

**PEACHTREE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

NEW REVISED

SUBJECT	DATE	NO.
Vehicle Pursuit Actions	10-23-01	40-12-1

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a directive that governs proper conduct by police involved in vehicle pursuit actions.

II. POLICY:

The Peachtree City Police Department mandates compliance with applicable laws pertaining to "emergency vehicles" and shall provide these standards and guidelines for engaging in vehicle pursuit.

Officers shall always exercise "due regard" when in response to an emergency or involved in pursuit situations.

III. BACKGROUND & EVALUATING CIRCUMSTANCES:

There is no range of "safe" speed. There are many limiting factors in pursuit driving other than the actual speedometer reading. The police officer must bear in mind the danger involved in a pursuit, and after quickly weighing prescribed pursuit procedures, must make intelligent decisions as to initiating and terminating a pursuit action.

Whether a particular speed is "safe" will depend upon the police vehicle capabilities, the driver experience, and training, and the roadway and weather conditions.

IV. PROCEDURE:

A. General Responsibilities:

1. Pursuit will only be initiated in those situations when failure to do so would constitute the likelihood of imminent threat of serious bodily harm to the officer(s) or others.
2. Situations that authorize pursuit actions:
 - a. Murder, when the likelihood of serious bodily harm to others is imminent.
 - b. Robbery, when the assailant inflicts serious bodily harm upon the victim of the robbery, and when the likelihood of serious bodily harm to others is imminent.
 - c. Aggravated Assault, when the likelihood of serious bodily harm to others is imminent.
 - d. Kidnapping or Hostage Situations, when the likelihood of serious bodily harm to others is imminent.
 - e. Other Felonies and Serious Misdemeanors, when serious bodily harm to others is reasonably certain.
3. When preparing to make a stop, officers should be within close proximity to the vehicle prior to activating the blue lights and siren. Some individuals who would not otherwise run will

attempt to flee when given a several block warning of an intended stop by police.

4. Allow the secondary unit, if possible, to close in prior to activating the blue lights and siren if there is an indicated or anticipated attempt to flee or elude.
5. Insure that other vehicles have yielded prior to proceeding through a red light or stop sign.
6. Use of lethal force only when justified as prescribed in SOP 10-10-1, Use of Lethal Force.
7. Abandon the pursuit when circumstances warrant it or as prescribed in this SOP.
8. Be able to justify any pursuit actions.

B. Unauthorized Pursuit Actions:

1. Officers will not initiate a pursuit when the only crime involved is a minor misdemeanor or a traffic violation.
2. Officers will not initiate a pursuit when the pertinent identification information about the automobile and occupant is known (tag number, name of driver), unless pursuit is under authorization as stated in Part IV, Section A, paragraph a. through d. of this SOP.
3. Officers participating in pursuit will not "caravan" a pursued vehicle (police units following each other in file).
4. Unmarked units will not be used in pursuit.
5. Officers participating shall not pass other police units involved in the pursuit, unless the passing officer receives specific instructions from the lead car.

C. Crossings Jurisdictional Borders:

Pursuing units shall not cross state or county lines without authorization of the Watch Commander. Officers shall notify the dispatcher that county lines have been met and will request that applicable police authorities be notified of the situation.

D. Primary Unit:

1. The police unit that becomes involved in a pursuit action is designated as the primary unit.
2. Once a pursuit is initiated and it is feasible to do so, the pursuing officer (primary unit) shall maintain communications with the dispatcher, relaying the following information:
 - a. The identity of his unit (Radio Identification Number).
 - b. Description and identification features of the vehicle being pursued.
 - c. Description and number of occupants.
 - d. Direction of travel.
 - e. The specific reason for pursuit.

SOP 40-12-1	PAGE 2
----------------	-----------

f. Advise any other details which will enable other officers in the area and the dispatcher to assist.

g. Request that the dispatcher "hold all radio traffic" if necessary.

3. The primary unit shall yield to a secondary unit in the event of equipment or vehicle safety problems.

4. The primary unit shall notify the dispatcher and supervisor in the event the vehicle being pursued is involved in an accident or the police unit is involved in an accident.

E. Secondary Unit:

1. The secondary unit should be designated by the dispatcher.

2. The nearest available unit may be designated to act as the secondary unit.

3. No more than two units should be directly involved in the pursuit without the express consent of a supervisor. All other units will stay clear of the pursuit.

4. The secondary unit should maintain a safe distance behind the pursuing unit, but close enough to render back-up assistance if and when required.

5. The secondary unit will become the primary unit if the primary unit experiences equipment or vehicle safety problems.

6. No more than two units should leave the city on any given pursuit action.

F. Responsibilities of Communications Center:

1. The dispatcher shall treat a pursuit action as a priority call and when applicable shall advise the Watch Commander who will have command control of the pursuit.

2. The dispatcher shall have the following responsibilities during a pursuit action:

a. Control and direct all radio communications.

b. Receive and record all incoming information concerning the pursuit action.

c. Relay, when necessary, communications to the supervisor from the pursuing units.

d. Generally coordinates all communications between units involved.

e. Advises "hold all radio traffic unless emergency" when necessary or as directed by the supervisor or pursuing officer. An example of proper communication is:

"All units 10-3, 10-33, 10-80 in progress."

f. Designate a secondary unit to back-up the primary unit.

g. Advise all other units of the pursuit action and direction of travel.

SOP 40-12-1	PAGE 3
----------------	-----------

- l. Perform relevant records, GCIC and NCIC checks.
- i. Notify applicable state, county, and municipal police authorities of the pursuit as needed and continues to relay the appropriate data and updates to them.
- j. Assign another unit as the secondary unit if the initial secondary unit becomes the primary unit or has equipment or vehicle safety problems and dispatches appropriate additional back-up units when directed.
- k. Assign the appropriate unit(s) to investigate accidents caused by the pursued vehicle.
- l. Notify the Patrol Division Command Staff and other Chain-of-Command as directed.
- m. Advise all units when the pursuit has terminated or has conclusion.

l a
tot
ric
bc

ch

od

G. Responsibilities of Supervisor:

r a

1. The Watch Commander shall monitor and switch radio channels when applicable to obtain information from the dispatcher and direct other police units.
2. The Watch Commander shall be in overall command of the pursuit action and subsequent arrest actions and/or the investigation of accidents.
3. The Watch Commander may determine the point at which the pursuit should be abandoned and so order the termination of the pursuit action.
4. The Watch Commander will be the only one who, with adequate justification may authorize:
 - a. The paralleling of a pursued vehicle.
 - b. The boxing in, heading off, or ramming of a pursued vehicle.
 - c. The use of roadblocks to stop a pursued vehicle.
 - d. The use and deployment location of Stop sticks.
5. Supervision and control of a pursuit action may be given to another officer when circumstances dictate.

he

re

to

H. Intra-Jurisdictional Pursuits:

1. Officers shall never engage in any pursuit, which has been initiated by another agency, unless specific approval to do so is obtained from the Watch Commander.
2. Officers may assist pursuits initiated by other agencies by blocking off intersections in order to allow the pursuing officers and fleeing vehicle a clear passage through the area. These actions are directed at preserving the safety of the pursuing officer and other motorists on the highway.
3. Officers may assist pursuits initiated by other agencies by positioning zone officers in strategic locations, which can be determined by the pursuit direction of travel. These actions are directed at preserving the safety and well being of the pursuing officer.

sh
p
ill
toas
ig

le

SOP 40-12-1	PAGE 4
----------------	-----------