

CHAPTER TWO

DRIVER TRAINING CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

Chapter 2

Driver Training Curriculum Guidelines

The purpose of this chapter is to provide law enforcement agencies and standards-setting organizations with suggestions for designing a law enforcement driver training curriculum that meets their respective state or local needs.

The chapter is divided into four modules. Each module focuses on specific knowledge and skills which are important to the development of sound driving habits. Each module contains:

1. a series of objectives and accompanying content
2. suggested instructional methodology and learning objectives
3. suggested resources that supplement or support the content
4. suggested evaluation methodology

Module 1 "Legal Aspects of Law Enforcement Driving" presents general legal principles common to the three types of law enforcement driver training covered: non-emergency, emergency response, and pursuit. The student must be made aware that violation of statutory and case law as well as agency policy governing the various types of driving can result in personal, criminal, and civil liability.

Module 2 "Non-emergency Driving" introduces students to driving skills, methods, and vehicle information which allows them to develop safe driving behaviors and safe driving habits.

Module 3 "Emergency Driving" introduces the students to the unique aspects of emergency vehicle operation. This section is an extension of the non-emergency driving module; however, the students will become aware of how much more demanding driving is for an officer in an emergency situation. The critical behaviors and safe driving habits needed by officers in emergency situations are presented.

Module 4 "Pursuit Driving" covers the operation of a law enforcement vehicle in a pursuit situation. The students will become aware of the high stress and risks encountered by an officer during a pursuit.

The objectives stated in this chapter reflect the knowledge, skills, and attitudes critical to safe and effective law enforcement vehicle operation. The suggested instructional methodology section focuses on lecture with learning activities involving practical experience in simulated and demonstration modes with numerous opportunities for class discussion. Resources and aids provide the appropriate curriculum supplements. The suggested evaluation methodology is included to encourage the measurement of student progress and achievement.

To provide further assistance, four appendices are found at the back of this Guide. Appendix A is a "Glossary of Terms." The intent of the Glossary is to set forth common definitions for law enforcement terms and concepts. Appendix B is entitled "Instructional Methodologies and Learning Activities." This appendix details a variety of teaching methods and provides direction and assistance for their use. Appendix C is called "Resources" and lists a series of curriculum aids that the instructor can use to supplement the instruction. Appendix D is labeled "Case Summaries" and includes a review of federal and state litigation of relevance to emergency vehicle operation and law enforcement.

The instructional methodologies suggested in this chapter and covered in greater detail in Appendix B advocate the use of teaching methods that encourage experiential learning. There is a focus on skill learning, in the context of conceptual learning and understanding through experience. This reflects the need for teaching and learning to have greater relevance to the real world. The suggested methodologies and learning activities present an opportunity to achieve relevance without losing sight of conceptual understanding.

Use of These Materials

A law enforcement agency or standards-setting organization using this chapter should have little difficulty in selecting the portions which best meet its individual state and local needs. It is believed that the knowledge, attitude, and skill topics covered through the objectives are comprehensive and can meet the training needs of any state or agency. Of course, the topics covered in this chapter are not exhaustive, nor is the treatment given those topics always as in-depth as might be desirable. There are certainly other important and useful areas of knowledge, attitude and skill to be considered. The objectives presented reflect the areas that should minimally be covered in law enforcement emergency vehicle operation.

Therefore, users with some background and sophistication in student instruction will likely want to supplement the content and instructional methodology. In fact, measurable performance objectives must be developed which detail specifically the level of learning and proficiency to be achieved by the students. Also, there is a need to provide additional content reflective of state statutes and local or organizational policy.

Conclusion

This chapter is a resource designed to assist law enforcement trainers and standard setters to develop or refine driver training standards and programs. The chapter's development was based on the premise that there is generic curriculum content that applies to the four subject areas addressed. It is further assumed that a set of general processes for instructional methodology and evaluation can be elaborated upon for use by qualified instructional developers. State standards and local policy will surely modify the content and processes detailed here. Nonetheless, use of the general principles outlined in this chapter will help individual states ensure a quality system for curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation of law enforcement driver training.

Finally, every effort has been made to give full credit to all ideas and materials in the chapter. If we have failed in places, it is most likely due to the fact that the original source for many of the useful concepts and materials has been lost in the shuffle of widespread application by practitioners. However, we remain indebted to so many who have provided information and effort in preparing the 40 lesson plans that are included within the four Modules contained in this Guide.

Law Enforcement Driver Training Curriculum Guidelines

This curriculum document includes components which address minimum training guidelines for:

1. Legal aspects of law enforcement driving,
2. Non-emergency driving,
3. Emergency response driving, and
4. Pursuit driving.

Module 1: Legal Aspects of Law Enforcement Driving

Goal: Make law enforcement officers aware of the legal limitations involved in law enforcement driving, with special attention to tort liability for improper actions.

Curriculum Objectives:

- 1.1 Identify statutory law, case law, agency policy, and principles of liability governing non-emergency driving.
- 1.2 Identify statutory law, case law, agency policy, and principles of liability governing emergency driving.

- 1.3 Identify constitutional law, statutory law, and case law governing the use of a vehicle as deadly force in terminating pursuits.
- 1.4 Identify constitutional law and federal case law governing civil liability for deprivations of constitutional rights other than through the use of force.

Module 2: Non-Emergency Response Driving

Goal: Develop accepted attitudes for safe driving methods and decision-making for collision avoidance while learning to simultaneously integrate the tasks of driving and law enforcement.

Curriculum Objectives:

- 2.1 Identify the reasons for law enforcement driver training.
- 2.2 Identify unique characteristics of law enforcement driving.
- 2.3 Identify the effects that attitudes and emotions have upon law enforcement driving.
- 2.4 Identify common psychological factors that contribute to law enforcement collisions.
- 2.5 Identify common physiological factors that contribute to law enforcement collisions.
- 2.6 Identify the components of driving that lay the foundation for the development of good driving habits.
- 2.7 Identify vehicle defects that contribute to law enforcement collisions.
- 2.8 Identify elements of an acceptable law enforcement vehicle inspection.
- 2.9 Identify the importance of safety belts and other occupant protection devices.
- 2.10 Demonstrate acceptable use of safety belts and other occupant protection devices.
- 2.11 Identify common environmental factors that contribute to law enforcement collisions.
- 2.12 Identify factors that affect handling, steering, and braking to include ABS systems.
- 2.13 Identify factors that influence the stopping distance of a vehicle.

2.14 Identify driving movements that frequently contribute to law enforcement collisions.

- 2.15 Identify acceptable vehicle control methods.
- 2.16 Identify methods for skid avoidance.
- 2.17 Identify acceptable methods for the use of the communications radio.
- 2.18 Identify factors involved in skid control.
- 2.19 Demonstrate acceptable skid control methods.

Module 3: Emergency Response Driving

Goal: Develop the ability to accomplish the emergency driving task by understanding the risk of the driving activity and by being able to physically negotiate driving situations.

Curriculum Objectives:

- 3.1 Identify the types and limitations of emergency warning devices on law enforcement vehicles.
- 3.2 Identify factors that contribute to the effective use of a police radio during an emergency response.
- 3.3 Identify factors in route selection for an emergency response.
- 3.4 Identify the changes in vehicle dynamics that occur during an emergency response.
- 3.5 Identify acceptable steering methods for use during an emergency response.
- 3.6 Identify acceptable methods of cornering during an emergency response.
- 3.7 Identify acceptable backing methods during an emergency response.
- 3.8 Identify acceptable collision avoidance methods during an emergency response.
- 3.9 Identify types of Power Assist Steering Loss and Acceptable Methods of Minimizing Potential Loss of Vehicle Control

Module 4: Pursuit Driving

Goal: Develop the ability to apply the decision-making process required to bring a pursuit to a successful conclusion.

Curriculum Objectives:

- 4.1 Identify factors that impact on initiating a vehicle pursuit
- 4.2 Identify factors involved when conducting a vehicle pursuit. (Includes 1996 IACP Sample Pursuit Policy)
- 4.3 Identify factors that would warrant the pursuing officer, or a supervisor, making the decision to terminate a vehicular pursuit.
- 4.4 Identify factors that impact on the termination of a pursuit: suspect voluntary or involuntary stopping.
- 4.5 Identify factors to be considered when a law enforcement vehicle is involved in the termination of a vehicular pursuit using various physical intervention techniques (roadblocks).
- 4.6 Identify considerations involved in post-pursuit reporting.
- 4.7 Demonstrate the ability to conduct a pursuit.
- 4.8 Identify post-litigation preparation considerations.