5-09/210.17 - Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT)

Pursuits are inherently dangerous and can place both law enforcement officers and the community at risk. The Pursuit Intervention Technique, also referred to as the PIT maneuver, is a tool available to law enforcement to bring a potentially dangerous vehicle pursuit to an end. It is defined as a forced rotational stop of a non-compliant suspect's vehicle. The PIT maneuver is not intended as a replacement for a high-risk traffic stop, but is an option which can be utilized in specific situations by trained and certified deputy personnel.

The decision to conduct a PIT shall be based on careful consideration of all facts, and only initiated when conditions permit. These factors may include volume of vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, school zones, weather, road conditions, the speed of the suspect vehicle, and officer safety factors. Even when an offensive driving tactic has been authorized, it is incumbent upon Department personnel planning to conduct a PIT maneuver to coordinate with the Aero Bureau unit via Sheriff's radio to determine, whenever possible, an area least likely to cause harm to the public, bystanders, and Department members if a vehicle spins out of control.

The decision to utilize a PIT shall only be authorized when the potential risk of intervention is outweighed by the imminent danger caused by the suspect and/or blatant disregard for the safety of bystanders and other users of the highway.

Personnel shall not PIT a motorcycle, or vehicles with less than four wheels, except when deadly force is justified.

Unless exigent circumstances exist, the PIT shall not be attempted for the following:

- The pursued vehicle is traveling in excess of 35 mph;
- For a vehicle where the suspect(s) is known to be armed with a firearm;
- Vehicles transporting known hazardous materials;
- Significantly heavier vehicles (i.e. buses, motorhomes, semi-trucks); and
- Vehicles with a high center of gravity;

NOTE: The PIT maneuver is an intentional act and shall not be considered a traffic collision, unless a third party is struck in the process.