

	Greenville, SC Police Department GENERAL ORDER		
	Subject Emergency Vehicle Operations and Pursuits	Number 215A6	Type Operational
Effective Date March 22, 2017	Amends/ Rescinds 215A5	Pages 15	Re-evaluation September
References CALEA 41.2.2; 41.2.3			Notes Updated Pursuit Considerations

1.0 **POLICY:** The policy of the Greenville Police Department is to protect lives, property, and to maintain the safety of its employees and members of the public. Emergency Vehicle Operation (EVO) is a critical aspect of police operations. The Greenville Police Department strives to ensure these operations are carried out in a manner intended to minimize the risk to the public while achieving the ultimate objective of ensuring public safety and maintaining order.

Vehicular pursuits, as a part of Emergency Vehicle Operations, are inherently dangerous to those involved as well as the public at large. Greenville Police Department policy regarding vehicle pursuits is to manage pursuits in a responsible manner in order to reduce the risks involved as much as practical. It is the policy of the Greenville Police Department that pursuits are allowed only when the necessity of immediate apprehension or stopping the violator vehicle outweighs the risks inherent to a pursuit.

Nothing in this policy authorizes employees to operate vehicles in a reckless manner.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Attempted Vehicle Stop: When an officer attempts to stop a vehicle but the subject refuses or fails to stop and the officer disengages and does not pursue the vehicle.

Authorized Emergency Vehicle: A marked or unmarked police vehicle that is equipped with an audible siren and blue lights meeting the requirements set forth in Title 56 of South Carolina Code of Law.

Auxiliary Equipment: Headlights (low and high beams), spotlight, hazard flashers, public address system, take down/ alley lights, and vehicle horn.

Deadly Force: (Also referred to as “Lethal Force”.) Any action(s) that would reasonably be considered to cause serious injury or death. Discharge of a firearm is always considered a use of deadly force. The use of less-lethal weapons in a potentially lethal manner is also considered a use of deadly force. Any other action(s), armed or unarmed, which could reasonably be considered to cause serious physical injury and/or death is considered a use of deadly force.

Emergency equipment:

Siren: An audible signal meeting the requirements of South Carolina Code 56-5-4970.

Blue lights: A visual signal meeting the requirements of South Carolina Code 56-5 4700.

Forcible Stopping: Deliberate immobilization or incapacitation of a vehicle by police with the intention to end a pursuit.

Intra-jurisdictional Pursuit: A pursuit involving agencies that share jurisdictional boundaries with the City of Greenville. Examples are pursuits involving the Greenville County Sheriff’s office and the South Carolina Highway Patrol.

Inter-jurisdictional Pursuit: A pursuit involving agencies that do not share jurisdictional boundaries with the City of Greenville. Examples are pursuits involving Mauldin or Fountain Inn Police Departments.

Minor Traffic Violation: Any offense that is four (4) points or less according to South Carolina Code of Law.

Parallel Pursuit: An officer not assigned to a vehicle pursuit, who engages in emergency operation of his/her police vehicle or operates with disregard to applicable traffic laws, so as to achieve or remain in close proximity to a vehicle pursuit. Parallel pursuits are forbidden.

Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT): The controlled striking of a violator vehicle by a police vehicle intended to bring the violator vehicle to a safe stop.

Rolling Roadblock: A tactic intended to stop a fleeing vehicle while in motion using pursuing vehicles. Pursuing vehicles surround the fleeing vehicle in a manner intended to block the vehicle’s ability to maneuver and causing the vehicle to slow down and stop.



Stationary Roadblock: A tactic intended to intercept a fleeing vehicle utilizing a planned maneuver of blocking a section of roadway to cause a fleeing vehicle to either stop or change direction of travel.

Termination of Pursuit: A decision made by the pursuing officer or a supervisor to discontinue the pursuit by deactivating all emergency equipment and leaving the path of the pursuit.

Tire Deflation Device: Vehicle tire deflating devices designed to puncture vehicle tires using sleeved quills causing a rapid deflation of the tire(s) while minimizing loss of vehicle control.

Un-marked Emergency Vehicle: A vehicle that does not have all of the markings associated with a patrol vehicle but still meets all of the requirements of South Carolina Code 56-5-4970 (Siren) and 4700 (blue lights).

Vehicular Pursuit: An active effort by a motor vehicle operator to avoid being lawfully stopped by a police officer through the use of maneuvers such as: speeds in excess of the posted limit, sudden un-signalled turns, unlawful and dangerous passing, disregarding traffic control devices, and reckless driving.

Violator: The broad definition includes motorists who have committed some form of traffic violation or other justification for an officer to conduct a traffic stop of the vehicle.

- 3.0 **AUTHORIZATION:** South Carolina state law sets forth authorization for police operation of emergency vehicles. These statutes include criminal violations for failure to stop for a law enforcement vehicle and operation of authorized emergency vehicles under Title 56 of South Carolina Code of Law 56-5-760.

Guidelines for pursuit, as set forth in South Carolina state law, include:
The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law, may exercise the privileges set forth in this section, but are subject to the conditions of this section.

- 3.1 While using both blue lights and siren, the responding officer may:
- 3.1.1 Proceed past a red stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation. Officers shall slow down or stop at intersections in order to ascertain safe passage.
 - 3.2.1 Exceed the maximum speed limit without endangering life or property.



3.2.2 Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

3.2.3 Park or stand as necessary.

3.3 An authorized emergency vehicle operated as a police vehicle need not use an audible signal or display a visual signal when the vehicle is used to:

3.3.1 Obtain evidence of a speeding violation.

3.3.2 Respond to a suspected crime in progress when use of an audible or visual signal, or both, could result in destruction of evidence or escape of a suspect.

3.3.3 Surveillance of another vehicle or its occupants who are suspected of involvement of a crime.

3.4 The provisions of this section do not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons at all times.

4.0 **EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATION**

Call priorities and information about the call for service (CFS) will aid in determining an appropriate response level.

4.1 There are three priority levels of call for service (CFS) priority:

4.1.1 **Priority One (Emergency Response):** This priority level represents an in-progress or serious situation where an immediate threat exists to life, bodily harm, public safety, and/or property. Delayed response could result in increased risk to individuals, the public, property, or of suspects escaping. Examples of situations warranting a Priority One response include, but are not limited to:

4.1.1.1 Serious crimes in progress;

4.1.1.2 In-progress crimes involving physical violence or weapons;

4.1.1.3 Hold up and panic alarms;

4.1.1.4 Officer calls for immediate assistance;

4.1.1.5 Foot or vehicular pursuits;

4.1.1.6 Vehicle collisions with entrapment, injury, possibility of fire, or other circumstances where a delayed response could adversely affect management of the situation;



- 4.1.1.7 EMS calls where serious or life threatening injuries or illness is reported;
 - 4.1.1.8 Response by specialized team members to an incident where threat to life or other serious circumstances exist;
 - 4.1.1.9 Fires, industrial accidents, or other types of incidents where a serious threat to individuals or the public exists;
 - 4.1.1.10 Any other serious and in-progress situation where delayed response could be detrimental to management of the incident.
- 4.1.2 **Priority Two (Immediate Response):** This priority level represents situations where an immediate response by officers is needed, but does not warrant an emergency response. Examples of situations warranting a Priority Two response include, but are not limited to:
- 4.1.2.1 Disputes or disorderly behavior without physical violence or weapons involved;
 - 4.1.2.2 Suspicious persons or vehicle calls without extenuating circumstances warranting a heightened response;
 - 4.1.2.3 Minor in-progress property crimes without extenuating circumstances warranting a heightened response;
 - 4.1.2.4 Fire, EMS, or accidents calls without immediate threat to life or public safety;
 - 4.1.2.5 General alarm calls;
 - 4.1.2.6 Collisions without injuries or circumstances posing an immediate hazard to those involved, the public, or traffic flow;
 - 4.1.2.7 Minor property crimes where suspect or suspects are still on scene or perishable evidence needs to be collected;
 - 4.1.2.8 Any other type of call where a delayed response could be detrimental to management of the situation or investigation, but an emergency response is not warranted.
- 4.1.3 **Priority Three (Delayed Response):** This priority level represents situations where no emergency is involved and there is no potential for the situation to escalate into an emergency situation. A delayed response would not have an adverse effect on persons involved, the public, or the ability of personnel to investigate the incident. Examples of situations warranting a Priority Three response include, but are not limited to:
- 4.1.3.1 Non-violent crimes or incidents which have already occurred and suspects are no longer present;
 - 4.1.3.2 Shoplifters in custody;



- 4.1.3.3 911 disconnect calls where there is no indication that a serious situation exists;
- 4.1.3.4 Noise or nuisance activity complaints;
- 4.1.3.5 Traffic related incidents where no immediate threat to individuals or public safety exist;
- 4.1.3.6 Follow-up investigations;
- 4.1.3.7 Requests for information;
- 4.1.3.8 Message delivery;
- 4.1.3.9 Escorts;
- 4.1.3.10 Any other situation where a delayed response would not expose individuals or the public to risk or adversely affect investigation of a crime.

4.2 Response levels for CFS are as follow:

- 4.2.1 **Priority One (Emergency Response):** This response level authorizes officers to respond in an emergency response mode. Conditions and facts of the situation warrant continuous use of emergency equipment (minimum of blue lights and siren). Officers may operate their vehicle in excess of the speed limit to the extent that they can maintain the safe operation of the vehicle. Officers are responsible for ensuring intersections are clear and safe before proceeding through.
 - 4.2.2 **Priority Two (Immediate Response):** This response level authorizes officers to respond in a non-emergency response mode. Officers respond immediately while obeying all traffic laws and no emergency equipment is needed or used.
 - 4.2.3 **Priority Three (Delayed Response):** This response level authorizes officers to respond in a non-emergency response mode. Officers respond when dispatched while obeying all traffic laws and no emergency equipment is needed or used.
- 4.3 Call priority is designated in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.
 - 4.4 Priority Three calls may be held by Communications for fifteen (15) minutes without field supervisor approval.
 - 4.5 Officers may be dispatched or may respond outside of their assigned patrol zones for Priority One and Priority Two calls. Officers will not be dispatched out of, or leave, their assigned patrol zones for a Priority Three call unless authorized by a supervisor.



- 4.6 Supervisors may upgrade or downgrade response and priority levels at their discretion.
- 4.7 Officers are authorized to initiate a Priority One emergency response on their own initiative for in-progress violent felonies, incidents in which there is a strong possibility of serious injury or death, or when an officer needs emergency or urgent assistance. When an officer initiates a Priority One emergency response, the officer must advise Communications of their response level. The response does not have to be approved by a supervisor, however, a supervisor may downgrade the response to a Priority Two non-emergency response. Situations in which officers may initiate a Priority One emergency response include, but are not limited to:
- 4.7.1 Officers needing emergency or urgent assistance (whether stated by the officer or perceived by other officers);
 - 4.7.2 An officer involved in a foot or vehicular pursuit;
 - 4.7.3 When an officer is not responding to a radio status check after three calls from Communications;
 - 4.7.4 Situations involving a potential imminent threat to human life or serious bodily injury.
- 4.8 **Officer Assistance Response:** Emergency or urgent need for assistance will automatically clear officers for a Priority One emergency response based on the following guidelines:
- 4.8.1 **Emergency Assistance (10-41A):** All units are automatically cleared for a Priority One emergency response. This is a declared emergency situation with potential imminent threat to life or serious bodily injury.
 - 4.8.1.1 With the exception of 4.8.1.2 below, officers need not advise that they are enroute or request permission for Priority One response.
 - 4.8.1.2 Only officers close to the location will advise they are enroute.
 - 4.8.1.3 Once Communications has confirmed that at least two units are enroute other responding units will not advise they are enroute on the primary frequency.



- 4.8.1.4 Once the imminent threat has been alleviated the requesting officer or a supervisor will advise Communications and all responding units that the situation has stabilized and Priority One response has been cancelled.
- 4.8.2 **Urgent Assistance (10-41B):** Only units in the same beat or adjacent beats are automatically cleared for a Priority One emergency response. This is a potentially dangerous situation where an officer needs immediate assistance but the situation does not warrant an Emergency Assistance (10-41A) alert.
- 4.8.2.1 Responding units will advise that they are enroute.
- 4.8.2.2 Supervisors may downgrade the response level or cancel additional units once an adequate number of units are enroute.
- 4.8.2.3 The requesting officer or supervisor on the scene will keep Communications and all units advised of the status of the situation and the need for additional assistance.
- 4.9 When sufficient units are on-scene and no further assisting units are needed, an officer or supervisor on the scene shall cancel all further units. In such cases, officers who are not on-scene must take responsibility to cease their response and proceed back to their assigned response zones.
- 4.10 When assisting a motorist on the roadway, or when parking in the roadway, emergency equipment and auxiliary lighting will be engaged as necessary to provide a safe environment for the officer(s) on the scene and the public at large.
- 4.11 Members of specialized teams may respond in a Priority One mode at the discretion of the scene commander or team supervisor.

5.0 VEHICLE PURSUIT OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

- 5.1 A violator does not establish a pursuit by refusing to stop for a police officer. The decision to engage in a pursuit is initially made by the officer and is affirmed or denied by the supervisor. At any time during a pursuit, the officer or supervisor has the authority to terminate the pursuit.
- 5.2 Officers without a functioning mobile or body-worn camera shall not become involved in a pursuit unless exigent circumstances exist. Once a police vehicle with a camera or an officer with a body-worn camera



becomes engaged in the pursuit, the officer in the vehicle without the functional camera will become an assisting unit or disengage completely if there is a primary and a secondary unit with cameras in the pursuit.

- 5.3 Officers shall not engage in a pursuit with a prisoner in the police vehicle.
- 5.4 The initiating officer of a pursuit will immediately notify Communications of:
 - 5.4.1 Their unit identification;
 - 5.4.2 Location and current speed (to continue throughout pursuit);
 - 5.4.3 Direction of travel (to continue throughout pursuit);
 - 5.4.4 The reason for the pursuit;
 - 5.4.5 Vehicle description including license plate number;
 - 5.4.6 Number, sex, race of occupants, and presence of children in the vehicle, if known.
 - 5.4.7 Weather
 - 5.4.8 Traffic
 - 5.4.9 Roadway Conditions
- 5.5 Unmarked police vehicles must be properly equipped as required by South Carolina Law with blue lights and sirens and both must be activated during pursuits. An unmarked vehicle becoming involved in an approved pursuit will withdraw as soon as marked officers are available to take over. The supervisor responsible for the pursuit will take this into consideration in deciding whether or not to allow the continuation of a pursuit.
- 5.6 Officers are responsible, even when a supervisor is monitoring a pursuit, to continuously evaluate the pursuit for safety. Officers are also responsible for keeping the supervisor monitoring the pursuit updated about the pursuit and any actions by the violator that increases the risk of the pursuit. Officers will terminate pursuits on their own if they feel the pursuit has become too dangerous or is no longer justified.
- 5.7 Once a decision is made to terminate a pursuit, all officers involved will acknowledge by repeating the order and confirming they have terminated the pursuit.
- 5.8 When the pursuit is terminated, the pursuing officer will immediately discontinue use of emergency equipment and leave the path of the pursuit. This is best accomplished by turning left or right off the path of the pursuit, turning around, or pulling over to the side of the road and stopping. The pursuing officer will broadcast the location of termination



and actions upon termination. Whenever possible, the supervisor will have the pursuing officer meet, either in the field or in the office, to begin the review process.

5.9 Supervisor responsibilities:

5.9.1 Upon notification, the supervisor will evaluate the overall situation and will direct the pursuing officer to either continue or terminate the pursuit.

5.9.2 If the supervisor clears the pursuit to continue he/she will monitor, ask pertinent questions, and evaluate the ongoing necessity for the pursuit. The supervisor may terminate the pursuit at any time.

5.9.3 Supervisors will try not to become directly involved in a pursuit in order to maintain objectivity. If it becomes necessary for the supervisor to become directly involved in the pursuit, supervision of the pursuit will be given to another supervisor, if at all possible.

5.9.4 Pursuits shall be terminated when a continuation would create unreasonable danger to the public and when:

5.9.4.1 The suspect's identity has been established and no need for immediate apprehension exists.

5.9.4.2 If the location of the pursued vehicle is no longer known. Officers shall discontinue use of emergency equipment and resume normal vehicle operation.

5.10 Communications responsibilities: When an officer announces that he/she is in pursuit, the dispatcher is responsible to:

5.10.1 Notify a Uniform Patrol Services supervisor immediately upon notice of a pursuit.

5.10.2 Receive, acknowledge, and record all incoming information on the vehicle being pursued.

5.10.3 Advise all other officers that a pursuit is in progress, providing all relevant information.

5.10.4 Perform relevant record and motor vehicle checks.



5.10.5 Control all radio communications during the pursuit in concert with sworn supervision.

5.10.6 Coordinate assistance under the direction of a sworn supervisor.

5.10.7 Continue to monitor the pursuit until its conclusion.

5.10.8 Acknowledge, over the air, termination action(s) by the officer.

5.11 Assisting officer(s) responsibilities:

5.11.1 The closest available officer responding will become the assisting officer in the pursuit. The assisting officer will take over radio communications allowing the primary officer to concentrate on the pursuit.

5.11.2 The assisting officer(s) will notify communications of his or her identity upon joining the pursuit.

5.11.3 The active pursuit will normally consist of no more than three police vehicles. Additional police vehicles may be authorized by a supervisor if circumstances of the pursuit warrant additional officers or police vehicles. This decision shall be determined by:

5.11.3.1 Nature of the offense;

5.11.3.2 Number of suspects;

5.11.3.3 Other clear facts that would warrant the increased hazard or need for additional officers and/or police vehicles.

6.0 PURSUIT CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 As a general rule, the need to capture or stop the violator must outweigh the inherent risks a vehicular pursuit poses to those involved and the public at large. Vehicular pursuits shall only be initiated in the following circumstances:

6.1.1 When it is reasonably believed the vehicle and/or an occupant is suspected of involvement in a violent felony and is fleeing from the officer. Violent crimes are defined, but not limited to, SC Code of Law 16-1-60

6.1.1.1 In addition to violent felonies; the property crimes of burglary and auto theft are approved for pursuit.



6.1.1.2 Examples of violent felonies not listed in 16-1-60 include, but are not limited to: assault and battery 1st degree, assault and battery by mob 2nd degree, strong armed robbery.

6.1.2 The suspect or suspects pose an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury to specific individuals or the public at large unless immediately apprehended.

6.1.3 The suspect is potentially impaired due to alcohol, drugs, illness, or other condition to an extent that he or she is operating the vehicle in such a manner that constitutes a serious and immediate threat to public safety.

6.2 The following situational factors must be continuously evaluated by officers involved in a vehicular pursuit as well as supervisors monitoring the pursuit:

6.2.1 **Vehicle Traffic Conditions:** Heavy traffic conditions increase the risk of a pursuit. Traffic conditions are often associated with the time of day and/or day of week.

6.2.2 **Pedestrian Traffic:** Heavy pedestrian traffic conditions dramatically increase the risk of a pursuit. Generally, if pedestrians are present, such as in a residential area, a pursuit will be considered high risk.

6.2.3 **Current Weather:** Weather conditions can significantly increase the risk of a pursuit. Wet roads, wet leaves in the roadway, ice and snow can create hazardous conditions adding to the inherent risk of a pursuit.

6.2.4 **Officer's Ability and Training:** All officers receive pursuit training. However, training cannot prepare an officer for all possible conditions encountered during a pursuit. Officer ability can vary based on experience, natural ability, and other factors. These factors shall be taken into consideration when evaluating a pursuit.

6.3 Officers may pursue suspects in the opposite direction of traffic flow only upon the approval of the supervisor monitoring the pursuit.



7.0 FORCIBLE STOPPING AND ROADBLOCKS

- 7.1 Stationary roadblocks shall not be used to end a pursuit or stop a fleeing subject.
- 7.2 Forcible stopping is permitted only with supervisor approval. Forcible stopping, including rolling roadblocks, PIT maneuver, and tire deflation devices may only be used by officers trained in techniques approved by the department.
- 7.3 Decisions to utilize forcible stopping techniques require consideration of the following factors: the presence of other motorists on the roadway, roadway conditions, speed, the type and size of vehicles involved, risk to department personnel or members of the public, and the type of terrain.
- 7.4 Tire deflation devices will only be used on vehicles with four or more tires.

8.0 INTERJURISDICTION/ INTRAJURISDICTION PURSUITS

- 8.1 A supervisor must give approval for a pursuit to continue once jurisdictional lines are crossed.
- 8.2 In the event an outside agency engaged in an active vehicle pursuit enters the city limits of Greenville and requests assistance a supervisor must decide to give officers permission to assist in the pursuit. Any officer that engages in a pursuit involving another agency must immediately notify Communications.
- 8.3 Officers assisting outside agencies in pursuits shall terminate involvement when the pursuit leaves the city limits of Greenville, unless authorized by a field supervisor or commanding officer.
- 8.4 If an originating agency terminates their involvement in the pursuit, Greenville Police officers will disengage, unless additional probable cause has been established inside the City's jurisdiction that is in compliance with the rules for engaging in pursuits.
- 8.5 Officers assisting outside agencies in vehicle pursuits will adhere to Greenville Police Department directives governing vehicle pursuits.



9.0 REPORTING

- 9.1 All officers involved in a pursuit must complete an incident or supplemental report that contains articulable facts to support the reason for pursuit as listed in section 6.0.
- 9.2 The “Administrative Incident Report” (AIR) is intended to provide documentation of pursuits and failures to stop, regardless if the suspect is arrested or if the pursuit was terminated by the officer or a supervisor. This information will be used to address future equipment, policy, and/or training needs.
- 9.3 An AIR will be completed by the supervisor monitoring the pursuit when the driver of a vehicle evades the police.
- 9.3.1 The supervisor will indicate on the AIR if any digital recording, body camera footage, or still photographs are available.
- 9.3.2 If a digital recording or body camera footage is available the supervisor must submit a request for two DVD hard copies to be made; one for review and attachment to the AIR and one for submission to Property and Evidence.
- 9.3.3 If still photographs are available a copy must be submitted to Property and Evidence and a copy attached to the AIR.
- 9.4 The supervisor will attach a printout of the CAD report with the AIR.
- 9.5 Communications personnel will make a recording of the pursuit radio traffic. The audio recording will be placed into Property and Evidence by either Communications personnel or a supervisor.
- 9.6 The supervisor overseeing the pursuit, or the initiating officer’s supervisor, is responsible for reviewing the pursuit and forwarding the documentation up the chain of command.
- 9.7 Either the supervisor overseeing the pursuit, or the initiating officer’s supervisor, is responsible for an initial pursuit review with the officer(s) involved in the pursuit. The review is a process intended to give the initiating officer and a supervisor an opportunity to critique the pursuit. The review will be documented on the AIR and cover the following criteria:
- 9.7.1 Reason for initiating the pursuit;



- 9.7.2 Situational conditions (including time, day, location, weather, vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, and any other relevant factors);
- 9.7.3 Radio traffic;
- 9.7.4 Actions of the suspect;
- 9.7.5 Actions of the officer and backup officers;
- 9.7.6 Outcome of the pursuit;
- 9.7.7 Any issues which should be incorporated into training in the future.
- 9.9 The AIR, with a copy of the incident report, will be forwarded up the chain of command to be reviewed and signed by the shift commander, the division commander, and finally the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- 9.9 The chain-of-command process may determine if a more extensive debriefing or review, other than the initial, is warranted. A written report will be made of the review in the form of a supplemental report which will document personnel in attendance; issues discussed, and recommended actions. This report will then be forwarded to the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- 9.10 The Professional Standards Division will maintain these reports on file. A computer database will also be maintained of all vehicular pursuits for analytical purposes. An annual review of all pursuits will be conducted and a copy of the final report will be forwarded to the Chief of Police for review.



Kenneth C. Miller,
Chief of Police

3-22-17

Date

