Special munitions are normally secured in munitions lockers at the station or transported in secured containers by supervisory personnel.
2. Special munitions must be used in accordance with agency training and manufacturers' instructions.
3. Special munitions may be used in emergencies that require deployment of personnel in dangerous situations, or as a considered alternative to the use of more lethal force.
4. Special munitions rounds are normally used in planned assaults which require the temporary disabling of target individuals, or facilitate maneuver, capture, or temporary disabling of individuals.

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5. Only personnel trained in the use of special munitions and under direct supervision expend these devices.
6. When practical, and to protect human life, staff assigned to deliver these rounds should be backed up by other staff armed with conventional weapons.
7. Emergency medical [first aid] trained officers or medical personnel assist in the deployment of special munitions to provide emergency first aid when available.
8. Officers render first aid and decontaminate those exposed to the effects of gas, chemicals, or OC as soon as practical after the situation is stabilized.

**Reporting:**

After using special munitions in tactical incidents, a report must be completed that includes:

1. The supervisor authorizing the use of special munitions;
2. Supervisor's perception for the need to deploy special munitions;
3. Identification of officers deploying munitions;
4. Number and types of rounds expended;
5. Effects on targeted person(s) and any injuries;
6. Collateral or unintended injury or damage; &
7. Attachment of any associated medical or damage reports.

This data may be described in the incident or investigative report, and does not have to be reported on a special document.

Reports are reviewed on a yearly basis to determine the effectiveness, of the munition, and to aid in developing future training.

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