5-09/200.35 - Code 3 Vehicle Operation and Tactics

Using tactics during code 3 operations shall require a coordinated effort among all units involved. The use of these tactics does not excuse the individual deputy from operating with due regard for the safety of all persons on the highway.

Entering and Clearing Intersections

To minimize the risk to deputy personnel and the public during all code 3 operations including pursuits, deputy personnel shall slow and, if necessary, stop at all intersections when faced with a red traffic signal light or stop sign. Using a continuous siren, the deputy shall then proceed with extreme caution. The deputy shall drive slowly, paying particular attention not only to yielding vehicles in the intersection, but to approaching vehicles as well. Deputy personnel shall clear the intersection "lane-by-lane" and, if necessary, stop at each lane before proceeding. Moreover, this cautious driving approach should be extended when driving through intersections on a green signal, particularly when there are "blind spots" and where the deputy's field of vision is obstructed, in any way, of a potential traffic hazard.

Blocking Intersections

Blocking intersections is permitted only in those instances where it is clear that public safety would be enhanced. Blocking actions must be the direct result of a coordinated effort between the blocking radio cars and the units responding code 3. Only distinctively marked radio cars or motorcycles equipped with emergency lights and siren may be used to block an intersection during code 3 operations. Blocking of an intersection does not relieve others operating code 3 from exercising due regard for their safety and the safety of others as they traverse the intersection. Due to the inherent dangers of traversing an intersection against the signals of traffic control devices, the requirement to safely clear the intersection, “lane-by-lane” remains in effect.

Caravanning

Caravanning is defined as multiple radio cars responding as a group from one designated location to another. These radio cars operate in concert with one another, often employing vehicle movement and blocking tactics as a group. Designated field units actively engaged in a pursuit, which is effectively a following tactic, shall not be considered caravanning.

Spacing

All units operating code 3 or engaged in a pursuit, whether directly behind a suspect vehicle or another police vehicle, shall space themselves at a distance that will ensure proper braking and reaction time in the event the pursued or lead vehicle stops, slows or turns.