



Surveillance Use Policy

SWAT – Tactical Custom Armored Track Loader (TAC CAT)
San Diego Police Department

DESCRIPTION

The Tactical Custom Armored Track Loader (TAC-CAT) is a compact, rugged, tracked robotic platform designed to provide immediate situational awareness in high-risk or confined environments. Engineered with a low-profile chassis and durable construction, the TAC-CAT can be safely deployed into areas that are too dangerous, too small, or too unstable for personnel.

The platform is equipped with front-mounted LED lighting, dual-track propulsion, and a wide-angle camera system capable of operating in both illuminated and low-light conditions.

The TAC-CAT transmits real-time video to a handheld controller, enabling operators to identify threats, locate individuals, assess unknown spaces, and gather situational intelligence while maintaining a safe standoff distance. Its tracked design allows reliable movement across uneven surfaces, debris, and cluttered interiors.

PURPOSE

The San Diego Police Department (SDPD) SWAT Tactical Custom Armored Track Loader (TAC-CAT) is used for the following purposes:

1. To provide ballistic and environmental protection for SWAT personnel and civilians during rescues, barricaded suspects, active shooters, terrorist attacks, or other critical incident operations conducted in hazardous environments.
2. To enhance officer and public safety during high-risk incidents by providing a man-operated or remotely operated armored platform capable of breaching barriers, deploying chemical agents, and delivering real-time visual observation to support tactical decision-making.

USE

The TAC-CAT is authorized to support the following types of operations:

1. Provide armored mobility and ballistic protection during barricaded suspect incidents, hostage rescues, high-risk search warrants, and other critical tactical operations.
2. Assist with the safe approach and breaching of fortified structures.
3. Support rescue or extraction of injured civilians or officers under fire or in hazardous environments.
4. Provide live video observation for command and control during high-risk incidents to enhance situational awareness.

The following rules and processes are required prior to each use of the TAC-CAT:

1. All requests for TAC-CAT support can be initiated by any personnel who are or plan to be part of a response to support a specific incident or event with a specific support objective.
2. The SWAT Commanding Officer (C.O.) or a SWAT designee must evaluate the request and approve the operation prior to deployment. This SWAT C.O. or SWAT designee is specially



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trained to assess whether TAC-CAT use complies with SDPD's authorized purposes and procedures. The designee must be a current member of SWAT.

3. Only authorized and trained members of the SWAT Team may operate or be in possession of the TAC-CAT.
4. The SWAT unit will ensure that when using the TAC-CAT, all citizen rights will be strictly observed.

DATA COLLECTION

The TAC-CAT is equipped with multiple cameras designed to enhance operator safety and provide visual feedback during operations, including a PTZ camera, three claw-mounted cameras, and a rear-view camera. All cameras are capable of infrared operation for low-light or no-light conditions.

The TAC-CAT's camera system can transmit live video to the operator's control station and, if configured, to an incident command post for situational awareness.

The TAC-CAT is equipped with an integrated digital video recorder (DVR) capable of recording or capturing still images.

The TAC-CAT does not automatically record any video or images. Recording must be manually activated by the TAC-CAT operator and authorized by a SWAT Supervisor for each specific operation.

If recording is activated, the captured video and/or audio are considered Digital Media Evidence (DME) and treated as official evidence throughout the remainder of the operation until properly impounded and documented by assigned SWAT officers.

During all operations, the TAC-CAT operator is trained to make every effort to only capture visual imagery relevant to the law enforcement contact or operational target to protect the privacy of uninvolved persons and property. All deployments strictly prohibit discriminatory or viewpoint-based use.

DATA ACCESS

All recorded DME remains in the physical possession of SWAT personnel until it is impounded.

Access to recorded material is restricted to SDPD SWAT personnel and authorized investigative staff directly involved in the operation.

Once impounded, retention, access, duplication, or release of DME are governed by SDPD Procedure 3.02.

DATA PROTECTION

All DME in the form of recorded video or still images are stored on a Secured Digital (SD) Card or external recording device integrated into the TAC-CAT's DVR system. These devices are accessible only



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to authorized SWAT personnel assigned to the operation and responsible for collection, transfer, and impound of the data.

Once the mission concludes, any recorded DME is extracted by SWAT personnel and transferred to a secure portable drive for impound at the SDPD Property Room. The original SD card or device is then wiped clean for reuse.

All TAC-CAT DME is labeled, logged, and impounded in accordance with SDPD Procedure 3.02 – Impound, Release, and Disposal of Property, Evidence, and Articles Missing Identification Marks.

The TAC-CAT's DVR system and SD cards are not connected to any wireless or cloud-based system, and no external party has remote access to the video feed or recorded data.

Once impounded, all protection, retention, and access control are managed through the SDPD Property Unit or the Evidence.com system per established Department procedures.

All recorded evidence is physically impounded and maintained solely within the SDPD Property Room or Evidence.com system.

DATA RETENTION

Once DME is impounded, retention periods are governed by SDPD Procedure 3.02 – Impound, Release, and Disposal of Property, Evidence, and Articles Missing Identification Marks.

Retention timeframes depend on the nature of the incident and any related investigative or prosecutorial requirements, and in accordance with state law.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Any DME recorded by the TAC-CAT may only be released to the public via a public records request if directly associated any DME recorded by the TAC-CAT shall be disclosed only to the extent required by applicable state public records laws or pursuant to lawful legal process.

Prior to impound, access is limited strictly to authorized SWAT personnel.

THIRD PARTY DATA SHARING

The SWAT Unit does not share TAC-CAT recorded DME with any third-party vendors. The SWAT Unit/SDPD only shares TAC-CAT recorded DME with the San Diego City Attorney or the San Diego District Attorney in connection with legal proceedings, or in response to a valid court or judicial order.

TRAINING

Only SDPD SWAT personnel who have completed TAC-CAT Operator Training are authorized to operate or deploy the TAC-CAT.



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Training includes operational safety, equipment inspection, and adherence to all Department policies and procedures.

AUDITING AND OVERSIGHT

Each TAC-CAT deployment and any activation of recording capability must be authorized and supervised by a SWAT Supervisor.

The SWAT Supervisor ensures that all actions and recordings comply with Department policy and procedures, approved use cases, and this Surveillance Use Policy.

The SWAT Command regularly reviews TAC-CAT deployments to ensure accountability and compliance.

The SDPD Research, Analysis, and Planning Division conducts independent annual audits of the use of this technology to verify compliance with the Transparent and Responsible Use of Survey Technology ordinance and this Use Policy.

MAINTENANCE

SDPD TAC-CAT equipment is inspected and maintained routinely to ensure operational safety, mechanical reliability, and the integrity of all protective systems.

Inspections are performed before and after each deployment to confirm proper function of drive systems, hydraulic breaching tools, communication components, and video display capabilities.