

# WEST PALM BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## III-27 POLICE ESCORTS, ROADBLOCKS, AND TRAFFIC RELATED CHECKPOINTS

**EFFECTIVE: 01/01/2005**

CALEA Standards: 61.1.6, 61.3.3, 61.3.4

CFA Standards: 24.03, 24.04

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**I. POLICY:** The West Palm Beach Police Department has established guidelines for officers to use when involved in police escorts, roadblocks and traffic related checkpoints to maximize the officer's performance and to create safeguards for the protection of officers and motorists.

### **II. POLICE ESCORTS:**

A. The Police Department will not provide any "code three" escorts under any circumstances. In the event of a medical emergency, an ambulance or medic unit will be requested. In an extreme life saving situation, an officer may transport with his or her vehicle only with prior approval from a supervisor.

B. Non-Emergency Escorts for parades, special events, public officials, dignitaries, funerals, etc., may be provided with the approval of the Assistant Chief of Field Operations. Persons or organizations requesting escorts must possess the appropriate permits and authorization as required by the City of West Palm Beach. The Special Events Coordinator will be responsible for planning and coordinating all requested escorts.

C. Companies wishing to hire escorts for oversize vehicles or vehicles hauling unusual or hazardous cargos will be referred to the Special Events Coordinator. If circumstances dictate, the company should be advised to seek a private vehicular escort company.

### **III. PURSUIT ROADBLOCKS:**

A. Roadblocks used in pursuit situations are permitted when circumstances dictate a roadblock as the only alternative for apprehending a subject who presents an imminent threat to the life of an officer or citizen. **A roadblock may be established only with the authorization of a lieutenant or above or a supervisor acting in the appointed capacity of a shift commander.**

B. It will be at the discretion of the on-scene supervisor to decide which type of roadblock would be best utilized (fixed, moving, or circle). This decision should be based on the reason for implementing the roadblock, e.g., officers who are in pursuit of a violent felony suspect or to seal an area for a car by car check. It will be the decision of the on-scene supervisor or higher-ranking officer to terminate the roadblock.

1. Moving roadblock- The use of one or more moving vehicles to occupy all moving lanes and adjacent safety or stopping lanes of a roadway to impede, slow and stop vehicle(s) traveling in the same direction.

2. Fixed roadblock- A full or partial roadblock established at a fixed point.

3. Circle system roadblock- A series of fixed roadblocks intended to contain a vehicle or suspect in a given area.

C. Fixed roadblocks will be manned by a minimum of three (3) officers. When staffing of the roadblock falls below minimum levels, the roadblock will be immediately closed down. When a supervisor is not on the scene, the senior officer will be in charge.

D. Spike Strips will be considered whenever and wherever possible to safely terminate a pursuit.

### **IV. TRAFFIC CHECKPOINTS/ VEHICLE SAFETY INSPECTIONS/ DUI CHECKPOINTS:**

A. When establishing the physical layout for the checkpoint, the safety of officers and motorists and the conspicuous display of an official presence designed to eliminate the initial fear or surprise among motorists are most important.

1. Members will use police vehicles, flares, cones, signs, and/or other warning devices when conducting a roadblock.

2. Spike strips may be used in these and other tactical situations to reduce the chance of a vehicle pursuit.

B. Site selections for traffic oriented checkpoints are most desirable where roadways are flat, limit the motorist's ability to turn around or to use alternate routes and provide motorists with a clear unobstructed view for a reasonable distance.

1. Public warnings of upcoming checkpoints should begin not less than 500 feet from the actual stop.

2. Impeding the flow of vehicular traffic will be kept to a minimum.

C. Criteria for stopping vehicles should remain constant. If possible, all vehicles should be stopped. If this is not possible, it is permissible to select a sample of vehicles.

1. When sampling is used, such as in the selection of every fifth or tenth vehicle, it is essential the procedure be rigidly adhered to if the operation is to comply with court prohibitions against random or discriminatory stops.

D. Supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring adequate documentation is kept on the operation. All departures from scheduled operations, such as vehicle sampling procedures and temporary shutdowns due to traffic congestion or other factors, will be documented.

1. Prior to the operation of the checkpoint, the supervisor will put in writing the vehicle selection procedure, duty assignments, detention techniques, and procedures for the disposition of vehicles. Each officer at the checkpoint will receive a copy of this plan.

2. The supervisor, or a designee, will forward a written critique to the appropriate Division Commander upon completion of the traffic-oriented checkpoint. The critique will include all statistical data, such as the number of stops, arrests, citations, etc.

## **V. REFERENCES:**

- SOP # II-3 Special Events, Extra Duty Details & Outside Employment.
- SOP # III-13 Use of Force.
- SOP # III-18 Supervisor Notification.
- SOP # III-23 Use of Authorized Emergency Equipment.
- SOP # III-24 Stopping & Approaching Vehicles.
- SOP # III-25 Vehicle Pursuits.
- SOP # III-26 Pursuit Termination Devices.

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**Delsa R. Bush, Chief of Police**

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Old SOP #: 6.640.043  
Revision Dates: 03/01/99, 01/01/2005

Job Title Task Files: Supervisor, Shift Commander, Special Events Coordinator, Vehicle Checkpoint Supervisor