



# POLICY AND PROCEDURE

# NO.585

## Response to ShotSpotter<sup>tm</sup> Notifications

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### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this directive is to delineate departmental policies and create consistent procedures and practices for the receipt, dispatch, emergency response to and investigation of gunfire incidents that are received by City of Worcester personnel using the ShotSpotter Gunfire Location, Alert and Analysis Service. This directive encompasses:

- Initial assessment and dispatching protocol
- Field unit response
- Evidence collection at scene
- Investigative Follow-up
- Crime Analysis Utilization
- Program Management

### POLICY:

#### Definitions:

- **ShotSpotter Technology:**

The ShotSpotter Gunfire Location, Alert and Analysis Service is a reliable and accurate means for law enforcement agencies to have greater and faster awareness of illegal gunfire and explosion incidents occurring within their jurisdictions.

The technology and combination of real-time alerts and accumulated data with accurate incident locations significantly changes how law enforcement officers respond and investigate these incidents. The ShotSpotter Gunfire Location, Alert and Analysis Service increase the reporting and awareness of these incidents, provides precise location information of each incident within seconds of the discharge(s). Fast, accurate audio information captured with an acoustic surveillance system can provide invaluable situational intelligence that can illustrate the severity of an incident which is critical to determine the appropriate level of field response. It will also better prepare first responders so they can safely manage a gunfire or explosives event which can include the dispatching of medical, emergency personnel, investigative units, crime scene investigators and additional support units.

ShotSpotter Gunfire Location, Alert and Analysis Service allow multiple entities within an agency to have simultaneous access to current, and historical incident information.

This information access can create an environment where illegal gunfire and explosives can be comprehensively addressed on a short term basis (tactical/operational use) and a long term basis (strategic use). These previously unavailable benefits change the dynamics involved with the receipt, dispatch, and investigation of gunfire incidents.

**Program Intent & Logistics:**

The ShotSpotter Gunfire Location, Alert and Analysis Service is intended to enhance the Department’s ability to respond effectively to and investigate violent crime involving gunfire. The system uses audio sensors placed in selected areas to identify the location of gunshots. ShotSpotter incidents may be replayed to hear the actual audio component of the incident, aid in the collection of evidence at crime scenes, and aid in the investigation and prosecution of crimes. ShotSpotter incidents shall be dispatched in accordance with long-standing department policy of the dispatch of crimes in progress involving the use of firearms. The purpose of the system is to reduce violent crime and incidents of indiscriminate gunfire in the City of Worcester and to be incorporated into the Department’s overall violent crime reduction efforts.

**PROCEDURE:**

**1. Initial Assessment and Dispatching Protocol:**

- a. Timely acknowledgement and review of incoming information
- b. Timely dispatching of appropriate number of field personnel (*2 officers preferably the EOPS car when available and 1 supervisor*).
- c. Provide the specific detailed location of the incident, i.e., “the backyard of the house located at: \_\_\_\_\_” or “directly in front of address”.
- d. Provide information on severity of the incident, i.e., single shooter firing a single round, single shooter firing multiple rounds, likely multiple shooters (i.e., a gunfight), suspect moving and at what speed and direction.
- e. Provide information of additional calls of the incident by citizens
- f. Upon confirmation of an actual shooting, provide timely emergency medical response units.
- g. Create CAD or dispatch incident and log information into permanent dispatch data system.

**2. Operations Response:**

- a. An Operations official will be in command of the incident.
- b. Responding officers must be made aware of the precise location of the event.
- c. Responding officers must be aware of the time the incident was reported.
- d. Responding officers shall take a safe and strategic approach to the incident, anticipating that the perpetrator may still be armed and on-scene.
- e. Responding officers acknowledge the severity of the incidents, i.e., single or multiple shooters, multiple gunshots, direction and speed of fleeing shooters.
- f. When appropriate, stage backup units at possible and likely escape routes.
- g. When available, review corresponding video from a video surveillance system that could have visibility to the crime scene.
- h. If equipped with a field-based system, field units shall review the incident audio at the scene to establish a crime scene and isolate potential evidence and/or witnesses.
- i. Responding officers shall canvass the precise location identified via the ShotSpotter system for victims, evidence and/or potential witnesses.

- j. Only a Police Official may clear the call of a ShotSpotter alert.
3. **Collection of Evidence:**
- a. The Crime Scene Unit (CSU hereinafter) must be aware of the precise location of the reported incident.
  - b. CSU must be aware of the severity of the event, i.e., multiple gunshots, direction and speed of fleeing suspect.
  - c. Standard and accepted evidence collection procedures must be adhered to.
  - d. In the case of a ShotSpotter Flexsm alert, the crime scene unit should search the area included within 25 meters of the location of the incident.
4. **Investigative Follow-up:**
- a. Investigating officers must have access to acoustic surveillance system.
  - b. Investigators must be able to create documentation that depicts the location and details of an incident.
  - c. Investigating officers must be able to replay any audio recording associated with a shooting incidents to recreate the crime scene, including a timeline of rounds discharged and determine the likely number of shooters.
  - d. Investigating officers must be trained to access, extract incident data, and evaluate and present incident data in preparation for prosecution.
  - e. For investigative and prosecution purposes, investigators shall know the process for acquiring detailed forensic reports of an incident and the securing of expert witnesses relative to acoustical surveillance.
5. **Crime Analysis Utilization:**
- a. The law enforcement agency must access the information accumulated by an acoustic surveillance system to identify potential gunfire related trends.
  - b. Gunfire information must be collated from other crime incidents so that specific gunfire locations and incidents can be strategically addressed.
  - c. High frequency areas must be documented and presented for an appropriate strategic response which could include patrol officers follow up, high profile enforcement missions, community awareness outreach, etc.
  - d. Crime Analysis information relative to gunfire must be incorporated into a regularly scheduled Captain's Round Table Meeting.

Per:



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