

San Andreas Statewide Policy

Vehicle Interventions and Pursuits

Definitions:

- **Boxing In:** A coordinated maneuver utilizing police vehicles to contain a suspect's vehicle, preventing the initiation or continuation of a pursuit.
- **Marked Unit:** An emergency police vehicle equipped with sirens, lights, and official agency markings.
- **Unmarked Unit:** An authorized emergency vehicle used for undercover or specialized operations requiring discretion for officer safety.
- **Pursuit:** An active, deliberate attempt by law enforcement to apprehend a suspect in a moving vehicle, wherein the suspect is aware of the attempt and resists by increasing speed, disobeying traffic laws, or engaging in evasive maneuvers.
- **Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT):** A controlled maneuver to stop a fleeing vehicle by strategically contacting its rear quarter panel to induce loss of traction and halt movement.
- **Ramming:** The intentional use of a police vehicle to disable another vehicle, excluding authorized PIT or boxing-in maneuvers.
- **Stop/Spike Strips:** Devices designed to deflate vehicle tires in a controlled manner to facilitate a safe stop.
- **Vehicle Intervention Strategies:** Tactics employed to stop or slow a fleeing vehicle while mitigating risks to public safety, officers, and suspects (e.g., barricades, boxing-in, PIT, ramming, stop/spike strips).
- **Roadblocks:** Stationary or rolling barricades using vehicles or physical barriers to restrict a suspect's movement and facilitate apprehension.

Policy:

1. The San Andreas law enforcement community acknowledges that vehicle pursuits are inherently dynamic and pose significant risks. Officers must exercise sound judgment and articulate their decisions regarding pursuit initiation and continuation. Pursuits must be objectively reasonable under the totality of the circumstances.
2. All officers shall receive specialized training in pursuit management to ensure public safety. Before initiating or continuing a pursuit, officers must weigh the potential risks against the necessity of apprehension.

Procedure:

1. Pursuit Authorization

1.1. Officers may initiate a pursuit only when there is reasonable suspicion that the suspect has committed a forcible felony or has demonstrated reckless driving that poses an immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death. Speed alone is insufficient justification.

1.2. Officers shall not initiate pursuits under the following circumstances:

- The suspect is known, not wanted for a violent crime, and can be safely apprehended at a later time.
- The pursuit endangers uninvolved passengers, complainants, or witnesses in the police vehicle.

1.3. Officers must disengage from a pursuit if:

- A non-pursuit-rated vehicle initiates the pursuit, and a pursuit-rated unit is available to take over.
- A police vehicle carrying non-law enforcement passengers (e.g., ride-alongs, chaplains, cadets) is involved.
- A collision occurs requiring immediate medical assistance, and multiple units are in pursuit. One unit must disengage to provide aid.

1.4. Extraordinary pursuits must be immediately reported to the highest-ranking on-duty supervisor and another active supervisor.

2. Pursuit Balancing Factors

2.1. Officers must continuously evaluate whether the pursuit's benefits outweigh the risks.

Considerations include:

- The severity of the offense and potential threat posed by the suspect.
- The suspect's driving behavior, vehicle condition, and presence of passengers.
- Traffic, environmental conditions, and officer familiarity with the area.
- Availability of alternative intervention strategies.

3. Officer Responsibilities

3.1. A maximum of four units may engage in a pursuit with emergency lights and sirens activated.

- Supervisors may authorize additional units only under exceptional circumstances, such as armed suspects or shots fired.
- Pursuit intervention maneuvers alone do not justify additional units.

3.2. Nearby officers not engaged in the pursuit may position themselves for perimeter support or deploy stop/spike strips.

3.3. Air support should assume primary pursuit observation when available, allowing ground units to follow at a reduced speed until the suspect is apprehended.

4. Pursuit Intervention Strategies and Standards

4.1. Officers may only employ department-approved intervention tactics for which they have received proper training.

4.2. The following intervention strategies may be utilized when objectively reasonable:

- **Boxing In:** May be used preemptively in static or dynamic situations when probable cause exists for arrest or when the suspect demonstrates reckless behavior posing an immediate danger.
- **PIT Maneuver:** Prohibited on motorcycles unless an articulable violent threat is present. Not permitted against passenger buses or hazardous material transporters. Speed considerations apply, but no specific speed limit is required for use.
- **Ramming:** Reserved for extraordinary circumstances with substantial justification.
- **Stop/Spike Strips:** May be used as a non-force intervention.
- **Roadblocks:** May be deployed when necessary to terminate a pursuit safely.

4.3. Officers may cross into opposing traffic lanes only if necessary, with extreme caution. The primary pursuit unit should take the lead, while secondary units remain in standard travel lanes whenever possible.

5. Pursuit Termination

5.1. Officers must terminate a pursuit if public safety risks outweigh the benefits of apprehension. Any sworn member may call for termination, and compliance is mandatory when ordered by a supervisor.

5.2. Upon termination, officers must broadcast acknowledgment, disengage, and cease following the suspect vehicle. Air support may continue monitoring but ground unit re-engagement is restricted.

6. Pursuit Reengagement

6.1. Officers may only reengage a terminated pursuit if new circumstances arise that justify continued pursuit under policy guidelines. Reengagement must be explicitly authorized by a supervisor.

This policy serves to protect public safety while ensuring effective law enforcement operations. All members must comply with these regulations to maintain the integrity and accountability of pursuit interventions.