

Department of the Interior Law Enforcement Policy

Effective Date: January 15, 2016
Series: Law Enforcement and Security
Chapter 18: Emergency Response and Pursuit Driving

Originating Office: Office of Law Enforcement and Security

18.1 Purpose. This chapter establishes policy concerning emergency response and pursuit driving for bureaus/offices of the Department of the Interior/DOI.

18.2 Scope. This policy applies to all DOI bureaus/offices with law enforcement programs.

18.3 Authority. This policy is issued pursuant to 112 DM 17 and 212 DM 17.

18.4 Responsibilities.

A. Director, Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES) is responsible for policy development and provides program guidance and oversight of the Department's law enforcement programs.

B. Bureau Directors of Law Enforcement (BDLE) are responsible for promulgating and complying with this policy, and the corresponding *Law Enforcement Handbook*.

18.5 Policy. Bureaus/offices through bureau/office policy and procedures, may authorize law enforcement officers (LEOs) to respond to emergency situations and engage in vehicle pursuits in certain situations while operating government owned vehicles/vessels. Bureaus and offices must ensure that:

A. LEOs are properly trained in the requirements for emergency response, pursuit operations and termination procedures.

B. Complete and accurate records are maintained for all pursuits and termination methods.

C. Alternate methods of terminating pursuits such as tire deflation devices, pit maneuvers, and stationary roadblocks are addressed in bureau/office policy if utilized.

18.6 Standards. Bureau/office law enforcement programs will establish and implement procedures that comply with this chapter and meet requirements specified in the corresponding *Law Enforcement Handbook*.

Law Enforcement Handbook

Chapter 18: Emergency Vehicle Operations

Date Issued: February 19, 2016

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18.1 What does this chapter do? This chapter establishes policy and minimum standards for Department law enforcement officers (LEOs) that operate of law enforcement vehicles during emergency response situations and vehicle pursuits.

18.2 What are important definitions for this chapter?

- 1) **Emergency** – A sudden, urgent, usually unexpected event or set of circumstances requiring immediate action.

- 2) **Vehicle Pursuit** – An attempt by an LEO, operating a LE vehicle, to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving vehicle that is actively evading apprehension or have otherwise disregarded a LEO's signal to stop. A pursuit does not include situations where: 1) LEOs are attempting to close the time and distance gap to initiate a traffic stop, or 2) the vehicle may be unaware of the LEO's commands, is not immediately yielding, and is not jeopardizing the safety of other motorists and/or pedestrians.

- 3) **Emergency Response** – Operation of a LE vehicle in non-pursuit circumstances where a LEO believes it necessary to proceed expeditiously for the purposes of responding to an emergency.

- 4) **Law Enforcement Emergency Response Vehicle** – A marked or unmarked motorized vehicle utilized by law enforcement that is equipped with emergency warning equipment (at a minimum, emergency lighting and siren).

18.3 What are the requirements for Emergency Response Operations (non-pursuit)?

Bureaus/offices will establish policies/SOPs for all vehicles used in emergency response to include the following requirements:

1) All law enforcement vehicles will have emergency warning equipment (lights/sirens) activated when engaged in emergency response. Audible equipment may be silenced when circumstances warrant, provided that safe operation of the vehicle can be maintained.

2) All operators of law enforcement vehicles engaging in emergency response should be in communication with a dispatch/communication center. Operators may continue an emergency response when out of communication during short periods of time.

3) Law enforcement vehicles may cautiously proceed through controlled or uncontrolled intersections and without stopping at stop signs or red lights only when allowed by state and local law and when vehicle operators exercise due diligence that there is no cross traffic, pedestrians or other hazards.

4) Law enforcement vehicles occupied with non-law enforcement personnel and/or civilian passengers must receive approval from a law enforcement supervisor before engaging in emergency response.

5) An LEO or supervisor may terminate an emergency response if they determine, based upon their knowledge of the circumstances, that the potential risk to the safety of the public and/or LEO outweighs the benefit of continuing an emergency response.

6) Bureaus/offices utilizing law enforcement vessels or other non-traditional land based conveyances will develop policies/SOPs for emergency response.

18.4 What are the requirements for Pursuit Operations? Bureaus/offices will establish policies/SOPs for vehicle pursuits to include the following requirements:

1) A vehicle pursuit may be initiated when not prohibited by law local, and a reasonable suspicion or belief exists that:

a) the occupant of the vehicle has committed, or is attempting to commit a serious crime,

or,

b) the contents of the vehicle present a clear and immediate threat to public safety,

AND

c) the LEO reasonably believes the need to immediately apprehend the subject outweighs the potential risk to the safety of the public and/or LEOs.

2) Bureaus/offices will create minimum performance equipment standards for all vehicles utilized in pursuits.

3) All law enforcement vehicles will have emergency warning equipment (lights/sirens) activated when engaged in pursuits.

4) All operators of law enforcement vehicles engaging in pursuits should be in communication with a dispatch/communication center. Operators may continue a pursuit when out of communication during short periods of time.

5) Law enforcement vehicles may cautiously proceed through controlled or uncontrolled intersections and without stopping at stop signs or red lights only when allowed by state or local law and when vehicle operators exercise due diligence that there is no cross traffic, pedestrians or other hazards.

6) Bureaus/offices utilizing law enforcement vessels or non-traditional land based conveyances will develop policies/SOPs for pursuit operations.

18.5 When should pursuits should be terminated? When the LEO or supervisor believes the safety of the LEO and/or the public outweighs apprehension of the suspect. In addition, the presence of one or more of the following conditions may indicate a pursuit should be terminated:

1) There is reasonable likelihood of a successful apprehension at another time or by other LEOs.

2) An aircraft is able to maintain observation of the pursued vehicle.

3) The location of the pursued vehicle is no longer known, or the distance between the LEO and the pursued vehicle is so great that apprehension is impractical.

4) The LEO communications capability is not sufficient to provide status and safety updates.

5) The performance capabilities of the law enforcement vehicle render continuation to be unsafe.

6) Poor driving or road surface conditions, or hazards from wildlife on the road.

7) The population density of the area (e.g., urban, residential area, school zones, pedestrian traffic, etc.).

18.6 What are the record keeping and reporting requirements for pursuits? Bureaus/offices will document and maintain the following:

1) A record of all vehicle pursuits entered into IMARS

2) Report all vehicle pursuits consistent with 446 DM 17, Serious Incident Reporting (SIR)

18.7 Are Tire Deflation Devices authorized as a tool to terminate pursuits? Bureaus/offices may authorize the use of tire deflation devices (TDDs) and similar technologies as tools to assist in terminating pursuits. Policies/SOPs must be developed to include the following requirements:

- 1) Establishment of use parameters;
- 2) Establishment of TDD equipment standards;
- 3) Development of bureau/office training requirements;
- 4) Maintain documentation that bureau/office and OEM training requirements are completed;
- 5) Establish regular equipment inspection requirements;
- 6) Establish reporting requirements for both successful and unsuccessful deployments.

18.8 When may TDDs be deployed? LEOs may deploy TDDs when one or more of the following conditions exist:

- 1) To stop declared vehicle pursuits;
- 2) To stop armed/dangerous suspects;
- 3) During special operations when approved as part of an operational plan.

The use of TDDs on two or three wheeled vehicles is only authorized when deadly force is justified.

18.9 Are Precision Immobilization Techniques (PIT) Maneuvers Authorized? Bureaus/offices that have determined they will authorize the use of PIT Maneuvers must establish policies/SOPs to include the following requirements:

- 1) Establishment of use parameters;
- 2) Development of bureau/office training requirements;
- 3) Maintain documentation that bureau/office training requirements are completed;
- 4) Establish reporting requirements for both successful and unsuccessful interventions.

18.10 What are stationary roadblocks and are they authorized to terminate pursuits? A stationary roadblock is a fixed-location roadblock used for stopping a fleeing vehicle attempting to evade apprehension. They are only authorized to apprehend persons who are believed to present an

immediate threat of death or serious injury and other options available to effect the stop have been exhausted.