

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

Vehicle Stops- Update

Expanded Course Outline

I. Welcome/Introduction

A. Introduction

1. Introduce the instructor

- a. Provide information on the instructor's resume
- b. Provide expectations for the class

2. Self-introduction of students

- a. Provide information on the students
- b. Provide information on the experience level of students in the class

B. Course Objectives

1. To provide training on vehicle stops to officers who have been assigned to correctional functions after academy graduation

2. To provide remedial training to officers who need an updated course on vehicle stops to safely and effectively perform their duties on patrol

3. To provide students with updated information from that provided in the Basic Academy, on vehicle stops to include additional officer safety considerations

4. To provide students with the opportunity to practice vehicle stops in a secure and controlled environment

5. To provide students with the skills needed to choose a safe location to conduct a traffic stop and provide the information over the radio to dispatch

6. To provide students with additional skills needed to safely conduct a high risk traffic stop

II. Unknown Risk Stop

A. What is an unknown risk stop

1. The driver and occupants of the vehicle are not known to the officer
2. Any officer safety threats are not obvious or known to the officer, but may exist

B. Types of unknown risk stops

1. Enforcement stop

- a. The officer observed a vehicle code violation, or other probable cause
- b. The stop was conducted with the intention of enforcing a traffic violation

2. Investigative contact

- a. The officer observed a vehicle code violation, or other probable cause
- b. The officer is interested in the subjects in the vehicle for potential crimes

aside from the traffic violation

C. Conducting the stop

1. Advise Dispatch on the radio

- a. Location of stop- give the street and nearest cross street the stop is at
 - i. Project ahead of actual location while advising dispatch on the radio
 - ii. Update dispatch if the vehicle moved from the advised location
- b. The primary street is called out first, the nearest cross street is given next

2. Vehicle description and /or license plate information should be provided to dispatch

a. C.Y.M.B.L.

- i. Color
- ii. Year
- iii. Make
- iv. Body style
- v. License plate

b. Provide license plate with phonetic alphabet

c. Specify if license plate is from a different state

D. Use of emergency equipment

1. Overhead lights

- a. Red and blue to alert offender vehicle driver that the stop is being made
- b. Solid forward facing red light is required by law for a stop
- c. The instructor will refresh the student's memory of the location of the overhead light controls location and how to use them

2. Spotlights

- a. Officer's driver side light is for offender's driver side of vehicle
- b. Officer's passenger side light is for the offender's passenger side of vehicle
- c. Increases the officer's ability to see inside the offender vehicle at night
- d. The instructor will refresh the student's memory on the location of the spot light controls location and how to use them

3. Take down lights

- a. Located in the center of the light bar, facing the front of the officer's vehicle
- b. The take down lights are activated from inside the officer's vehicle

3. Horn/siren/air horn

- a. Audible to get the offender driver's attention
- b. The siren is required if the offender does not yield to the officer
- c. The vehicle horn will change the siren while in code 3 mode

E. Officer safety concerns prior to initiating the stop

1. Location of the stop

- a. The officer chooses the location of the stop based on officer safety concerns
- b. Traffic hazards that could be a danger to the officer or the public
 - i. Traffic- other vehicles and pedestrians
 - ii. Curves/hills- other roadway issues
- c. Geographical area of concern for officer safety
 - i. Gang territory
 - ii. Bars
 - iii. Large multi-housing complexes
- d. Escape routes for the officer
 - i. Can the officer get away if he/she is placed in danger
 - ii. Can back-up officers get in to the area to assist the primary officer
- e. Lighting
 - i. Ambient lighting from residences and businesses
 - ii. Back light or silhouette of officer from other sources

2. Direction of travel of the offender vehicle

3. Occupants in the offender vehicle

- a. Number of passengers
- b. Passenger locations
- c. Occupant movements

III. Positioning of Officer's Vehicle

A. Distance between vehicles

1. One car length in between both vehicles
2. the officer should be able to see the violator's tires over the hood of the officer's vehicle, while the officer is sitting in the patrol vehicle

B. Off-set parking

1. Provides an approach path for the officer to the offender vehicle
2. Center of hood should be aligned with violator's left side

C. Danger zone- area between both vehicles

1. When standing in this area, the officer is vulnerable to traffic collisions
 - a. The officer or offender's vehicle could be hit by another vehicle
 - b. The officer could be seriously injured if in the danger zone during a collision
2. When standing in this area, the officer is vulnerable to potential attacks from the violator since the violator can see the officer from the offender vehicle
 - a. There is no cover or concealment for the officer
 - b. This area has a clear view of the officer to the offender

IV. Officer Approach

A. The officer must be out of the patrol vehicle quickly

1. Increased ability for the officer to react to potential threats
2. Officer is less of a target to the offender when out of the vehicle

B. Driver side approach

1. Move quickly but cautiously to the left side of violator vehicle
2. Check to see if the trunk is open/unlatched
3. Look in the rear window to inspect the back seat
4. Make contact without passing any occupants

5. Maintain a position of advantage

- a. Keep occupant's hands in view
- b. Control occupant movement
- c. Be alert for distractions

C. Passenger side approach

1. The officer should move quickly but cautiously around the rear of their vehicle
2. Officer has many advancing options
 - a. Move up along the right side as you would the left side
 - b. Flank out to the right of the violator's vehicle and move in toward the vehicle until occupants are visible to the officer
3. Make contact from the passenger side window
4. Maintain control same as driver side approach
5. Officer safety benefits to the passenger side approach
 - a. Safety from traffic passing next to the offender vehicle
 - b. More visibility of the occupants for the officer
 - c. Officer can more safely move to cover or concealment if needed

D. Occupant contact

1. Stand by the A or B pillar of the vehicle, depending on location of occupants
2. Complete the "8-step" traffic stop script
 - a. Officer identifies self and agency
 - b. Officer identifies the reason for the stop
 - c. Officer asks offender if there was legal justification for the violation
 - d. Officer requests and obtains identification
 - e. Officer requests and obtains registration for the vehicle
 - f. Officer requests and obtains the insurance for the vehicle
 - g. The officer makes the decision whether to issue a citation or not
 - h. The officer concludes the stop with the decision and returns the documents

V. Citation Position for the Officer

- A. Right door position of officer's vehicle

1. Seated in a position which allows the passenger door to be used as concealment
2. The officer will be able to watch the offender without being easily seen

B. Rear of unit position

1. Right rear of unit, using the trunk as a table
2. Can have a clear view of the offender between the roof and light bar
3. The officer will be able to see oncoming traffic from all directions

VI. Termination of Stop

A. Ending contact with the violator

1. Make a cautious approach to offender vehicle
2. Explain the citation to the offender
3. Compare signatures of offender to identification
4. Return documents to the offender
 - a. Driver's license
 - b. Registration
 - c. Insurance
5. Return to officer's vehicle while remaining alert to safety concerns

B. Returning to traffic

1. Allow violator to leave the scene first (liability)
2. Ensure safe transition of the offender into traffic
3. Advise dispatch of status and clear stop

VII. Vehicle Variations

A. Special vehicle concerns

1. Vans

- a. Multiple doors to monitor
- b. Limited vision inside of the vehicle

2. Motorhomes, Semi-Trucks, and Buses

- a. Movement of occupants are difficult to detect
- b. Height of the vehicle- the windows are usually higher than the officer can see and causes a lack of visibility to the officer of the interior of the vehicle.

3. Motorcycles

- a. Offender possible has a helmet
- b. Potential for secret or storage compartments which are accessible to the offender

B. Two-man unit

1. One officer maintains cover for the other officer
 - a. Partner stays with patrol vehicle until called up
 - b. Each officer flanks to one side of the vehicle
 - c. Officers move to rear/side of violator vehicle prior to contact
2. Officers should communicate with each other during the contact
 - a. Do not do anything until both officers are ready
 - b. Know your responsibility on the stop
 - c. One officer is in control of the stop

ACTIVITY #1- Have students go to a pre-set, stationary, traffic stop scene. Students will go through the unknown risk traffic stop scenario with a role player as the driver. Students will practice passenger side approaches, driver side approaches, and two-man approaches. All students will be required to wear their assigned duty belt.

All weapons: guns, knives, batons, OC, Tasers, etc SHALL be removed from the belt and secured away from the classroom and the scenario. All students SHALL be inspected by one of the two instructors prior to participating in the activity for any concealed weapons: guns, knives, etc. The inspection SHALL be conducted in a "clean room," such as the classroom, and all students SHALL respond directly to the scenario location to prevent additional weapons from being introduced into the scenario. All students will be provided with a training gun. The training gun SHALL be solid molded plastic or rubber material in a solid color such as blue or red. These training guns are replicas of regular weapons to use in place of actual weapons. The second instructor will be used to assist to ensure a proper ratio of student to instructor to ensure no weapons are introduced into the learning activity.

VIII. High Risk Stops

- A. What is a high risk vehicle stop
 1. The vehicle is associated with the commission of a violent crime
 2. The vehicle was reported stolen
- B. Number of suspects in the offender vehicle
 1. Visible to the officer at the time of the stop
 2. Known at the time the crime was committed

C. Officer safety concerns involving the location of the stop

1. Location of the stop

- a. The officer chooses the location of the stop based on officer safety concerns
- b. Traffic hazards that could be a danger to the officer or the public
 - i. Traffic- other vehicles and pedestrians
 - ii. Curves/hills- other roadway issues
- c. Geographical area of concern for officer safety
 - i. Gang territory
 - ii. Bars
 - iii. Large multi-housing complexes
- d. Escape routes for the officer
 - i. Can the officer get away if he/she is placed in danger
 - ii. Can back-up officers get in to the area to assist the primary officer
- e. Lighting
 - i. Ambient lighting from residences and businesses
 - ii. Back light or silhouette from other sources

2. Back-up officers

- 1. Attempt to plan the location of the stop so responding officers will be there
- 2. Ensure there are sufficient backing officers prior to initiating the stop

IX. Conducting the Stop

A. Dispatch needs to be advised on the radio

- 1. Vehicle description and /or license plate information should be provided to dispatch
 - a. C.Y.M.B.L.
 - i. Color
 - ii. Year
 - iii. Make
 - iv. Body style
 - v. License plate
 - b. Provide license plate with phonetic alphabet

c. Specify if license plate is from a different state

2. Location of stop

- a. Project the location ahead of the current location
- b. Update dispatch if the location of the stop moved

B. Use of emergency equipment

1. Overhead lights

- a. Red and blue to alert offender vehicle driver that the stop is being made
- b. Solid forward facing red light is required by law for a stop
- c. The instructor will refresh the student's memory of the location of the overhead light controls location and how to use them

2. Spotlights

- a. Officer's driver side light is for offender's driver side of vehicle
- b. Officer's passenger side light is for the offender's passenger side of vehicle
- c. Increases the officer's ability to see inside the offender vehicle at night
- d. The spotlights are activated from inside the officer's vehicle
- e. Point the lights to prevent the offender from being able to see the officer

3. Horn/siren

- a. Audible to get the offender driver's attention
- b. The siren is required if the offender does not yield to the officer
- c. The air horn and siren controls are inside the officer's vehicle

X. Positioning of Vehicle

A. Distance between vehicles

- 1. The primary officer's vehicle should be 2-4 car lengths behind the offender vehicle
- 2. The back-up officer's vehicle should be approximately 10 feet to the right of the primary officer's vehicle

B. Off-set vehicle placement

- 1. Place primary officer's vehicle slightly to the left of the suspect vehicle
- 2. The primary officer's vehicle wheels are turned out, away from the suspect vehicle
- 3. Provides a wider spread of light from the involved patrol vehicles spotlights

C. Back-up units' position

1. Should be directed by the primary unit, usually to the passenger side off the vehicle
2. Back-up officer's vehicle provides cover for other responding officers
 - a. Creates a space between the primary and back-up officer's vehicles
 - b. When both vehicles doors are open, provides cover to the officers in between the two patrol vehicles

XI. Placement of Officers

A. Officer safety concerns

1. Officers should avoid bunching up together in the same small area
2. Allows officers to communicate with each other outside of suspect's range of hearing

B. Maintain a clear field of fire to the offender vehicle

1. Avoid a cross fire situation between officers
2. Do not allow avoidable obstructions between the officers and the offenders
3. Officers need to be aware of the potential threat, back-drop, and beyond
 - a. Avoid shooting into a residential area or school
 - b. Avoid shooting toward traffic or occupied areas
 - c. Avoid shooting into an area that the officer cannot see

D. Officer maneuverability concerns

1. Maintain cover nearby for safety
 - a. Officers should be aware of locations for cover or concealment
 - b. Officers need to be aware of things that would cause a need for cover
2. Use lighting to assist officer concealment
 - a. Do not silhouette other officers
 - b. Use lighting to prevent the suspect from seeing the officers

E. Perimeter control- for additional officers not involved in the actual vehicle stop

1. Officers need to keep hostile crowds away from the officers conducting the stop
2. Officers need to keep traffic away from the officers conducting the stop
3. Officers need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene
4. Officers need to ensure no suspects leave the perimeter from the stop

F. Officers posted on the outer doors of the patrol vehicles are responsible for monitoring actions on the outside of the suspect vehicle

G. Officers on inner doors of the patrol vehicles are responsible for suspect's actions inside the suspect vehicle

XII. Removal of Suspects

A. All suspects should exit through the driver's door

1. One suspect at a time
2. Control the movement through verbal commands

B. Control of suspects

1. Duty weapons should be out of the officer's holsters

- a. Occupant is possibly armed or dangerous
- b. Officers recognize the increased risk to officer and public safety when guns are out of the holster

2. Use public address (PA) system

- a. Radio/PA system should be pre-set at the required station
- b. Officer's commands should be short and to the point
- c. Only one officer will give commands on the PA
- d. The officer will order the driver to shut off the vehicle
- e. The officer will order the driver to bring the keys back with him

3. Position of suspects as they exit the vehicle

- a. The officer should order the suspect to put hands up and in full view
- b. Positions that are difficult for the suspect to hold will create problems with compliance, and should be avoided
- c. The primary officer will maintain control until back-up officers respond, if the stop should occur before additional officers are present

C. Driver should be ordered to open the door from the outside

1. Keep offender's hands in view
2. Suspect exits the vehicle and closes door with foot
3. Visual check of suspect for weapons
 - a. Rotate 360 degrees

- b. Lift outer clothing to allow a visual inspection of the suspect
- 4. Have suspect walk back towards the patrol vehicles, with back to the officers
 - a. Use commands to the suspect and other officers to acknowledge if a weapon was seen
 - b. Disarm the suspect in the area to the front of the patrol vehicles, prior to bringing the suspect back behind the other officers
- 5. Handcuff the suspect
- 6. Search the suspect
 - a. cursory search in front of patrol vehicles
 - b. More thorough search at rear of patrol vehicles
- 7. Interview the suspect at the rear of the marked patrol vehicle
- 8. Secure the suspect in a patrol vehicle

XIII. Clearing the Suspect Vehicle

- A. The officer should challenge any unseen suspects to show themselves
 - 1. Use P.A.
 - 2. Advise of the officer's "knowledge" of their existence
- B. Use available resources to assist in clearing the vehicle
 - 1. Canine
 - a. The dog can find a hidden suspect faster than an officer
 - b. The dog can fit through a window to enter the vehicle when an officer cannot
 - 2. Aviation
 - a. An aviation unit can use infra-red (FLIR) cameras to detect a hidden suspect
 - b. If a suspect escaped from the vehicle, the aviation unit can see them leaving
 - C. Officers can maintain observation on the vehicle while the aviation unit maintains visual on the running suspect
- C. Multiple officer approach of suspect vehicle
 - 1. Lead officer flanks out for cover
 - 2. All officers stay in line and flank the vehicle together
 - 3. Officers should approach the vehicle slow and quiet
 - 4. Officers should visually inspect interior of the car prior to trying the trunk

- a. Avoid crossfire between officers by staying on the same side of vehicle
- b. Unlock the trunk and hold in place from a corner
- c. Release the trunk when officers are ready
- d. Officers will bring hidden suspects back to safety area near marked patrol

vehicles

ACTIVITY #2- Have students go to a pre-set, high risk, traffic stop scene. Students will go through the high risk traffic stop scenario with a role player as the driver. Students will practice controlling the occupants, maintaining a good field of observation, and participating as part of the approach team. All students will be required to wear their assigned duty belt.

All weapons: guns, knives, batons, OC, Tasers, etc SHALL be removed from the belt and secured away from the classroom and the scenario. All students SHALL be inspected by either instructor prior to participating in the activity for any concealed weapons: guns, knives, etc. The inspection SHALL be conducted in a "clean room," such as the classroom, and all students SHALL respond directly to the scenario location to prevent additional weapons from being introduced into the scenario. All students will be provided with a training gun. The training gun shall be solid molded plastic or rubber material in a solid color such as blue or red. These training guns are replicas of regular weapons to use in place of actual weapons. A second instructor will be used to assist to ensure a proper ratio of student to instructor to ensure no weapons are introduced into the learning activity.

XIV. Course Review and Evaluation

A. Discuss the results of the activities

1. Debrief the learning activities with the students

- a. Student has incorporated techniques to safely perform vehicle stops
- b. Demonstrated knowledge of high risk and unknown risk vehicle stops

2. Student Ability- the student showed proficiency by successfully performing the activities

- a. Student completed high risk and unknown risk vehicle stops
- b. Student showed improved officer safety practices during vehicle stops

B. Evaluation

- 1. Students will complete an evaluation on the class and instructor
- 2. Students will be provided with feed-back reference the practiced vehicle stops

C. Conclusion

- 1. Students will be given their certificates
- 2. Students will be given a handout with the "8-step" script