



TRAINING BULLETIN

Los Angeles Police Department

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PERIMETER AND CHECKPOINT VEHICLE STOP TACTICS WITH POTENTIALLY ARMED SUSPECTS

Conducting a vehicle pullover can be one of the most dangerous duties a patrol officer can perform. Police officers must recognize the inherent risk involved and take the appropriate precautions necessary to ensure their own safety, as well as the safety of others. Because any vehicle pullover has the potential to turn into a high-risk situation, officers must utilize good judgement, basic tactical concepts, and de-escalation techniques consistent with Department training.

All tactical situations consist of many variables. Therefore, strategies to resolve incidents will vary accordingly. Every situation is fluid and unique, and it is essential to have ongoing communication, flexibility, and coordination between officers.

The purpose of this Training Bulletin is to provide an overview of basic tactical concepts, specific to vehicle pullovers involving armed or potentially armed suspects while assigned to a perimeter or checkpoint operation. The concepts described in this bulletin are general guidelines only.

Planning

Officers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Department tactical concepts and routinely discuss tactical scenario responses with their partner(s). Such discussions should include basic tactical concepts such as contact, cover, communication, and each officer's responsibilities during vehicle pullovers and high-risk situations. Officers should understand that their responsibilities may shift during dynamic situations and officers must be flexible and adapt as needed.

VEHICLE PULLOVERS

Generally, vehicle pullovers are divided into three types: Traffic Enforcement, Investigative, and High-Risk. A felony arrest stop is considered a high-risk pullover, however, any vehicle pullover may become high-risk based on the suspect's behaviors, actions, and statements.

Perimeters and Checkpoints

While on a perimeter officers are tasked with vehicle inspections. Officers on a perimeter are tasked with approaching vehicles that are attempting to leave the area that has been secured by the police. The goal of the inspection is to ensure that the vehicle is clear, and there are no suspect(s) attempting to flee the area undetected by the police.

During perimeter inspections, the officers conducting a stop may not have a vehicle readily available to provide cover as they would for a high-risk traffic stop. Encountering a possibly armed suspect in a vehicle while conducting a perimeter inspection does not happen often (low frequency), but when it occurs, the incident must be considered high-risk and officers must be ready to react accordingly. Officers must not become complacent while conducting inspections on a perimeter.

PERIMETER AND CHECKPOINT STOPS

Officers conducting perimeter and checkpoint stops should consider the following:

- Placement of the parked black and white
- Officers tactically deployed outside of the police vehicle
- Maintain a contact and cover approach to any vehicle leaving the perimeter
- Predetermine vehicle stop location that affords nearby cover (e.g., parked vehicles, large trees, etc.)
- Gain compliance from the occupant(s) before making the approach to the vehicle
- Safely approach the vehicle while continuing to scan and assess the vehicle and the surrounding area for possible suspect(s)
- Keep lines of communication open with your partner for any tactical considerations
- Advise the occupant(s) of the reason for the inspection stop, and request compliance
- Visually and physically inspect the vehicle, clearing it for any possible suspect(s)
- Thank all occupant(s) for their cooperation



TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

If officers are on a perimeter conducting a vehicle inspection and locate an armed suspect inside with a firearm, they should consider the following in sequential order:

- Identify the threat and communicate their observations to their partner
- Utilize the suspect's vehicle pillars (B- and C-Pillars) as cover, when appropriate
- Give strong voice commands to the suspect(s) and occupant(s) of the vehicle
- Safely create distance and find alternate cover (preferably) behind the suspect's vehicle
- Call for additional resources (Help, Back Up)
- Broadcast to responding officers with safest routes of approach to avoid any further tactical issues (e.g., cross fire)



If the suspect(s) are cooperating with the officers' commands, and the officers can visually see the suspect's hands in the air, the officers should look for environmental cover (parked vehicles, large trees, etc.), and tactically redeploy to a better position of advantage. Redeploying to a better position of advantage should provide the officers with additional distance and cover, which will also provide the officers with more time to successfully manage the incident and proceed with High-Risk Stop Tactics.



If the suspect is uncooperative with the officers' commands, officers should initially tactically redeploy to cover behind the suspect's vehicle and ultimately look for other

environmental cover that can create more distance, affording officers more time for additional resources to arrive at scene. Once sufficient resources are on-scene, officers can proceed with High-Risk Stop Tactics. If the suspect continues to refuse commands (i.e., remain inside the vehicle), officers shall make notifications to Metropolitan Division for a barricaded suspect.



Due to the rapidly evolving nature of law enforcement encounters and the environment in which they occur, deviation from these basic concepts may happen. Often, officers do not want to “give up” ground once they have approached the vehicle and have eyes on the suspect. While circumstances vary, officers should strongly consider redeploying to a position of cover. The use of cover and concealment can afford officers a significant tactical advantage and allow them more time to assess the situation and react, if necessary. The use of distance plus cover may provide officers with additional time (**Distance + Cover = Time** and **Time = Options**) to evaluate and develop an alternate plan while waiting for the arrival of additional resources.

Note: Deviations may range from minor, typically procedural or technical, to substantial deviations from Department tactical training. Any deviations are to be explained by the involved officer(s), and justification for substantial deviation from Department tactical training shall be articulated.

Barricaded Suspect in a Vehicle

Barricaded suspects that meet the Department’s Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) response are not limited to buildings. High-risk vehicle encounters involving armed suspects are inherently dangerous and can easily escalate into a barricaded suspect within a vehicle. During incidents involving a barricaded suspect, the primary concerns are the preservation of human life, and the safety of the first responders, the community, and the barricaded individual. A barricaded suspect incident prompting a SWAT response may include, but is not limited to the following criteria:

- The suspect is probably armed; **and**
- Probable cause exists to believe that the suspect has been involved in a criminal act or is a threat to the lives and safety of the community and/or police; **and**
- Is in a position of advantage, affording cover and/or concealment; **or** is contained in an open area and the presence or approach of police officers could precipitate an adverse reaction by the suspect; **and**

- The suspect refuses to submit to a lawful arrest.

Note: Not all suspects who refuse to surrender are considered barricaded suspects necessitating a SWAT response.

There is a distinction between an armed barricaded suspect wanted for a crime, and a barricaded subject who has not committed a crime but has expressed a desire to commit suicide.

Note: There may be times when officers encounter a situation, where tactical disengagement is not an option (i.e., an armed subject is in the middle of the road or intersection threatening suicide, or the subject may want to use the vehicle in some way to harm themselves and possibly others).

Officers should:

- Seek cover;
- Treat the situation as a high-risk stop; and
- Utilize tactical de-escalation techniques-Planning, Assessment, Time, Redeployment and/or Containment, Other Resources, Lines of Communication (PATROL).

It is not a crime to express suicidal ideations, or even attempt to commit suicide or self-mutilation in the State of California.

CONCLUSION

Encounters with armed suspects in vehicles are inherently dangerous. Officers are reminded to utilize Department basic tactical concepts and de-escalation techniques to ensure overall safety when engaged in these activities. Officers should continuously assess the situation and utilize tactical de-escalation techniques, if feasible. The objective is to gain voluntary compliance or mitigate the need to use a higher level of force while maintaining control of the situation. The dynamic nature of most incidents will require tactical responses to be flexible and adaptable as additional information or factors become known.

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