

TRAFFIC STOPS- FELONY

(High Risk)

INTRODUCTION:

This competition training manual is designed to provide the Sheriff Explorer with the basic principles concerning felony (high risk) traffic stop procedures. This manual is not all inclusive, but does suggest some specific techniques that should be used for competition purposes, although other methods can be just as equally effective. Following the basic principles in this manual should allow the explorers to successfully handle this type of law enforcement competition scenario safely and professionally.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

- The explorer team should have duty belts with training firearms. (Hosting agency should provide if needed.)
- Handcuffs and handcuff keys for each explorer. (Hosting agency should provide if needed.)

TYPICAL SCENARIO:

While on daily patrol, the team will encounter a “high-risk” vehicle that is or has been involved in felony offense(s). Team must react to the scenario as it develops. Objectives may include: contact/cover, verbal skills (with suspects), communication (partners), observation skills, arrest techniques, proper approach/vehicle clearing, investigative skills, and overall officer safety. Please note: for competition purposes, typically the scenario starts with the law enforcement vehicles already positioned in the correct vehicle pattern. At no time should explorers be driving the law enforcement vehicles, unless told differently by the hosting agency/judge.

TIME:

A typical felony traffic stop is completed within an average of 15 minutes, depending on the scenario, and number of suspects. Maximum time limit is 20 minutes for competition purposes.

ORGANIZATION:

Team size is limited to a maximum of four (4) explorers. These scenarios typically start with each law enforcement “patrol” vehicle occupied by two persons. A primary explorer designated as (P1) will be sitting in the driver seat and secondary/cover explorer designated as (P2) will be sitting in the front passenger seat. A second “patrol” vehicle may be used as a cover/back-up unit. The occupants of the second law enforcement vehicle will consist of the back-up unit driver designated as (B3) and back-up unit front passenger designated as (B4).

TEAMWORK:

The explorer team will need to show they are working together and that everyone is contributing to the team. Team members should show they are giving suggestions or their recommendations on how to accomplish tasks to their team leader to make the final decision. Communication is essential in this scenario, but team members need to realize if they are all shouting commands at the suspects, they may act confused as to what order they should follow.

WEAPON SAFETY SKILLS:

When in the felony traffic stop position all team members should have their firearms pointed out toward the direction of the suspects in the “high-ready” position. At all times, the explorer must keep their trigger finger off the trigger but indexed along the side of the firearm, unless they can justify “deadly use of force” by saying “BANG.” Explorers should avoid all crossfire situations or “lasering” situations (the act of pointing your firearm muzzle at one of your teammates) as this can be points deducted.

BRIEFING:

The team will have a high risk scenario presented to them. If the scenario involves a stolen vehicle, the vehicle will need to be confirmed as stolen prior to activation of the lights and/or siren. If the vehicle matches a description of a vehicle used in a felony offense, a team member should verify the license plate matches prior to activation of the lights and/or siren.

ARRIVAL:

The team will start the scenario as if they have just come to a stop on the road/street/highway with the suspect(s) directly ahead of them. The team member should request a hold on radio traffic from dispatch. The team must react to the scenario as it develops.

Unit #1

Primary Explorer (P1): Uses the public address (PA) system if available and gives commands to the vehicle occupants. P1 will also assist with the vehicle clearing/search at the end of the occupant removal.

Secondary Explorer (P2): Becomes the arresting explorer and is the police radio operator. This explorer should also be the explorer that checks out with dispatch for the traffic stop.

Unit #2

Backup/Cover Driver (B3): Becomes an arresting explorer, and assists P2 in handcuffing suspect(s).

Backup/Cover Passenger (B4): Provides tactical cover while arresting explorers deal with handcuffing, searching, interviewing suspects. B4 will also assist with the vehicle clearing/search at the end of the occupant removal.

All team members are positioned to use the law enforcement vehicles as best cover as they can, even with the understanding that most vehicle doors/windows are not bulletproof. It is recommended to use all overhead, side spotlights even during the daytime to illuminate the scene.

P1 commands to give suspects:

- Announce yourself (example: THIS IS THE LEON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE)
- Announce actions to be taken (example: ALL OCCUPANTS IN THE VEHICLE-PLACE YOUR HANDS ON TOP OF YOUR HEAD -DO IT NOW!
- DRIVER ONLY, WITH YOUR RIGHT HAND ONLY TURN OFF THE VEHICLE AND DROP THE KEYS ON THE GROUND/PLACE ON THE ROOF -DO IT NOW!
- DRIVER ONLY, WITH YOUR LEFT HAND TAKE OFF YOUR SEAT BELT AND OPEN THE VEHICLE DOOR-DO IT NOW!
- DRIVER ONLY, GET OUT OF THE VEHICLE AND FACE AWAY FROM US-DO IT NOW!
- DRIVER ONLY, WITH YOUR LEFT HAND, LIFT UP YOUR SHIRT BY YOUR NECK COLLAR-DO IT NOW!

- DRIVER ONLY, TURN AROUND IN A COMPLETE CIRCLE UNTIL I TELL YOU TO STOP - DO IT NOW!
- DRIVER ONLY, TAKE THREE STEPS BACKWARD- DO IT NOW! [Repeat as necessary to position suspect at about the front tires or front bumper area of the law enforcement vehicles.] *(Explorers should not say “walk back to the sound of my voice” The suspect may not go in the direction you want them to. Instead, explorers should order the suspect to “take three steps” back or right etc. This will get the suspect to the location of your choosing.)*

P2 commands to give suspects:

At this point of time the P2 will take over the commands using only their voice. P2 will tell the suspect anything additional the suspect needs to do in order to have them in a safe position to be handcuffed by B3.

B3 commands to give suspects:

The B3 explorer should make the first arrest by following either prone or kneeling handcuff techniques depending on outside weather conditions and temperature of the roadway.

FRISK/SEARCH:

The B3 explorer should double lock the handcuffs and then perform a terry frisk (pat-down) for any weapons. B3 should then walk the arrestee to the rear of the law enforcement vehicles and do a thorough search and find anything that can be used as evidence. This can include, but not limited to: handcuff keys, pocket knives/illegal knives, tasers/stun guns, weapons (pistols, rifles, shotguns), illegal drugs/prescription drugs belonging to another, rope, duct tape, ski masks, gloves, batons/flashlights, or any other criminal tools, etc.

B3 should ask the arrestee questions like:

- How many people are in the vehicle?
- What are the names of the other occupants in the vehicle?
- Are there any dangerous weapons/explosives/chemicals in the vehicle?

B3 should then place the arrestee in the back of the law enforcement vehicle, seat-belted in place and the vehicle door closed and secure. Once B3 is back in their original position, P1 can start the process of removing the next suspect by giving similar commands and repeating the process.

(If possible, B3 should try to place suspect(s) in separate law enforcement vehicles, so they cannot speak to each other.)

Once all the visibly seen occupants have been removed from the vehicle, P1 should order one last final time, **“OCCUPANT OF THE VEHICLE, WE KNOW YOU’RE IN THERE, COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP!”** You never know when another occupant may be hiding inside the vehicle.

APPROACH:

P1, P2 and B4 should now approach the vehicle in a tactical style whereby they are not positioning themselves in any crossfire situations. As they approach, they are watching for any occupants that are lying down or holding anything in their hands such as weapons.

If the vehicle has a trunk, then the P1,P2 and B4 should clear the trunk tactically with one explorer either using the trunk latch release button while the others tactically clears the trunk or by using the vehicle keys to unlock the trunk while the other clears the trunk by positioning themselves to avoid any cross fire situations.

Once the scene is considered safe/secure, and the vehicle has no other occupants, then the team members should continue their investigation into the crime or allegations of felony criminal activity.

DEDUCTIONS:

Loss of points can be obtained by unjustified discharge of weapons, unnecessary roughness of the actor(s), or explorer killed by actor(s) or other suspect(s) or other explorers. Points will also be deducted for improper handcuff placement or not double locked.