



LAW ENFORCEMENT RISK ANALYSIS

Vehicular Law Enforcement Crash Mitigation Considerations

The 2021 National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum [Law Enforcement Officers Fatalities Report](#) recognized that 58 officers were killed in traffic incidents in 2021, a 38% increase from 2020. Of these 58 fatalities, 27 involved the officer being struck by a vehicle, which is an increase of 93% over the year 2020. It is clear that line of duty motor vehicle crashes remains a constant threat for law enforcement. The loss of life is tragic. There are many other outcomes from law enforcement involved crashes that warrant action, including officer injuries, lost time at work, the effect on officer mental health, agency reputation damage, and potential legal consequences for the officer, including the threat of indictment.

Law enforcement motor vehicle crashes that occur when an officer responds to an emergency need to be addressed and mitigated through policy, training, and supervision. However, general patrol driving, distracted driving, and officers being struck by vehicles are well-known risks that every agency should strive to reduce, as many of these incidents are preventable. An abundance of technology has been engineered into patrol vehicles, which have become essential operational tools in many agencies. However, these tools create risks, and agency training programs that narrowly focus on pursuit or emergency driving do not adequately prepare officers for the driving challenges they may face or the threat of being struck by another vehicle.

The purpose of this document is to provide a menu of options that can be explored and easily implemented to make police vehicle operations safer for law enforcement and communities. This document's scope and potential use can be of assistance to a broad range of law enforcement professionals. The law enforcement executive may utilize this document to establish an agency workgroup to identify best practices and build a sustained department campaign to improve driving operations. Personnel assigned to training functions may use the described programs as an integral part of an initial Field Training Program, an objective of the professional development strategy, or as a remedial driving training tool. The front-line supervisor may employ the many resources to assist in developing brief roll training sessions and as part of mentoring officers. Roll Call Safety Briefings and mentoring can be highly valuable in reinforcing the agency's commitment to driving safety. There are numerous notations in this

document that highlight areas where supervisors can easily access and utilize Roll Call Training and mentoring resources. If you have questions, please contact your Law Enforcement Risk Control Consultant.

A Policy and Administrative Considerations			
Samples/Links	Resources	Considerations	Notes
1 Sample Vehicle Usage Policy The MEL Resource Center – Vehicle Safety	The use of cell phones in vehicles, the impact of other distractions, types of vehicles, and how such vehicles are utilized has an impact on driver behavior.	Review current agency policies, the provided sample policy, consult with the municipal attorney and seek other resources regarding cell phone use, vehicle type considerations, operator training for certain types of vehicles, and more.	
2 Sample Policy Available Upon Request	Standardized response language and a clear and consistent understanding of response expectations reduce ambiguity of the proper response procedures.	Review current agency policies, the sample policy, consult with the municipal attorney and seek other resources regarding call response priorities. Implement an internal working group to learn of current possible misunderstandings of proper call responses and develop common solutions.	
3 N.J. Attorney General Early Warning System N.J. Attorney General Early Intervention System	All members of the agency will benefit if every motor vehicle crash is reviewed in an effort to determine causal factors. Agency leaders should seek to capture information that	Establish a well-structured “Accident Review Committee” and/or include crash instances into the Safety Meeting process. At-fault motor crashes are a required trigger under the	

	<p>Off Duty and Secondary Employment Sample Policy – Total Hours</p> <p>Law Enforcement Fatigue, Sleep, Rest, and Risk Considerations Resources Document</p> <p>IACP Injury Tracking Tool</p> <p>The Power of Collaboration – Risk Management for Local Officials</p>	<p>may be a causal factor of motor vehicle crashes such as sleep deprivation, working extended hours or extraneous off duty employment, the number of days off between shifts at the time of crashes, length of the shift at the time of the crash, use of agency installed equipment in the vehicle, and more.</p>	<p>Early Intervention System mandated by the N.J. Attorney General – ensure compliance. Establish a defined and consistent remedial driving training program and utilize competent and qualified trainers.</p> <p>Utilize a system to track workplace injuries, consider placing limitations on the number of permissible work hours, and when investigating crashes, ascertain if a distraction due to equipment or technology was involved.</p>	
4	<p>BWC and ICC Job Safety Observation Report</p> <p>BWC and ICC Job Safety Observation Report – Sample Policy</p> <p>Law Enforcement Job Safety Observation Report - Template</p>	<p>Most officers are equipped with a Body-Worn Camera and some vehicles are equipped with a Mobile In-Car Camera.</p> <p>Job Safety Observation Reports can serve as an integral component of a review of driving behavior. Body-Worn and In-Car camera reviews will be more beneficial to the officers and the agency when they go well</p>	<p>Evaluate what technology exists and how it is being utilized. Establish a Body-Worn and In-Car Camera Review Program where one of the goals is to improve driver performance and compliance with agency policy. Depending on the agency size, such a review may not be possible for every BWC/In-Car Camera review; however, if crash reduction, officer safety, and</p>	

		beyond determining if the officer activated his or her camera properly and also includes a review of the officer's driving behavior when appropriate.	compliance with agency driving policy are desired, then a review of these tools in some defined and consistent fashion is essential.	
5	Agency vehicles equipped with GPS – Some agency vehicles may be equipped with a GPS or AVL (Auto Vehicle Locator) technology that is capable of tracking driver speed or providing speed alerts to authorized persons.		Evaluate what technology exists and how it is being utilized. If the agency has GPS/ALV technology, is anyone responsible to monitor its use? If so, are the findings part of an overall strategy or process to improve driver compliance or refer those in need for remedial training? If such technology exists, and there is no defined process for its use in terms of addressing improper driving behavior, there is a tremendous risk to the agency.	
6	<u>Department of Homeland Security Launches New Initiative to Reduce Law Enforcement Driving Risks</u>	Advanced Decision Support for Public Safety Over the next two years, DHS will partner with a variety of stakeholders including law enforcement officers, academia, local, state, and	Consider participation in the project to better prepare officers for the driving challenges they may face.	

		federal partners, and the private sector, to apply a systems-engineering approach to help reduce law enforcement distracted driving incidents.		
7	<p style="text-align: center;">Create Culture</p> <p>Law enforcement should have a clear understanding of their duty to intervene when another officer is using excessive force due to recent mandated statewide training. This same sense of intervention should permeate the agency when it comes to traffic safety. Officers who observe others who drive recklessly or do not wear their seatbelts have the opportunity to intervene but absent the proper culture they may never do so.</p> <p>The best equipment, training, and vehicle response or driving safety policies can be undermined by an agency culture that is not consistently reinforced by everyone in the agency.</p>	<p>Establish and maintain a culture that supports driving safety. A path to a culture of safe driving must extend beyond training programs aimed at emergency and pursuit driving and focus on specific steps that foster such a climate.</p>		

8	Sample Language of Uniform Regulations for Traffic Safety Vests is Available upon Request	<p>The wearing of an approved reflective traffic safety vest can be most valuable in saving the life of an officer, preventing serious injury, while enabling the officer to properly perform their duties. Officers must clearly understand when they are required to wear this protective equipment and front-line supervisors should be mandated to ensure its appropriate use.</p>	<p>Ensure the agency requirements for wearing a traffic safety vest, including the specified and authorized type, are codified in agency policy.</p>	
---	---	--	--	--

B Training Considerations (Agency-Wide and Re-Medial)				
	Samples/Links	Resources	Considerations	Notes
1	Defensive Driving			
	Defensive Driving – N.J. State Four Hour Course	<p>Available on the MSI Learning Platform and provided by the National Safety Council. Upon completion, participants may be eligible for a personal insurance premium discount if accepted by their insurance carrier. Students have two weeks to complete the course upon the initial time of enrollment.</p>	<p>Establish the completion of the Defensive Driving program as an initial component of the agency field training program.</p> <p>Utilize as a remedial training program.</p> <p>Establish a training program where the goal is to have all</p>	

		employees complete this training.	
2	Safety Emergency Responder Vehicle Education		
S:SERVE	<p>These two courses are available through the MEL Safety Institute Webpage- Provided by S:SERVE:</p> <p><u>Online EVOG Simulation-Based Training:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (5) 30 Minute Lessons: • Intersection Approach • Intersection Assessment • • Clearing the Intersection – Basic • Clearing the Intersection – Advanced • Intersection Departure <p><u>Distracted Driving Online Simulation-Based Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 Minute Lesson: • Distractions Inside and Outside of the Vehicle 	<p>Evaluate the feasibility of incorporating these courses into the agency training program.</p> <p>Prioritize the completion of the course with individuals who work with or train others such as FTO's and frontline supervisors.</p> <p>Utilize as a remedial training program as appropriate.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for Limiting and Avoiding Distractions 		
3	Below 100		
Below 100	<p>This training is designed to help eliminate preventable line-of-duty police deaths and serious injuries through compelling common-sense training designed to focus on areas under an officer's control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear your safety belt. Wear your vest (Ballistic and Reflective) Watch your speed What's important now Complacency kills 	<p>Evaluate which officers in the agency have had this training, as some may have completed it during initial police academy training and others may have not. Consider implementing a process to have all officers trained as part of an overall safety program.</p> <p>Utilizes as a remedial training program as appropriate.</p>	
4	Mel Safety Institute Driving Safety Awareness		
MSI Driving Safety Awareness	<p>This course is approximately one hour in length. It is not specifically for law enforcement. It's a basic course that covers general distracted driving, driving conditions, speeding, and more.</p>	<p>The four-hour Defensive Driving course is significantly more in-depth; however, this course may be helpful for anyone who drives a vehicle and may be especially helpful for civilian employees who drive to and from the</p>	

		workplace, and completion of the four-hour Defensive Driving Course is not feasible.	
5	“Report Struck By”		
ReportStruckBy.com	Learn from others and share mishaps for lessons learned. This new nationwide database collects detailed information about incidents on the roadway where emergency responders or their equipment were struck by a vehicle while operating at a scene.	Upon the approval of the Chief or Officer-In-Charge, enroll the agency in the <i>ReportStruckBy</i> database. This presents an opportunity to share near tragedies with others. ROLL CALL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: Access the database and utilize near tragedies as brief but informative roll call training sessions. Stress the importance of safe driving every day.	
6	National Traffic Incident Management Training Certificate – Responder Learning Safety Network		
National TIM Training Certificate	The Federal Highway Administration and the Responder Safety Learning Network offer a National TIM (Traffic Incident Management) Training Certificate for registered users who complete ten specific online	Evaluate the program and its contents to determine if it is appropriate for the agency.	

	self-paced programs: Advance Warning, Blocking Procedures, High Visibility Innovations, Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Move It or Work It, See and Bee: Emergency Lighting Awareness, Special Circumstances: Safe Operations for Vehicle Fires, Special Hazards, and Termination.		
7	National Law Enforcement Roadway Safety Program		
	<p>Ongoing training events via webinars and in-person events. Toolkits and other resources.</p> <p><u>National Police Foundation – Law Enforcement Roadway Safety Program</u></p>	<p>Review the many existing available training programs.</p> <p>ROLL CALL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: Utilize the toolkit and safety posters for brief Roll Call Training Sessions and ongoing safety messaging. Stress the importance of safe driving every day.</p>	
8	LEO Near Miss		

<p>LEO Near Miss</p>	<p>A collection of near-miss tragedies involving police officers including traffic collisions and pedestrian crashes.</p>	<p>Upon the approval of the Chief or Officer-In-Charge, enroll the agency in the <i>LEO Near Miss</i> database. This presents an opportunity to share near tragedies with others.</p> <p>ROLL CALL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: Access the database and utilize near tragedies as a brief but informative roll call training session. Stress the importance of safe driving every day.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Valor – Officer Safety and Wellness Program – Vehicle Safety</p>		
<p>Valor – Vehicle Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distracted Driving • Seatbelt and Vest Wear • Roadside Safety 	<p>Explore and utilize the many resources.</p> <p>ROLL CALL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: Numerous very short in duration driving safety videos suitable for brief roll call training are easily accessible. Fact sheets and other resources are also available and ready for download. Stress the importance of safe driving every day.</p>	

10	Law Enforcement Bulletin – Preventing Crashes Considerations		
Law Enforcement Message – Toolkit – Graphics – how to Prevent Crashes	<p>The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) collaborated on a study of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department’s <i>Safe Driving Program</i>, which found the program significantly reduced collisions and injuries.</p>	<p>Evaluate for possible full implementation and/or utilize the many resources including the available toolkit.</p> <p>ROLL CALL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: A toolkit is available with many resources that can assist in delivering brief roll call training sessions. Numerous very short in duration driving safety videos suitable for brief roll call training are easily accessible. Fact sheets and other resources are also available and ready for download. Stress the importance of safe driving every day.</p>	
11	Work Zone Considerations		
Rutgers CAIT Work Zone Safety Training Program MSI Course: Law Enforcement Work Zone Refresher Training	<p>Rutgers/CAIT Work Zone Training</p> <p>MSI Course – Law Enforcement Work Zone Refresher</p>	<p>Determine if officers currently have completed work zone safety training.</p> <p>Incorporate this training into the campaign.</p>	

LE Bulletin: Traffic Control by Law Enforcement Officers in Work Zones	Law Enforcement Bulletin: Traffic Control by Law Enforcement Officers in Work Zones		
12	Other Resources		
Bulletin: New Jersey Safe Passing Bill	This bulletin addresses recent legislation concerning proper driving near pedal cyclists.	Determine if employees are aware of this training and train as necessary. ROLL CALL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: Review the new legislation at agency training events and Roll Calls.	

Sources:

Birozy, A. (2018, October 24). Dying by Driving - Understanding Law Enforcement Related Traffic Fatalities.

Breul, N., & Luongo, D. (2017). *Making It Safer: A Study of Law Enforcement Fatalities Between 2000-2016*. Washington D.C.: COPS, U.S. Department of Justice, NLEOM.

Cowan, J. A., Jones, B., & Ho, H. (2006). *Safety Belt Use by Law Enforcement Officers on Reality Television: A Missed Opportunity for Injury Prevention*. Bethesda MD: National Laboratory of Medicine.

Dourvetakis, J. K. (2011, February 11). Officer Involved Traffic Crashes.

Hill, J., Whitcomb, S., Patterson, P., Stephens, D. W., & Hill, B. (2014). *Making Officer Safety and Wellness Priority One*. Washington D.C.: COPS, Major City Chiefs.

Montgomery, B. (2019). Improving Officer Safety on the Roadways. *National Institute of Justice*.

National Law Enforcement Memorial Museum. (2020). *2020 Law Enforcement Officer Fatalities Report*. Washington D.C.: NLEOM.

National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum. (2020). *2021 Mid-Year Preliminary Law Enforcement Officers Fatality Report*. Washinton D.C.: NLEOM.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2021, June 3). *2020 Fatality Data Shows an Increase in Traffic Fatalities During Pandemic*. Retrieved from NHTSA: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/2020-fatality-data-show-increased-traffic-fatalities-during-pandemic>

Tiesman, H., & Knuth, R. (2021). *Law Enforcement Agencies - How to Prevent Motor Vehicle Collisions*. Morgantown: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.