CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE
GENERAL POLICE ORDER

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 17, 2025	CHAPTER: 5 – Field Investigations	PAGE: 1 of 6	NUMBER: 5.08.04
SUBJECT: GUNSHOT DETECTION SYSTEM: SHOTSPOTTER			
CHIEF: *Dorothy A. Todd, Chief*			

Substantive changes are italicized

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for use of ShotSpotter®, a gunshot detection system.

POLICY: **It is the policy of the Cleveland Division of Police** that ShotSpotter® gunshot detection technology will be deployed in designated locations throughout the City. This technology will enhance the Division's ability to respond effectively and efficiently to conduct investigations of violent crime involving gunfire. Through the coordinated placement of sensors in designated areas, the location of gunfire will be conveyed and dispatched as a crime-in-progress. The system is designed to assist with precise and efficient response to gunfire, rendering aid to victims, evidence collection, investigations, and prosecution of violent offenders. The technology provides opportunities for a collaborative effort with the community for crime reduction where gunfire is most prevalent and enhances the Division's overall mission.

DEFINITIONS:

Detailed Forensic Report – *this is a highly detailed report generated by ShotSpotter analysts that is typically used for trial or in highly sensitive incidents (e.g. officer-involved shootings). This report must be requested from ShotSpotter and can take some time to be prepared and delivered.*

Errors – following are the definitions of potential errors in the detection of gunfire:
- **False Positive**: ShotSpotter alerts the Division to a gunfire incident that officers can verify was not gunfire.
- **False Negative**: ShotSpotter detected the incident, did not identify it as gunfire, and did not publish it to the Division. Officers later confirm that there was gunfire (outdoor, unsuppressed, and over .25 caliber) not reported by ShotSpotter.
- **Missed Incidents**: ShotSpotter did not detect or report outdoor and unsuppressed gunfire over .25 caliber.
- **Mislocated Incidents**: The gunfire incident did not occur within the area identified by the ShotSpotter alert.

Investigative Lead Summary - this is a report available via the Respond Application and is generated automatically by the ShotSpotter software. This report can provide detailed information *including the location of each round fired, the time that each round was discharged, and the interval of time between rounds fired.*

ShotSpotter Insight - a web-based application that provides members access to all historical ShotSpotter data. This application can be used for review and investigation of specific incidents as well as more detailed analysis of trends and production of reports.

ShotSpotter Respond - the web-based application members will use to receive real time alerts. Respond is also available as an application for smartphones and other devices. Seven (7) days of alerts

are available for review in Respond.

PROCEDURES:

I.   General Information/Guidelines

      A.   Through the placement of acoustic sensors, ShotSpotter software detects the location of gunfire. Within approximately sixty seconds, ShotSpotter will provide an alert from unsuppressed, outdoor gunfire from weapons above .25 caliber. The alert conveys a location typically within a 25-meter (82-foot) radius where the shots were fired and can include information about the number of gunshots, the firearm's capacity, and if multiple firearms are involved.

      B.   The Communications Control Section (CCS), the Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC), and members with ShotSpotter Respond access will receive the alert from ShotSpotter.

            1.   ShotSpotter alerts will be sent to CCS and tracked with a unique CAD entry.

            2.   The alert will be prioritized as an in-progress violent felony and dispatched accordingly.

            3.   While an address will be provided in the alert, officers shall be dispatched to the "dot" which is the center of a 25-meter (82-foot) radius circle representing the location of the shooter. Dispatchers shall provide a description of the exact location of the "dot."

      C.   Incidents involving gunfire within the coverage area that are not reported by ShotSpotter shall necessitate the investigating officer to contact ShotSpotter support via the ShotSpotter Respond application (support tab). Officers shall report the suspected time and location of the gunfire. ShotSpotter will review sensors near the location and provide any data or evidence that they have available.

            1.   Unreported data from the sensors are kept for 24 hours, therefore timely notification to ShotSpotter is critical.

      D.   Critical incidents (i.e., homicides, felonious assaults, officer involved shootings, etc.) occurring outside of the ShotSpotter coverage area may have triggered ShotSpotter sensors. ShotSpotter can be contacted via the Respond application to inquire if any evidence of the shooting is available (audio, time of shooting, possible location, etc.).

II.   Member Responsibilities

      A.   Members assigned to work locations where ShotSpotter is deployed shall access ShotSpotter Respond via the web on their Mobile Data Computer (MDC) or via the ShotSpotter app on cellular devices. Each member will have a unique account sign on.

      B.   Members working patrol will receive alerts concurrently with CCS. Members may respond to an alert before being given the assignment through MCAD; however, the

unit responding shall notify the dispatcher via radio.

C.   Members shall utilize information provided through the ShotSpotter alert and shall approach the scene tactically, bearing in mind that the shooter may still be in the area. This tactical approach includes, but is not limited to, the need for additional units, consideration for how units will approach the scene, and consideration for perimeter control.

D.   Members responding to ShotSpotter alerts shall follow procedures outlined in General Police Order (GPO) 2.02.01 Investigatory Stops and GPO 2.02.02 Search and Seizure. The ShotSpotter alert will need to be supported by further investigative actions by responding members. *A ShotSpotter alert alone does not provide probable cause for vehicle stops or searches, entry into a backyard, business, or residence to search for suspects. (See GPO 2.02.01 Investigatory Stops and GPO 2.02.02 Search and Seizure.)*

E.   Upon arrival, members shall, in order of priority, address the following:

1.   Ensure the scene is safe.

2.   Victims in need of medical attention: Officers shall conduct an outdoor visual search for injured parties consistent with requirements of GPO 2.02.02.

3.   Evidence: A search for evidence shall be conducted within the 25-meter (82-foot) radius of "the dot" at a minimum. Particular emphasis shall be placed on locating discarded firearms and shell casings. *While conducting the search, officers may enter into the curtilage of a residence or the residence itself only if permitted by GPO 2.02.02 Search and Seizure.* Shell casings shall be collected at all alert incidents and submitted for processing. This will facilitate the subsequent investigation of crimes linked to the same weapon. For an incident report containing evidence in connection with a ShotSpotter alert, members may utilize CCO 627.09 - Improperly Discharging a Firearm on or near Prohibited Premises. A Property Found report is not acceptable in these cases.

4.   *Faster responses to ShotSpotter alerts allow for a stronger possibility in assessing reasonable suspicion or probable cause. As time passes, the ability to develop reasonable suspicion or probable cause is diminished.*

F.   Members responding to the scene for investigation should view the alert information and listen to audio files for situational context prior to interviewing victims, witnesses, or suspects.

G.   Upon completion of the assignment, the following information shall be conveyed to CCS or entered into MCAD by the primary unit:

1.   The number of arrests made.

2.   The number of shell casings recovered.

3.   The number of guns recovered.

4.   The number of reports generated as a result of the assignment.

5.   Any lifesaving first aid rendered (i.e., CPR, QuikClot®, chest seal, tourniquet, etc.).

H.   Daily, designated members chosen by the commander will review ShotSpotter alerts to determine the need for follow-up for evidence recovery and/or community outreach. If required, members shall return to the scene and may utilize resources such as canine handlers, investigators, community outreach officers, and metal detectors. Results shall be documented under the original CAD/incident report number.

III.   Supervisory Responsibilities

A.   Sector Supervisors shall:

1.   Be responsible for assisting CCS and patrol in prioritizing response to calls for service, including ShotSpotter alerts, when call volumes are high.

2.   Be responsible for ensuring that the tactical response to a ShotSpotter alert is appropriate for information known at the time of dispatch.

3.   Be responsible for ensuring patrol officers are properly searching for and seizing evidence found at the scenes of ShotSpotter alerts.

4.   Ensure that all dispositions are documented via MCAD and all inconsistencies are reported to ShotSpotter.

5.   Ensure that all reports created as a result of evidence collected from a ShotSpotter alert are routed to the District Detective Unit for review.

B.   District Commanders shall:

1.   Ensure a staff member is assigned daily to gather required data associated with the ShotSpotter Program.

2.   Ensure that any concerns or identified problems are brought to the attention of the Program Manager.

IV.   Investigatory Response

A.   Real Time Crime Center (RTCC): Upon receiving an alert, members of the RTCC will determine if camera resources are available in the area. All safety and time-sensitive information (e.g., suspect location, description) from those resources will be relayed to the responding officers immediately through CCS. Any snapshots or video evidence will be forwarded via email or phone app. The RTCC will upload video evidence to evidence.com or other Division storage sites.

B.   Detectives

1.   Detectives have two reports available from ShotSpotter to support their investigation:

a.   Investigative Lead Summary.

b.   Detailed Forensic Report.

2.   Historical data via ShotSpotter Insight may be used to determine if there were other gunfire incidents in the area to provide a connection between crimes. Specific location information, especially repeat alerts, along with other factors (i.e., known residence of a parolee, recovered casings, etc.), can be used in seeking a search warrant. Incident reports, audio files, and detailed forensic reports shall be included in the investigative packet, and when appropriate, presented to the prosecutor's office.

3.   Officer Feedback: Detectives shall notify officers when shell casings they recover are identified through the NIBIN process as being connected to other crimes. This is intended to keep the officer engaged in the investigatory process and encouraged to make casing recoveries a priority.

V.   Errors

A.   ShotSpotter technology is accurate, but not infallible. Errors need to be reported to improve the delivery of service and allow for correction.

B.   Members shall report all errors, including false positives, false negatives, missed incidents, and mislocated incidents to ShotSpotter utilizing the support option on ShotSpotter Respond. *Members shall also report these errors to CCS for documentation in the record management system (RMS) and shall document them via email, forwarded to the Program Manager and copied to the Bureau of Compliance and Technology Commander through their Commander's office. The report shall detail the errors the member discovered.*

VI.   Data

A.   Tracking

1.   Each district shall designate a staff member who will update required statistical documentation daily. The Program Manager will provide the required documents to each command.

2.   A copy of the tracking documentation shall be forwarded to the Program Manager bi-weekly via email.

B. Analytics

1. Analysts, when available, should be directed to perform daily analysis on gunshot and other relevant crime data to provide commanders situational awareness.

2. Analysts shall provide regular weekly, monthly and annual reports on gunfire activity that provide temporal activity (days of the week and hour of the day), along with repeat gunfire activity locations. *Reports shall be forwarded via email to the Program Manager and the Bureau of Compliance and Technology Commander.*

VII. Program Management

A. The Chief of Police shall designate a supervisor to be the Program Manager of ShotSpotter.

B. Administrative Users: Each command will designate an Administrative User who shall manage access to ShotSpotter for members under that command.

1. The Administrative User can provide access to the various ShotSpotter applications.

2. The Administrative Users are responsible for removing members under their command who leave employment from the Division of Police.

C. Partnering Agencies: Partnering law enforcement agencies operating within the coverage areas of ShotSpotter may have access provided to their members. The Program Manager can be contacted to provide access to these entities.

THIS ORDER SUPERSEDES ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DIRECTIVE OR POLICY FOR THIS SUBJECT AND WILL REMAIN EFFECTIVE UNTIL RESCINDED OR SUPERSEDED.