



## LAGUNA BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

### TRAINING BULLETIN # 21-01

#### **HIGH-RISK CAR STOPS**

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this training bulletin is to provide employees with the recommended procedures for conducting a High-Risk Car Stop. Please follow the steps outlined below to ensure we are conducting our High-Risk Car Stops in a safe and uniform manner.

#### **A. Pre-Stop Procedure**

- 1) Notify dispatchers as soon as the suspect vehicle is located.
  - (a) Give a description of the suspect vehicle, number of occupants, and license plate.
  - (b) Advise location, direction of travel, want, and speed.
- 2) If possible, follow the suspect vehicle until additional units arrive and you are in a safe location to conduct the stop.
  - (a) This is not always possible.

#### **B. Method of Stop**

- 1) Use all emergency lights available.
- 2) Advise dispatch of the stop and location.
- 3) Park your patrol vehicle approximately 30 feet behind and offset to the left of the suspect vehicle by approximately 2-3 feet.
- 4) The assisting officers should then park second patrol vehicle to the right of the primary patrol vehicle. Additional patrol vehicles should park to the rear of the first two patrol vehicles.
- 5) After the suspect vehicle stops, activate takedown lights and spotlights during periods of darkness in order to illuminate the interior of the vehicle.
- 6) Determine whether or not you will utilize your patrol vehicles public address system to give commands prior to the stop.

#### **C. Exiting the Patrol Vehicle**

- 1) Exit from the driver's door making sure the microphone is accessible to you.
- 2) Stay behind the door maximizing protection from the patrol vehicles ballistic panels inside the door.
- 3) Assisting officers take position behind the doors of the first two patrol vehicles.
- 4) Cover the occupants of the suspect vehicle with either your handgun or alternative weapon system (AR-15 or Shotgun)
- 5) If the windows of the suspect vehicle are rolled up, immediately order the driver to roll all of the windows down.
- 6) Order all occupants to raise their hands and hold them out of the windows if possible.



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- 7) Advise the occupants of the following:
  - (a) This is the Laguna Beach Police Department.
  - (b) You are suspects in a criminal investigation.
  - (c) Comply with our commands or force may be used against you.
- 8) Order the driver to remove the keys from the ignition and throw them out of the window in order to disable the vehicle.
- 9) Once assisting officers are in place, the primary officer can begin giving commands.

#### **D. Removing Suspects from the Vehicle**

- 1) Depending on the geographic conditions, the occupants SHOULD exit the vehicle on the DRIVER'S SIDE. (Note: This may not always be possible and officers should remain flexible. However, all occupants should exit on the same side.)
- 2) Suspects should exit the vehicle in the following order:
  - (a) Driver
  - (b) Front Right Passenger
  - (c) Left Rear Passenger
  - (d) Right Rear Passenger
- 3) Order suspects to open the vehicles door from the outside.
- 4) Once the door is opened, order the occupants to exit the vehicle with their hands up and face away from officers.
- 5) Order suspect to walk backwards towards the patrol vehicles using short commands.
- 6) Once the suspect is positioned between the primary and secondary patrol vehicle, order the suspect into a high-risk kneeling position with their hands on their head, fingers interlaced, and ankles crossed.
- 7) Once the suspect is in the above position, the designated arrest team officers (usually the officers positioned at the primary vehicles passenger door and secondary vehicles driver door) will detain the suspect in handcuffs.
- 8) Once the suspect is detained in handcuffs, the detaining officer should walk the suspect to a patrol vehicle, conduct a search of the suspect, and place them in the back of a patrol vehicle. The officer should also ask the suspect safety questions such as, how many occupants are in the vehicle, are there any weapons in the vehicle, etc.
- 9) Repeat the same procedure for all occupants in the vehicle after ensuring the arrest team is back in place.

#### **E. Clearing the Suspect Vehicle**

- 1) Once officers believe all suspects are out of the suspect vehicle, the primary officer should give a verbal ruse in the event there are additional suspects inside the vehicle.
- 2) Officers should then make a plan to clear the suspect vehicle considering things such as, what doors are already open, backdrop, additional passengers or children in the vehicle, etc.



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- 3) Officers should then clear the suspect vehicle, render the scene safe, and notify dispatch.

#### **F. Things to Remember**

- 1) Place suspects in patrol vehicles corresponding to their seating position in the suspect vehicle (i.e., driver in patrol vehicle #1, front seat passenger in patrol vehicle #2, etc.)
- 2) Dependent of the situation, officers should keep in mind the following resources: K-9, helicopter, ballistic shield, less lethal force options, trauma kits, etc.
- 3) If a suspect flees from the vehicle on foot, consider establishing a perimeter or utilizing the above listed resources instead of pursuing the suspect past a vehicle that has not been cleared.
- 4) Ensure the police radio and MDC screen are turned off if a suspect is in the back seat of that police vehicle.
- 5) **Time is on our side.** Officers should not rush a High-Risk Car Stop or take shortcuts. This may lead to mistakes and create officer safety issues.



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Sources: Orange County Sheriff's Department

