

CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Title: *ROADBLOCKS*

Procedure: 4.616

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Revised:

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines on the use of roadblocks in emergency situations.

that a roadblock constitutes a use of force.

POLICY:

The Police Department may use roadblocks for checking drivers and their vehicles, controlling traffic for public ceremonies and parades, and detouring traffic from accident or disaster scenes. Roadblocks are sometimes necessary to apprehend persons fleeing from the scene of a serious crime or attempting to evade arrest. The Police Department will use emergency roadblocks as a last resort to apprehend dangerous criminals, and only when the proper conditions have been satisfied to ensure the safety of the officers and public affected.

3. When the need for a roadblock arises, a supervisor will evaluate the available information and determine whether a roadblock is warranted and can safely be implemented.

4. A supervisor must authorize, plan, implement and directly supervise roadblock operations.

5. Roadblock locations shall be chosen so that the safety of officers will be maximized. There must be a clear view of the roadblock so vehicles will be able to stop. Roadblocks will be avoided on curves, hills or where the approaching vehicles are unable to clearly see that a roadblock is present.

6. Officers will not remain inside a vehicle used for blocking the roadway.

7. Adequate warning to approaching vehicles is a necessity, unless the only vehicle reasonably expected as the first to approach the roadblock is that of an offender against whom deadly force is authorized, and there is insufficient time to warn the offender prior to his arrival.

8. If the suspect vehicle is being pursued by the police a warning must be provided to pursuing vehicles of the roadblock and the positions of officers manning the roadblock.

9. The following blocking techniques will be utilized:

DEFINITION:

A roadblock is defined as a restriction or obstruction used or intended for the purpose of preventing free passage of motor vehicles on a roadway in order to effect the apprehension of a suspect.

PROCEDURE:

EMERGENCY ROADBLOCKS

1. Roadblocks are authorized only with the expressed approval of a supervisor.

2. The decision to place a roadblock will be made considering several factors.

These include, but are not limited to:
number of officers available;

seriousness of the crime;

sufficient information available on subjects and vehicle;

elapsed time of the criminal act;
danger to the officer and public; and

GENERAL

The general position of the parked patrol vehicle is at a 45 degree angle to the traffic flow. This is useful when conditions do not permit bringing vehicles to a complete stop and allows the officer to check the passing vehicles because of their slowed speed. No person will be allowed to remain in a vehicle used to block the roadway.

TWO-LANE ROADWAYS

On a two-lane road, to stop traffic traveling in only one direction, the vehicle will be parked at a 45 degree angle to the flow of traffic, partially on the roadway, blocking the lane used by the traffic to be stopped. The normal speed, stopping distance, and element of surprise will be considered when placing warning signs for the roadblock. In darkness the signs will be illuminated.

A stop sign should be placed at the roadblock point. At night red lights or flares may also be necessary. There should be sufficient illumination from a light source so the police officer will be readily recognizable to the traffic. Once a vehicle has stopped, it should be approached in the manner normally used when approaching a violator's vehicle.

While the first officer is checking the vehicle, a second officer should take a position allowing him to cover the entire area. If a third officer is available, he should take a position of natural cover out of the firing line of the other officers.

Light traffic may be stopped in both directions using this blocking system. Heavy traffic will require this blocking procedure on both sides of the road. The blocks should be close enough to one another to be within sight and to provide assistance as necessary.

MULTI-LANE ROADWAYS

The blockade of one side of the multi-lane roadway is basically the same as that for the two lane roadway. Additional warning signs will be necessary and if traffic speeds are high, placement must be further ahead. Flares and signs should be used to funnel traffic down to one or two lanes.

10. Only marked police vehicles will be used in roadblocks. Privately owned vehicles will not be used to set up a roadblock.

11. Moving roadblocks will not be used without supervisor approval.

12. Safety of the officers and all civilians will be the primary concern in utilizing the roadblock.

13. Supervisor's will fully inform officers manning the roadblock about the nature and seriousness of the crime, the description of the vehicle and the wanted person, a description of any weapons involved, and if possible any previous record of the suspect.

14. Officers manning a roadblock will be in full uniform including the traffic safety vest.

15. Roadblocks will be well lighted by means of emergency lights, spotlights, fuses, and other available lighting equipment. Special care must be taken to not blind drivers of vehicles as they approach the roadblock.

16. The emergency roadblock will be conducted in conjunction with the authority granted by statute and case law, and the enforcement of state and local laws will be exercised in good faith.

17. The Stinger Spike system can be used to effectively and safely control and stop pursuant vehicles during departmental vehicle pursuits.

18. Whenever a vehicle pursuit is initiated the use of the Stinger Spike System should be considered as a means to quickly and safely resolve the situation. Use of the device will not be considered as a roadblock or the application of deadly force.

19. The on-duty Supervisor will monitor the progress of the vehicle pursuit and will determine if the Stinger Spike System will be used based on road and traffic conditions at the time of the pursuit and information provided by the pursuing officer.

20. Measures should be taken to divert other traffic from the area where the Stinger Spike System is to be used to prevent unnecessary damage to other vehicles.

21. The exact location, to include the lane, of the deployed Stinger Spike System will be communicated to headquarters and pursuing officers. This will allow officers to back off from pursuit to give the deploying officer time to retract the Stinger Spike System before pursuing vehicles come in contact with it.

22. At no time will the Stinger Spike System be used on any vehicles with less than four tires.

23. A marked police vehicle may be used to control the flow of the pursuant vehicle into the path of the Stinger Spike System. The marked police vehicle must also be parked in such a manner to protect the officer during deployment. At no times may the marked police vehicle be used to block the entire roadway.

24. Once the pursuant vehicle strikes the Stinger Spike System the deploying officer must retract the unit as quickly as possible so as not to interfere with pursuing vehicles.

25. When time permits the Stinger Spike System can be pulled across the roadway by use of the attached rope. This method requires the officer to cross the lane of traffic. Caution should be used at all times. To deploy the system using the PULL METHOD the officer will remove the unit from the case picking it up by the rocker arms and not the sides. The officer places the unit on the ground on the opposite side of the roadway from the marked patrol vehicle. The officer then pulls the rope across the roadway and takes a safe position behind his vehicle. Once in a safe position and it is time to deploy the unit, the officer pulls the rope, therefore opening the unit across the highway. CAUTION: Do not hold the rope or wrap it around your hand or wrist. Be careful not to get the rope tangled around your feet or legs. After the unit has

been run over, remove it from the lane of traffic with one quick hard pull.

CURBSIDE DEPLOYMENT is completed when traffic is heavy or time is limited. This deployment requires the officer to give himself a position of extra visibility for a prompt deployment, and time to reach cover and retrieve the unit. The officer removes the stinger from the case picking it up by the rocker arms and not the sides. Release the spool and rope and let them fall to the ground. When the pursuant vehicle appears, bend over while holding the rocker arm at ankle level and with a swinging motion slide the unit across the roadway. Using the rope adjust the unit so it rests in the path of the pursuant vehicle. After the unit has been run over, remove it from the lane of traffic with one quick hard pull.

26. Whenever the system is deployed an Incident Report must be completed.

NON-EMERGENCY ROADBLOCKS

1. Roadblocks for parades, public ceremonies, the random checking of drivers, or other non-emergency situation requires prior approval from the Chief of Police or his designee.

2. Supervisors will submit a plan detailing the time, location, equipment, blocking technique, purpose, and manpower required for establishing the roadblock.

3. Non-emergency roadblocks will be implemented and supervised by a supervisor.

4. Procedures used for non-emergency roadblocks will follow those applicable guidelines for emergency roadblocks.

5. The non-emergency roadblock will be conducted in conjunction with the authority granted by statute and case law, and the enforcement of state and local laws will be exercised in good faith.