5-09/205.00 - Code 9 and Pre-Stop Coordination

The tactics employed prior to attempting a vehicle stop are separate and distinct from those in a pursuit operation. Certain field situations require “pre-stop coordination” prior to initiating a vehicle stop including, but not limited to, a single deputy who observes a vehicle suspected of a crime. In such situations, the deputy shall coordinate additional units to assist in a subsequent vehicle stop. The purpose is to increase deputy safety as well as discourage the suspect’s inclination/ability to flee. This is not only an accepted and trained tactic, it has repeatedly proven to be successful.

Pre-stop coordination is not a pursuit activity and should not be confused with “following only” as referenced in the policy. Pre-stop coordination begins prior to attempting a vehicle stop and ends with the activation of lights and siren.

The Sheriff’s Communications Center (SCC) has designated a code 9 for personnel to broadcast their desire to initiate pre-stop coordination (thus avoiding the use of the term “following”). To facilitate pre-stop coordination, personnel shall advise they are a code 9 on a vehicle and, once given the duplex patch, give the reason for the stop, exact location, current direction of travel, and vehicle description.

When a code 9 (pre-stop coordination) is initiated:

- SCC shall automatically initiate the duplex patch when a code 9 is advised, obtain the estimated response times of assisting units, coordinate the response of the two nearest units, and request an Aero Unit;
- Once SCC has obtained the response times of the two nearest units, the handling unit may opt to request assisting units respond code 3. Factors to be considered when requesting assisting units code 3 should include the following:
    - The safety of the responding deputies;
    - The possibility of an armed confrontation;
    - Response times of the two nearest units; and
    - Traffic congestion;
- So as to not alert the suspect, code 3 responses should be terminated prior to coming into the view of the requesting unit’s and suspect’s vehicles;
- The requesting unit should try to observe the suspect vehicle from a reasonable distance and consider not pulling directly behind the suspect vehicle until assisting units and Aero (if responding) are in place;
- When preparing to initiate a vehicle stop, and when practical, the initiating unit should be within reasonable proximity to the suspect’s vehicle prior to activating the red lights and siren. In closing the distance, every effort should be made to comply with basic speed laws and other rules of the road. When that is not possible, activation of red lights and siren is required; and
- Once units are in position and the decision is made to attempt to stop the vehicle, the primary unit should direct the assisting units into position and continue to direct their actions throughout the operation.