



Special Operations Response Team (SORT)



WHAT IS THE SORT?

SORT stands for Special Operations Response Team. The team consists of ambulance nurses and drivers from all locations of Ambulance Amsterdam in the region of Amsterdam-Amstelland, Zaanstreek-Waterland, and Kennemerland.

The SORT is deployed in incidents involving extreme violence, where the situation is not safe and/or the safety is still unclear. Such as attacks, demonstrations, and riots.

The SORT was established in 2016 after the terrorist attacks in Brussels and Paris and the increased terrorist threat in Europe. During the same period, all ambulance services were assigned the task by the GHOR to carry out the Large-scale Medical Assistance (GGB). The SORT was then founded to meet the demands of both situations.

The SORT is financed from general funds and the Safety Regions of Amsterdam-Amstelland, Zaanstreek-Waterland, and Kennemerland.



WHERE IS THE SORT DEPLOYED FOR?

The focus of the SORT is on deployment in large-scale incidents (GGB calamities team), extreme violence, and disruption of public order and safety with a chance of injuries. These incidents are too risky for unprotected ambulance personnel to enter.

In addition, the SORT is always present during planned escalations for events such as the Holocaust remembrance, Memorial Day, King's Day, and the Canal Pride.

EXTREME VIOLENCE

The threat level of terrorism in the Netherlands has been 'substantial' for a number of years. This means that there is a real chance of a terrorist attack in the Netherlands. Therefore, account must be taken of extreme violence in which many victims can fall.

Moreover, Amsterdam and its surroundings have a violent street culture and there are many large events and demonstrations. Where small violent incidents can escalate into a larger disruption of public order with many injuries.

The SORT therefore works closely with the police (AT/DSI) and fire brigade (QRT B) in Amsterdam-Amstelland, Zaanstreek-Waterland, and Kennemerland.

The Amsterdam model for action in violent situations is currently unique in the Netherlands. We are the only region where specialist teams from the fire brigade, police, and ambulance service can act together in the warm zone.





VEHICLES

In a deployment for a GGB operation, we make use of the emergency vehicle, which can transport a lot of extra material, in combination with a rapidly deployable vehicle (SIV) with ambulance responders. This vehicle and its equipment are specially arranged with the resources needed for such an operation. The vehicle is not suitable for transporting patients.

Seven days a week, the SORT uses a 'normal' ALS-ambulance in the regular duty roster. Extra material is added to this, so that this unit can adequately and immediately respond to incidents involving extreme violence.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The trained SORT members work in the so-called 'warm zone' under the protection of the police. Working in this warm zone places demands on the personal safety of the SORT members. Therefore, we are equipped with a personally tailored bulletproof vest. In addition, we wear a ballistic helmet, eye and hearing protection, and have various communication tools at our disposal.

Together with the police, it has been determined how the clothing of the SORT should look. With the premise that a SORT member must be visibly ready for his/her task as a caregiver in special circumstances.



TRAINING AND PRACTICE

Over the years, we have build up a lot of expertise in the field of education, training and exercise. The basic training we therefore provide ourselves from Ambulance Amsterdam.

The extra-exercise hours for the SORT are included in the regional training plan (ROP) Ambulance Amsterdam.

In addition, the SORT regularly trains to be well prepared for a deployment. We often do this together with the police (AT/DSI) and with the fire brigade (QRT-B). The SORT also joints training sessions of the Ovd-G (GHOR).



We support and assist in the regular training of the basic teams of the Police and the QRT Fire Brigade.

The final exercise often takes place at a public institution, such as museums and event locations. These institutions simultaneously practice their own evacuation procedures. In this way, we make our collaboration increasingly stronger.



ALERTING

SORT members are available 24/7 for a call. The request for deployment is made through the Amsterdam Amstelland control room. In the case of a GGB, the SORT is informed at code 10 so that, when necessary, quick additional assistance can be provided. The standby SORT unit is alerted directly from the control room system (LMS) within the deployment criteria. The SORT operates as a disaster response team in the regions of Amsterdam-Amstelland and Zaanstreek-Waterland.

Contact us for more information about this, and we will look at the wishes and possibilities to deploy the SORT regionally in cases of GGB and extreme violence.

MORE INFO

Do you have questions about the deployment of the SORT? Then contact us.



Frank Lagerweij | Expert Opgeschaalde Zorg en Evenementen

✉ flagerweij@ambulanceamsterdam.nl

☎ 06 - 29 56 48 19

Ivo van Tent Beking | Operational team coordinator SORT

✉ Ivantentbeking@ambulanceamsterdam.nl

☎ 06 - 46 24 58 43

Posting SORT

Ambulance Amsterdam

Van der Madeweg 55

1114 AM Amsterdam Duivendrecht





Ambulance Amsterdam

zorg met hoofd en hart