



# TRAINING BULLETIN

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Michel R. Moore, Chief of Police

## VEHICLE INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

Vehicle Intervention Techniques (VIT) are tools available to law enforcement to bring a potentially dangerous pursuit to an end. VIT includes the Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT) and the use of the Tire Deflation Device (TDD). A VIT may be deployed when the officer believes that the continued movement of the vehicle would place persons in imminent danger of great bodily harm or death and/or the risk of harm to persons outweighs any risks created by the application of a VIT. The purpose of this Training Bulletin is to provide officers with the guidelines, techniques, and reporting procedures used in conjunction with PIT and TDD.

### PURSUIT INTERVENTION TECHNIQUE

The Pursuit Intervention Technique may be used when all the following conditions have been met:

- The apparent risk of harm to officers or the general public outweighs the potential risk of implementing the PIT.
- When the primary unit's watch commander or the on-scene supervisor has given approval (unless exigent circumstances exist, and the exigency can be articulated).
- Other reasonable means of apprehension (tire deflation devices, etc.) are not practical or have proven ineffective.
- A third unit has joined the pursuit and is in position to support the primary and secondary units.
- When the speed of both vehicles is 35 mph or less.

**Note:** PIT may only be used by officers who have been certified by the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) Unit of Training Division

Once a supervisor has approved the PIT maneuver and the third unit has joined the pursuit, the driver of the primary unit should PIT the suspect vehicle whenever that decides PIT would be both effective and safe. Once approval has been granted, the decision to employ PIT remains with the primary unit until withdrawn or canceled by a supervisor.

The primary concern for the officer conducting PIT is location. Site selection for PIT is critical in safely and effectively employing the technique. In an effort to decrease the possibility of injury or property damage, the following factors should be considered when selecting a PIT location:

1. The presence of traffic or pedestrians.
2. Road hazards, blind curves, narrow roadways, bridges, abutments, guardrails, parked vehicles, traffic islands, nearby structures, or buildings.
3. The nature of the surrounding area (residential or commercial).

### Additional Considerations

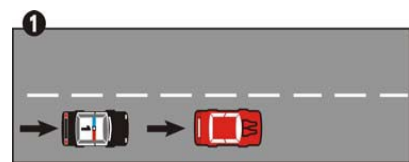
The PIT should generally not be attempted on:

- Vehicles carrying hazardous materials.
- Large and/or heavy vehicles.
- Vehicles with a high center of gravity.
- A suspect who is known to be, or suspected of being, armed with a firearm.

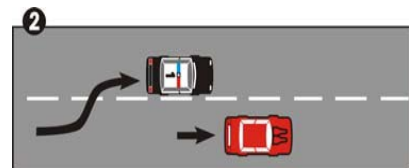
Officers should be aware that employing the PIT will cause them to be in close proximity to the suspect, due to this, officers should not PIT a suspect known to be armed with a firearm. In addition, implementing **PIT on a motorcycle would be considered deadly force**. Therefore, it should **only** be used on a motorcycle **when deadly force is justified**.

### Pursuit Intervention Technique Maneuver

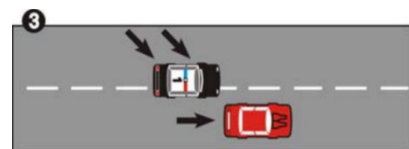
The police vehicle approaches the suspect vehicle from the rear (Fig. 1). The PIT **should not occur** when the speed of either vehicle is **in excess of 35 mph**. **Higher speeds can result in over-rotation of the suspect vehicle**.



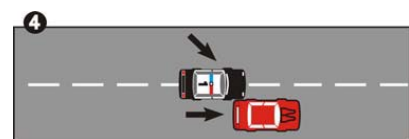
The officer determines from which side to perform the PIT, accelerates, and matches the speed of the suspect vehicle (Fig. 2). **The officer can PIT from either side**, however, contact should generally occur on the side of the suspect vehicle with the most available roadway.



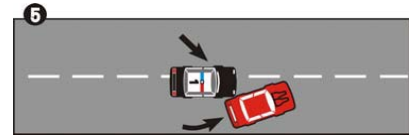
The officer then accelerates until the front quarter panel of the police vehicle overlaps the rear quarter panel of the suspect vehicle (Fig. 3). There should be minimal spacing to prevent unintended ramming of the suspect vehicle.



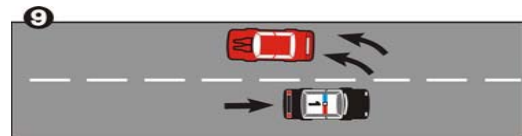
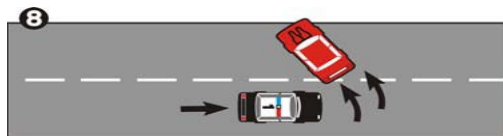
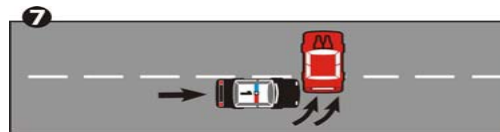
Once in position, the officer steers the police vehicle until the front quarter panel makes **gentle** contact with the rear quarter panel of the suspect vehicle (Fig. 4).



Once contact has been made, the officer turns the steering wheel approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn while smoothly accelerating the police vehicle if necessary (Fig. 5). The suspect vehicle will rotate to the side the PIT contact was made (i.e., if the PIT contact was made on the driver's side, the vehicle will rotate toward the driver's side).



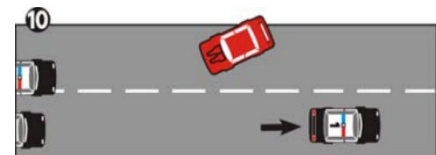
The PIT maneuver causes the rear wheels of the suspect vehicle to break traction, ultimately causing it to spin approximately 180 degrees (Figs. 6-9). The officer must keep a firm, steady grip on the steering wheel and resist the urge to swerve or attempt to avoid the suspect vehicle once it has begun to rotate.



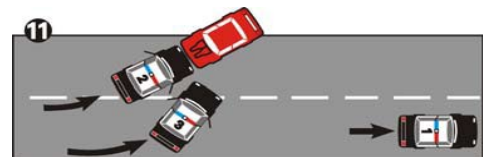
Once the rear of the suspect vehicle has been moved over 45-50 degrees from the original path of travel, rotation is irreversible. The suspect vehicle will continue to rotate regardless of any action taken by the driver, including counter-steering, braking, accelerating, etc.

The natural momentum of the suspect vehicle should carry it out of the path of travel of the police vehicle. However, as the suspect vehicle rotates in front of the police vehicle, there may be a secondary contact between the front of the police vehicle and the side of the suspect vehicle. This contact is usually minor and should not cause a loss of control of the police vehicle.

As the suspect vehicle continues to rotate, the officer should gently accelerate out of its path and avoid stopping in a potential crossfire situation. The secondary and third units approach the suspect vehicle (Fig. 10).



The secondary unit will close to within one to three feet of the suspect vehicle front bumper (Fig. 11). The third unit should approach on the side that provides the best advantage for the officers, preventing the suspect from driving away. Once the secondary and third units are in position, officers should proceed to take the suspect into custody.



## Vehicle Damage

The greatest likelihood of damage to the police vehicle, or injury to the officer, is from loss of control of the police vehicle after the maneuver is executed. When the technique is properly executed, damage to the vehicles should be insignificant or negligible. If the PIT is employed and damage occurs to either the police vehicle or the suspect vehicle, it is not considered a traffic collision. However, if an uninvolved vehicle is damaged as a result of PIT, proper traffic collision reporting procedures will apply.

## TIRE DEFLATION DEVICE

Officers shall obtain approval from a supervisor prior to deploying a VIT, unless exigent circumstances exist that require immediate action and preclude officers from seeking prior supervisor approval. The Tire Deflation Device (TDD) normally should not be deployed for a pursued vehicle traveling at speeds in excess of 65 mph.

A primary concern for officers deploying TDD is location. Officers should select a location that provides officers with appropriate cover options in addition to unimpeded pathways for deployment.

**Note:** The TDD may only be used by officers who have been certified by the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) Unit, Training Division or a designated Department instructor.

## Additional Considerations

Absent exigent circumstances, the TDD should generally not be used in adverse terrain or where geographic configurations increase the risk of injury to the suspect (e.g., on roadways bounded by steep descending embankments, and curves), or at any location where safety of proceeding or opposing traffic cannot be assured. Absent exigent circumstances where lethal force is authorized, officers shall not use a TDD on two or three-wheeled vehicles.

Officers should determine a deployment location based on proximity to and the driving patterns of the suspect. Officers may stage the TDD for deployment using one of two options, throwing the TDD or manually staging. In both options, officers should communicate both staging location and subsequent pending deployment so pursuing officers can increase their following distance to minimize potential TDD impacts on Department vehicles.

When staging by throwing the TDD, officers should:

- Grab the TDD in their primary hand, and cord reel, which has approximately 80 feet of cord, in their support hand.

- Make sure to release the cord reel crank handle.
- When traffic has abated, with their primary hand, throw the TDD across the roadway.
- Using the cord reel and crank handle, pull the device into staging position.
- Take out any slack in the cord reel, lock the crank handle and lower the reel and cord down onto the roadway to prevent the cord from being caught by passing vehicles.

When manually staging the TDD, officers should:

- Set the device down in the intended staging location, being mindful to place the TDD so it will deploy fully and not cross over itself.
- Unlock the cord reel crank handle.
- Safely cross the roadway to a safe location.
- Take out any slack in the cord reel, lock the crank handle, and lower the reel and cord down onto the roadway to prevent the cord from being caught by passing vehicles.

Deployment is the same for both staging techniques – when the suspect vehicle is approaching, officers should:

- Communicate the intention to deploy the TDD to pursuing units.
- Pull the TDD into the path of the approaching suspect vehicle.
- Officer should be careful to not “jerk” the device into position as the device cannot be pushed back into position.
- Once the suspect vehicle strikes the TDD, officers should quickly pull the device out of the path of pursuing units.
- Retrieve the TDD when safe to do so.

### **Safety Concerns**

Safety is of paramount concern, officers are reminded to stay out of the road and when possible use available cover to minimize exposure to being struck by the suspect vehicle. Never grab or use the cord to pull or position the TDD. Never wrap the cord around your hand or any part of your body. Pursuing units should also remember to increase the following distances to the suspect, giving the deploying officers time to safely deploy the TDD and minimize the potential for TDD impacts on Department vehicles.

### **CONCLUSION**

Pursuits are inherently dangerous and can place both law enforcement officers and the community at risk. Vehicle Intervention Technique provides officers options to help bring a pursuit to an end using controlled techniques if the appropriate conditions exist, reducing the risk to officers, and the public.

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**This Bulletin cancels and supersedes Volume XLIII, Issue 1, Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT), March 2013**

Field Training Services Unit  
Police Training and Education

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